Morning Oregonian

ESTABLISHED BY HENRY L. PITTOCK.

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WHY WORRY?

The disconcerting information comes to us via the New York Evening Post that the president may not after all make his grand swing around the circle in the interest of the league of nations, as the trip will cost about $40,000, and there is no $40,000 available for a presidential travel fund. The annual appropriation for that purpose, as is well known to all who keep close watch of the interesting subject of presidential perequisites, is a paltry $25,000. Therefore a minor excursion, costing the modest sum of $20,000, is the embarrassing alternative which confronts the president and the country.

The Evening Post must of course be mistaken. The cost of an enterprise presents no obstacles to any member of the present administration from our wandering president down to the humblest member of congress. About all the American people have learned as to government finance in the past five years has been to pay the bills after they have been incurred. Does anybody know, for example, how much it has cost to make peace? No doubt it is worth all it cost; but it will be a-plenty.

The steamship George Washington lay in the harbor of Brest for forty-two days (from May 18 to June 29, 1919) awaiting the pleasure of the president. The expense of operation of the George Washington is about $10,000 a day. So that the people of the United States will pay something like $420,000 to have a vessel on hand whenever the president got ready to come home. No doubt other ships were available; but only the George Washington would serve the presidential fancy.

Why should there be any hesitation now about a trifle like $30,000 or $40,000 when $420,000 is thrown away for a presidential whim? The people would like to see the president. They have not seen him for quite a time. There should be no trouble about the money. Who at Washington is disturbed about mere money nowadays, with the election more than a year hence?

Congress once voted President Wilson the rather handsome sum of $100,000,000 to disburse at will. Why not take a few dollars out of the $100,000,000 fund, if any is left, and it can be done? Or are we to understand that it is all gone? Incredible. It is a fixed principle of democratic action that there is no bottom to Uncle Sam's pocket book. So, if the $100,000,000 has been spent, there are other $100,000,000s.

Let the president come. Why worry now about money?

AERIAL FIRE PATROLS.

"Exceedingly dry weather has caused increased vigilance of the aerial forest fire patrol and the watch from the observation balloon was maintained throughout the night." This quite matter of fact statement is contained in a routine report of the director of the air service of the United States army. It marks one of the steps in the transition of aviation from a war to a peace basis. It is conceivable that within a very short period there will be few or no repetitions of serious fire conditions such as have been recently reported from the Crazy Horse mountain district of Montana. The secret of forest fire prevention is the checking of fires in their incipiency. This will be made possible by airplanes as by no other possible agency.

The experiment now being made in California owes its locus chiefly to the fact that it is in that state that the principal army aviation fields are situated. Doubtless, however, the work will be rapidly extended to those regions, such as the forest reserves of Oregon and Washington, where the standing timber is of immense extent and value. But already it has assumed a business status. From the three stations at Mather, March and Rockwell fields in a single week recently, fifty-three flights were made, of a total duration of 317 hours and covering a distance of 7615 miles. Four fires were discovered and reported to headquarters of the forestry service in time for precautionary measures to be taken. In at least one instance this was done in a district that was without telegraphic communication and in which the damage done might have been enormous if the fire had gained headway.

Three alternatives for reporting fires are now available, by message attached to parachute dropped over the nearest town, by landing at fields near a forest patrol telephone box, and by returning to the home field. Preparations are being made for installation of radio apparatus on airplanes, although use of parachutes will be continued. An interesting degree of co-operation between towns along the route and the federal government has been developed through local chambers of commerce, and people everywhere are on the lookout for messages from the air.

Expansion of forest patrol work has an important bearing on the immediate future of aviation because it promises to aid the industry in tiding over the period of reconstruction. Sudden cessation of the war left American factories with large equipment on hand and without a market for quantity production. It is acknowledged that development of commercial flying will require several years, and that it will not be possible on a large scale until landing fields have been generally provided by communities and people have been educated to the comparative safety of the modern machines. The service may atone in some measure for the near-sighted policy which has largely withdrawn government support from aviation at a critical time. It is safe to predict that the aerial patrol will become general within a short time, supplementing rather than supplanting, present facilities for fire detection.

AVOIDABLE ACCIDENTS.

The controversy over location of the Columbia river highway between Scappoose and St. Helens is brought to mind by the deplorable accident at the grade crossing Sunday north of the former town. The old main road crosses the railroad several times, and it was urged that the new state road should follow the same course; otherwise the important town of St. Helens, a trading center and a county seat, would be left at one side. It was finally decided by the state highway commission that the true route was to continue on from Scappoose on the west side of the track, avoiding several crossings for the main thoroughfare and also for five or six lateral roads. The wisdom of their decision is unquestionable. It is made the more obvious by the tragedy which resulted in three deaths and the serious injury of one or more others.

It is inexplicable how such accidents happen; but they happen. At this particular crossing, the approach of a train may be seen for a considerable distance either way. There are the usual road signals, and the track is besides in plain sight from the road. An approaching train makes a great noise, and the locomotive whistle is usually blown. It is hard to see how the driver of an automobile can be unaware of the danger, possible or actual.

In this instance, it appears probable that the unfortunate Mrs. Gillette thought the train was not near, and sought to cross ahead of it. She sought to change gears to clear the grade, and in the excitement stalled the engine of her car, and came to a halt on the track. It is easy for an inexpert driver, unfamiliar with a road, to make a miscalculation as to speed, distance and grade, and it is inevitable, in an emergency, that the wrong thing will be done at the fatal moment.

If automobiles are to be driven by anybody, and if grade crossings are to be maintained, there will be many more such accidents, in Oregon and elsewhere. It is not likely, with motor cars in possession of everybody, that strict requirements can be made and enforced as to a driver's qualifications. But certainly much may be done to eliminate grade crossings, or to increase their protective devices.

HOW SENSATIONS GROW.

The manufacture of excitement over the settling of one corner of the terminal elevator was doubtless for home consumption. Here it was a story of considerable technical detail and mainly interesting as to the measures taken to stop the sinking, and for the embellishments those who were disappointed over location of the site and those whose advice had been ignored could offer for the occasion.

If we could keep such stories at home they would merely furnish variety in the ordinary humdrum of municipal existence, but that is not possible. We have now before us a clipping from the Lincoln (Nebraska) Star, which gives a romantic touch to the incident. Squabbles of real estate owners and self-nominated public advisers did not lend enchantment to a Portland story in far-off Nebraska. So the Star's readers are informed that "Portland's 'great mistake' may present the western coast with a leaning towner of Pisa."

The city's million-bushel grain elevator is declared to be "gradually sinking into the paleozoic ooze of the Columbia river." "The huge cylindrical storage buildings and operating house, containing thousands of dollars' worth of machinery for operation of the storage tanks, each day sink just a fraction farther into the mire of the river." Engineers are attempting to stay the settling and if they succeed "why then Portland has its leaning tower, certainly as large, and much more costly than the structure of Italy."

But the most interesting retouching of the story is contained in the statement that "in the meantime tourists leave the many hotels daily and special autos carry them to the scene of the modern leaning tower."

Thus do sensations grow. It was a passing one in Portland. The dock commission gives assurance that the difficulty at the grain elevator has been overcome. The structure does not tip or lean perceptibly; the settling has stopped. Tourists who visit St. Johns may find interesting harbor and shipyard development, but nothing more sensational. Having got their case before the enlightened public of Nebraska in the form of a slur on Portland, how do the pessimists, the disappointed realty owners and the volunteer advisers like it?

KEEPING UP THE PRICE OF SHIPS.

Chairman Hurley, the shipping boss, has changed front again. His hand was forced when the senate passed the Jones bill withdrawing private ship contracts from the supervision of the shipping board, and he was obliged to find a reason for the house committee not to report the bill. His reason is that it would interfere with the successful sale of ships; that shipyards which sprang up to meet the war demand might take contracts at prices which would be ruinous to themselves and to the industry generally; that some yards must close, and that the board will approve contracts so long as they maintain American standard prices.

These reasons do not square with known facts. The world deficiency of tonnage is so great that the entire shipbuilding capacity of the world for two or more years could be employed in making it good. The yards of Great Britain, this nation's principal competitor, have contracts to employ them for two years. Cost of production in that country is now nearly equal to that in the United States, hence there is no danger that contracts will be taken at ruinous prices in competition with the British, while other nations are small factors. There appears to be enough business to employ all yards until arrears are made up, after which competition may decide which shall live and which shall die.

The object behind Mr. Hurley's desire to keep a restraining hand on private contracts is more probably to keep his pet government yards at Hog Island and other places fully employed and to keep up the price of ships to a figure at which he can sell the product of those yards at a profit. His one anxiety is to avoid having to sell at a loss the vessels which he has built and is building at extravagant cost, and to make a good showing for the fabricated yards. In view of his own statement that ships are selling at $178 to $210 per ton and can be built at $165 per ton, there is no danger that any shipbuilders will bankrupt themselves by taking contracts below cost. So long as Mr. Hurley is interested in the success of Hog Island and other government yards, he is in the shipbuilding business himself and has an unfair advantage when he has the right to inspect and veto his competitors' contracts.

Mr. Hurley's philanthropic scheme to sustain the price of ships takes no account of the people who consume the goods to be carried in them. Ocean freight is still at exorbitant figures, which largely explain the high level of prices. A sufficient supply of tonnage and competition among shipbuilders and shipowners will bring down freights to more reasonable figures, and bring down prices also.

The whole shipping board business goes to prove the economic unsoundness of government shipbuilding and ship owning. It was excusable to meet a war emergency only, and should end as soon as possible after the emergency ends. The only occasion for a shipping board is to exercise supervision over the shipping business, as the interstate commerce commission supervises the railroads.

NATURE CELEBRATES.

Reports from pedestrians quite generally agree that there has not been a recent spring in Oregon in which wild flowers were so plentiful or so glorious. Only a few weeks ago we were noting the exceptionally deep hues of the wild currant, trilliums showed their faces in a million unexpected places, and dogwoods made whole mountainsides white with their gorgeous bloom. Now it is the season of the syringa, which seems more prolific than ever before. The ground dogwood is to be found everywhere in the high places. No one can remember a time when there were so many rhododendrons, or when the creek beds were so yellow with wild snapdragons.

It would seem as if nature were celebrating the return of peace to the world. And that indeed, in all probability is what is coming to pass, although not quite literally.

For five years we have had no eyes for the beauties of nature. It may be that other spring times have been as gloriously decked as this one, but we have been thinking of other things. The sun shines more brightly for us in 1919, and the flowers blossom more gaily because we see them so. We need no tables of comparative statistics of weather and the growth of plants to tell us whether it is so or not. The figures as a matter of fact may be against us. It does not matter. Any observer will confirm the statement that the spring and summer outdoors in Oregon this year are the most satisfying that we have known in years.

CHAIRMAN FOSDICK'S REPORT.

The report of Raymond D. Fosdick, chairman of the commission on training camp activities, made public through the war department and constituting in effect a survey of the welfare work done in behalf of our soldiers in France, speaks of "rivalries engendered by the sectarian nature of the Young Men's Christian association, Knights of Columbus, Jewish Welfare board or other societies" as having "provided the worst possible basis for social work with the army," but it cordially commends them, for their accomplishments as a whole and acquits them of intentional dereliction. It credits the heads of the organizations with having co-operated in the right spirit and the organizations themselves with giving service without distinction on account of race or creed. In the main the report is an argument for the taking over of welfare work by the army itself, but it is especially interesting because it clears up a number of misunderstandings and discusses the entire question in a non-partisan, non-sectarian spirit.

Complaints against the Young Men's Christian association, for example, are discussed without reservation. Much of this criticism, he says, "is due to misunderstanding." The bulk of it arose from Y. M. C. A. operation of army canteens, which Mr. Fosdick says was a mistake; yet in another part of the report he indicates that it served a good purpose, from which the fair-minded reader will draw the deduction that it was justified. "It was a genuine relief to the general staff," says Mr. Fosdick, "that during the fighting days of the army it did not have to handle the ever troublesome canteen problem." If, one will believe, the Y. M. C. A. was able to take from the shoulders of the general staff an "ever troublesome problem," it was clearly justified in doing so. It appears also that this not only relieved the army heads from anxiety, but also released a large combatant personnel, which was important, especially in the earlier days of the fighting.

The bearing of the canteen question on criticism of the Y. M. C. A. is explained by Mr. Fosdick as arising in part from the fact that from early days the canteen had been an army perquisite and the soldiers could not understand why it should be handed over to a "private society which was at the same time raising millions at home for support." He adds:

> Moreover the personnel of the Y. M. C. A. was untrained for this kind of work, and soon found itself in a maze of business and technical difficulties with which it was at first unable to cope. In the minds of the soldiers it immediately became a commercial organization, and from this stigma it never succeeded in freeing itself.

Yet Mr. Fosdick has gone into the finances of the Y. M. C. A. and his succeeding words ought to do much to restore confidence in the minds of those who are inclined to judge from individual experiences and isolated instances. He says:

> The charge that the Y. M. C. A. made money out of the canteen is erroneous. However high its prices may have been in individual localities, considered as a business venture the total results show large losses.

The personnel of the Y. M. C. A. was in many cases not adapted to the work required of it, but here the field of choice was limited by inability to obtain many men possessing proper qualifications who were in the army. Having, however, the entire womanhood of the country from which to choose, it did better in selection of its 2500 girls. Their work is found to have been "beyond praise." Indeed, the Knights of Columbus are mildly criticised for failure to employ women overseas, Mr. Fosdick being convinced that "the average woman worker attached to a hut is worth four or five men workers as an influence on the morale and spirit of the troops." In this connection he has a word of praise for the work of the special committee of the National Catholic War council, which corresponds to the Young Women's Christian association, which is being conducted in Paris. The Jewish Welfare board is found to have been "admirable in every respect," the American Library association has put the army under deep obligation, and the Salvation Army is "easily the most popular of the six organizations in France." But some facts as to this may help to clear up more misunderstandings with regard to other organizations, without detracting a particle from the work of the Salvation Army itself. The latter employed in France some 200 workers, by comparison with 6000 representatives of the Y. M. C. A. and 800 of the Knights of Columbus, and it actually reached only a few divisions. Contrary to popular impression, it did not give all supplies free, reserving this for times and cases of need. Mr. Fosdick goes on:

> Its policy is to sell canteen supplies, even its far-famed doughnuts, and its prices, due to the fact that it had no extensive buying machinery, are generally higher than those of the Y. M. C. A.

There must have been a reason for the deep affection in which the Salvation Army is held by soldiers without exception. This Mr. Fosdick finds to be:

> It is the inner spirit of service which has endeared this organization to the hearts of the doughboy. Its personnel has been carefully selected from trained workers of the Salvation Army—men and women who know how to meet their fellowmen on a common plane, and no task has been too humble and no service too small for them to perform for the troops. Its reward is the genuine affection of the American expeditionary forces.

Mr. Fosdick thinks that the sectarian basis underlying much of the welfare service is fundamentally wrong. He would leave the religious interests of the men entirely with the chaplains. He has noted an undesirable tendency to exploit names and insignia. He is "disheartened to witness" the efforts of different organizations to make a lasting good impression upon returning troops, bringing prominently into the foreground their emblems and insignia, but one will think, perhaps, that Mr. Fosdick has gone out of his way to find something to worry about. A competitive effort to "make a lasting good impression" may not represent the ideal of perfection, but it ought not to do a great deal of harm. Similarly, it will be felt by many that if, as Mr. Fosdick would have it, welfare work were turned over to the army, there might be some lack of that "inner spirit of service" which he declares to have been the secret of the success of the Salvation Army. It is probably true that "morale is as important as ammunition and is just as legitimate a charge against the public treasury." But to make the creation of morale a governmental affair exclusively would be to ignore the meaning of morale.

Participation of the whole people, not as taxpayers but as voluntary contributors, and of workers who were actuated by the spirit of sacrifice, probably had more to do with the success of the welfare work as a whole than is commonly credited to it. In any event, the army did not possess such agencies in the beginning of this war, and the organizations which supplied the need are found to have done nobly, when their work is studied in the perspective which brings out the high lights and softens the asperity of individual criticism.

In the ruction at Brest Sunday night in which French soldiers and sailors threw rocks at American soldiers, it is reported "the Americans retaliated." Of a verity, they did. The Yank is strong on retaliation and throws straight from his baseball experience on the back lot.

Patrolman Finn did great work yesterday morning in killing one and capturing another burglar. Did you ever note that Portland patrolmen make good at the right time? Yet some people yawp for the impossible.

The Beaverton bank robber was an Oregon jail bird, paroled, of course. The slickest makes the best "good dog." There is much "bunk" in the system, but how to get rid of the "bunk" is the problem.

The German departure from Versailles was less noisy than in 1871 and does not promise to be followed by an eruption of statues in Germany.

The case of Carter, the bank robber, and Hazel Perry, his companion, raises the question: Is it stealing to steal stolen money from a thief?

The most popular celebration for the returned man will be that that burns the least powder, which is no more incense to his nostrils.

Anywhere will be a good place to go on the Fourth, and the fellow who must stay in Portland and work will be the lost dog of the day.

Mr. Cummings starts early to flay the republican party; hardly good non-partisan tactics. He better would try to tickle 'em.

With a 'phone strike the lazy man gets his, for upon analysis it is found the 'phone was invented for lazy people especially.

Bethmann-Hollweg wants to die for his emperor, but B.-H. can die on his own account if the allies live up to their duty.

The Oregon country this morning chuckles at the discomfiture of other states with a thirst and no way to quench it.

The treaty signed, the railway strike in Germany is over. Sure thing. It was Deutsche camouflage.

Mint growers meet in Eugene tomorrow; but in what, pray, is mint used nowadays?

It is up to Lansing, House and the rest of them to finish the job at Paris.

The drive is $50,000 short, and suppose we try another dollar apiece.

Old John H. Barleycorn, fare thee well, and if forever, that goes!

Now that the war is over, let us all make war on gloom.

Welcome, red stamp. You have a republican brand.

What's the real matter around the city hall?

General forecast: A mighty "dry" spell.

Don't tell your troubles, 'phone 'em.

Those Who Come and Go.

"Food is very scarce in Germany. I saw well-to-do people down on the docks scraping up a handful of flour and taking it home to make soup," said Edward D. Oesch, who is here to go out as chief engineer on the West Nosska. "I was in Hamburg in April with the West Wauna, another Portland-built steamer. We were the fourth ship in there with a cargo of food. The chamber of commerce sent a representative down as a sort of reception and we were kindly treated. The representative said that America's entrance into the war turned the tide against Germany, and the people blamed Von Tirpitz and his submarines for making the United States an enemy. This German also said there is not much feeling against America, but that the people cannot forgive England. Soap is so scarce in Germany that you can get anything for it. I was traded two automatics and a razor for a bar of soap. One of these automatics is worth $45. Everyone in Hamburg had plenty of money, such as it was, but the purchasing value has greatly decreased."

Tom Sweeney, formerly a Bull Moose leader, passed through Portland yesterday on his way to Camp Lewis to be discharged. He is a captain in the engineers. "I'm not a sawmill man," explained Tom, "but I had charge of two sawmills and made the record cut for a day's run and a week's run. I did road building, too. In fact, when there was anything to be done in France they said 'Let the engineers do it.' It may have been a hospital that was to be built and maybe there were only electrical engineers available, but it made no difference. The engineers were expected to tackle anything in the building line, and hydraulic engineers would like as not be set to building roads." Just as soon as Tom can shed his uniform and get into "civ" he says he is coming home and bid on some of these road contracts. Captain Sweeney met Lieutenant-Colonel George H. Kelly, who had charge of the lumber production, in the Imperial lobby, whereupon they went into executive session "toot sweet."

An astrologist once told Douglas Scott, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Scott, who are at the Multnomah, that he was born under a lucky star. At the outbreak of the war young Scott tried to enlist, but was refused as he was only 16 years old. He went to Canada and enlisted in the first division sent overseas. He was one of the first sent to the front. Of the 1100 in the division only 20 are now alive and only four escaped without losing a limb. During the war Scott was wounded five times and so badly gassed that his life was despaired of. He was captured by Germans, killed the Prussian officer and two guards, and after three days' wandering across no-man's land, returned to the allies' lines, badly wounded.

A jinx is pursuing John Dunn, a Greeter from the Whitmore, San Francisco. Shortly before leaving California his hand was injured in an auto accident. When he arrived in Portland his traveling case was missing, but later was located. Now Mr. Dunn's injury has become aggravated and he has been forced to remain in this city, when he expected to be home the night of nights in San Francisco when J. Barleycorn war farewelled. Mr. Dunn is at the Multnomah.

"I'm a democrat from Maine," confessed J. A. McLean of the Griggs hotel at Eugene. Mr. McLean came to town as democratic state committeeman for Lane county to meet National Chairman Cummings, and is registered at the Hotel Portland. "In Maine there are some mighty good democrats, although it is such a republican state that very few democrats ever get elected to office."

R. H. Lockett of Brogan is at the Imperial on business. Brogan is at the end of a railroad, the Malheur Valley railroad, which the late Mr. Brogan induced one of the railroad kings to take an interest in. The surrounding country is now best known for its fruit, and the apples of Brogan would make the Hood River variety sit up and take notice if the Brogan fruit was as extensively advertised.

"The first intimation we had of the telephone strike," said George Thompson, clerk at the Perkins, "was when a woman in the house became sick and wanted a doctor. We phoned and phoned, without result, and wound up by sending a messenger for a physician. Time was when people used to get along without telephones, but they can't very well now."

C. A. Harrison, one of the veteran hotel men of the coast, is at the Perkins for a few days. His headquarters are now in Seattle. He used to be at the Russ house in San Francisco, and the Cornelius hotel in Portland was originally built with the object of having Mr. Harrison operate it.

"Things are prospering in Marshfield," reports Judge A. S. Hammond of Coos Bay. "The C. A. Smith camps are operating again and it is reported that Mr. Smith has gone to Sweden to raise funds to recover the property which is now in the hands of a receiver."

W. P. Kenney of St. Paul, federal director of the Great Northern railroad, was registered at the Multnomah over Sunday. He was accompanied by his wife and three daughters. The visitors were taken over the Columbia highway by E. V. Hauser and Grant Smith, proprietors of the Multnomah.

Motoring home to Tacoma from Los Angeles, a party arrived at the Hotel Oregon yesterday. The visitors are Mr. and Mrs. D. M. Mothby and Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Burkard.

Opportunity for Young Men.

PORTLAND, June 30.—(To the Editor.)—Young men of America who desire and wish to see service with the American expeditionary forces in either France or Germany have just five days left in which to make their decision. It's a golden opportunity, not only from a military standpoint, but the vast practical knowledge that such services offer. It's the greatest offer that has ever been made to the youth of America and every mother's son between the ages of 18 and 25 should take advantage of it.

The new peace time army is the people's army, and it will be a high mark of merit to have served in it. "July 5th" says the secretary of war, "is the last day that enlistments may be accepted for service with the expeditionary forces." It would sure be a fine thing if the American nation could say: "Every American man, a soldier."

CAPTAIN EARL HARKINS.

Allotment of Soldier's Pay.

IONE, Or., June 28.—(To the Editor.)—Can parents collect all or part of a soldier's wages if they are in need of this help? The soldier has served nearly three years now, being 18 years old. He has never helped the parents while in service. The father gave consent for the enlistment, not letting the mother know until afterward.

A READER.

If the soldier gives his consent arrangements can be made for allotment of a part of his pay to the parents. The only way is to induce the soldier to make the application.

More Truth Than Poetry.

By James J. Montague.

THOUGHTS ON A GRIZZLY BEAR.

(Copyright, 1919, by Bell Syndicate.)

I gazed with regret at a grizzly
As he pawed at the bars of his cage.
I looked, with a sigh, at the blood in his eye
Which told of his venomous rage.
For I thought, "What a shame to imprison
A creature so rabidly keen,
He ought to be backed for an animal act,
He would sure make a hit on the screen!

"When he started out for a hero
No keeper, hid back in the gloom,
Could turn him away with a shout from his prey
Or shoo him aside with a broom;
Just give him a chance in the movies
And instantly he would instil
A punch in the plot till the audience got
A thrill that is really a thrill.

"I am weary of second-hand lions,
Who only awaken the fear
That they'll die of old age ere they get off the stage,
While the hero escapes free and clear.
A wildcat would serve the turn better,
But wildcats are dreadfully rare;
A tiger might do, but they're costly and few,
But a grizzly! well, he'd be a bear!

"And what a great boon to producers;
For lions are gluttons for food
And so likely to die that the lion supply
Each month or two has to be renewed.
But make this vast, massive jawed creature
The star of a photoplay cast,
And though heroes passed on, now and then, and anon,
The bear would be certain to last."

* * *

Maybe It Can Be Done Anyway.

Our chief objection to the treaty is that there was no provision in it for putting the Hohenzollern boys to work.

* * *

The Best Brake.

It is an excellent thing that a speed maniac was sent to Sing Sing. When speeders learn that they are going to state's prison they will not be in such a hurry.

* * *

Get Ready for the Next Crusade.

Better begin enlarging your cellar so as to hold a stock of cigars, cigarettes and smoking tobacco.

Embarrassing.

By Grace E. Hall.

We tried to pass upon the street,
A fat man whom I chanced to meet,
And I,
He turned to left instead of right,
And onward came, an awesome sight—
And so did I!

He made a dodge to change about,
His wits completely put to rout,
And so did I!
He bobbed to left with reddened face
And much accelerated pace—
And so did I!

With frantic speed he then essayed
Another pass and progress made—
And so did I!
He paused just then and glaring stood
As if an image made of wood—
And so did I!

Then, with a bow, his cheeks a-flame,
He hurried back from whence he came—
And so did I!
He wonders still how it occurred—
A situation so absurd—
And so do I!

NO REASON FOR OIL STOVE LAW

Fuel Proposed to Be Proscribed Safer Than Gas, Says Writer.

PORTLAND, June 30.—(To the Editor.)—This week I have had occasion to look over one of the proposed ordinances to be considered at the next meeting of the city council, which reads as follows:

An ordinance to amend section 33 of article 111 and repealing sections 34, 36 and 37 of said article 111 of ordinance No. 32929, regulating the use of oil burners and declaring an emergency.

The city of Portland does ordain as follows:

Section 1—That section 33 of article 111 of ordinance No. 32929, entitled "An ordinance on public safety and general welfare and declaring an emergency," passed by the council June 6, 1917, be and the same is now amended to read as follows:

"Section 33—Oil burners: Where oil is used as fuel no system using water or gravity pressure, compressed air or gas to force the oil from the supply tank to the burner shall be permissible.

"Section 2—That sections 34, 36 and 37 of said Ordinance No. 32929, entitled 'An ordinance on public safety and general welfare, and declaring an emergency,' passed by the council June 6, 1917, be and the same are now hereby repealed."

Inasmuch as this ordinance is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, peace and safety of the city of Portland in this: That certain types of oil burners are a fire menace and should be regulated, therefore, an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this ordinance shall be in effect from and after its passage by the council.

It seems to me that this proposed ordinance as amended is very broad in all of its phases and was evidently drawn up by someone entirely unfamiliar with what he was attempting to do. When a city the size of Portland attempts to strike a blow at one of the largest and most popular industries in the whole world and at the use of a fuel that is absolutely essential to economical living today, then it is time that the general public took a hand and stopped such transactions by public officials.

Oil is the most popular fuel being used at this time and the most economical, safest and best and if Portland was awake to the source of her future industries she could easily see that this oil stove industry could be made one of her greatest assets instead of being condemned by her leaders of city government.

This ordinance as amended would bar the sale of all oil-burning appliances in the city of Portland and there are now on sale in this city about six different makes of oil stoves, which are shipped into this city by the carload—many carloads of them—all of them manufactured in the east. Does not Portland need this business and also this industry, which could be easily transplanted on this coast?

In case anyone wishes to contend that my remarks are not true I would like to have the opportunity of proving them, also to show these know-it-alls that oil is a safer fuel than city gas, is far more economical to use, inasmuch as it will not escape in unconsumed gas, as it does on a city gas burner; also that the fumes therefrom will not kill all of the plants and pets that one might want to have around the house as does city gas, and that it is therefore less menacing to the immediate preservation of the public health, peace and safety of the city of Portland.

THOMAS M. TAGGART.

"A Wife's Revenge."

Indianapolis News.

The wife was having a small bridge party at the house for a company of women and one of the guests failed to appear, leaving a vacant place at one of the tables, so she called up her husband at the office and asked whether he would not come home early and "fill out."

"But why can't you play with a dummy?" he asked, evidently having no relish for the game.

"Why, the girls have invited you," was the wifely response.

In Other Days.

Twenty-five Years Ago.

From The Morning Oregonian, July 1, 1894.

Chicago—A general strike of all trade unions in support of the American Railway Union is threatened here.

Berlin—Emperor William has proposed to the French ambassador an international agreement against anarchists as a result of the assassination of President Carnot, of France.

Washington, D. C.—Continuation of free delivery of mail at Roseburg, Or., and Caldwell, Ida., was authorized today.

Judge T. A. Stephens yesterday succeeded Judge M. G. Munly as his successor presiding over the state criminal court.

Fifty Years Ago.

From The Morning Oregonian, July 1, 1869.

Montreal, Can.—Joe Arnold, champion of England, challenges any man in America to fight in Canada for $5000.

A. B. Richardson, auctioneer, sold two lots at the corner of Fourth and Yamhill streets, yesterday, to Henry Failing for $3800.

Nearly a dozen teams from Silverton and vicinity were in the city yesterday, loading goods for the merchants of that place.

Dublin—Large meetings were held yesterday in Irish cities by those favoring the release of Fenian prisoners.

NOT SO EASY AS IT APPEARS

Adoption of Metric System Encounters Several Practical Obstacles.

PORTLAND, June 30.—(To the Editor.)—I read with interest the article on the adoption of the metric system in this country as published in The Oregonian.

Superficially the article was timely—the metric system is far more practical and has been adopted by nearly every country except England and the United States. When a mere matter of changing means so vast a benefit, why not simply pass a law to that effect and have done?

But investigation of the other side reveals many things. First, the English system is not the promiscuous jumble it is represented to be, decimal equivalents being used largely in engineering and technical work. Tons and fractions thereof are measured in tons and tenths of tons, not in tons, pounds, ounces, etc., as set forth by the metric advocate. The surveyor's tape is graduated in feet and tenths of feet, not feet, inches and fractions of inches. Machinery in factories and machine shops is graduated to do work to inches, tenths, hundredths and thousandths of inches, not quarters, eighths, sixteenths of inches.

"Every school, college and university in the country uses the metric system in the instruction of chemistry and physics." True, and they use it only in physics and chemistry, or virtually so, these subjects being what might be termed experimental subjects; whereas, on the other hand, the same colleges and universities use the English system exclusively in teaching applied engineering subjects, such as hydraulics, engine design, etc.

"Practically all the world uses the metric system, but the English-speaking peoples. . . . We are too indolent to change." Is it indolence which prevents the passage of a law which would junk millions of dollars' worth of machinery and apparatus, scales and measures graduated in the English system throughout the United States, England, Canada, Australia and the other possessions of the United States and Britain? France did it, one may say, but France originated the system in 1790, and gradually assimilated it till 1837, when it was made compulsory, and at that early date the machinery problem was not a pressing one.

Again, even though the loss of apparatus was overcome, what about the workmen, educated for a lifetime in the English system? It would be impossible for them to visualize the metric units for a long time to come—a man given a piece of work to make so many meters in length would find it necessary to calculate the distance in the old units accurately to visualize the work. Thus, for a questionable benefit, a generation of confusion would result.

The adoption of the metric system is one of those many propositions which appear so flowery in theory, and are well-nigh impossible in practice. If its superiority were so incalculable, and its adoption a mere matter of passing a law, such action would have been taken long ago by a people as progressive as those of the United States.

There is little question but that England's money system could profitably be changed to the metric, but that does not effect this country, as we already have the metric money system.

CHESTER A. KLINK.

CANAL RATES PRESENT PROBLEM

What's to Happen When Coastwise Traffic Competes With Government?

DALLAS, Or., June 29.—(To the Editor.)—In all of the discussion of the perplexing railway problem, I have seen no word concerning water competition by way of the Panama canal when ships again shall be available for the coastwise traffic. This feature of the problem doubtless is being given due consideration by the powers that be, as no sensible solution can be reached without taking the canal into account.

Prior to the war, when ships were available as coastwise carriers, the water rate from New York to Portland was approximately one-half of the rail rate in less than carload lots. The less-than-carload shippers, who constitute an overwhelming majority of the merchants of the country, were able to ship goods from Atlantic ports by water at a rate as low as that paid by the coast jobber who shipped in carload lots by rail. Taking into account the 25 per cent advance recently put into effect by the government, in its frantic effort to check the alarming gain of expenditures over receipts, the old water rate was approximately one-fourth of the existing rail rate.

Now that the war is over, and ships for the coastwise trade again will be available, what use will be made of the canal? Will the government permit the use of its property by ship owners who desire, and can afford, to cut rates to get business away from government-operated railroads, when such railroads are going into the hole to the tune of something like a billion dollars a year? Or will the government, in order to protect its railroads, force the steamship companies to raise their rates or be deprived of the use of a $400,000,000 waterway built with public money?

The canal is a factor that must be considered. One of the chief purposes of its construction was to enable steamship lines to compete effectively with the railroads. If the railroads were unable to meet steamship rates before the war, when operating expenses were much lower than under government control, how can the railroad administration hope to compete with water traffic under existing conditions? To take over the ownership of the rail lines would only make matters worse, as the public would then own both the railroads and the canal and would find itself its own competitor.

It is said that James J. Hill once predicted the day would come when pond lilies would grow in the Panama canal. The late empire builder was not noted for giving tongue to idle thoughts, and it begins to look as if the present generation may witness the fulfillment of his prophecy.

J. C. HAYTER.