Morning Oregonian

ESTABLISHED BY HENRY L. PITTOCK.

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WHY MR. FLETCHER RESIGNED.

The position in which Henry P. Fletcher was placed by the administration's policy made resignation as ambassador to Mexico his only escape from a constant sense of humiliation. During the nearly three years of his tenure of that office, he witnessed flagrant violations of neutrality in favor of Germany and open demonstrations of enmity to his own country, yet any protests he might make were not backed by his own government with the force which alone could make them effective. He saw his fellow-countrymen murdered, outraged or robbed and he demanded that the offenders be brought to justice, but he received only formal promises of redress, which he knew were broken and were made to be broken. He saw Britons and Germans free from attack and, if by mistake a Briton was attacked, prompt apology was made with the explanation that the man had been taken for an American—a plain intimation that Americans were considered fair game for bandits.

Between the lines of Mr. Fletcher's testimony before the house committee on rules last July can be read the confession of his impotence to accomplish anything for his country under the restrictions imposed by President Wilson. Loyalty to the administration forbade him to express opinions which could not have failed to be unfavorable to it, yet the facts which he reluctantly stated and his manner of stating them were damning to the Wilson policy from its inception. When asked how much of Mexican territory the Carranza government controlled, he answered:

> I think you might say that they control practically all of Mexican territory in this way: That such organized government as exists in Mexico is the Carranza government, and they control practically all the ports.

But when asked how many revolutionary movements there were, Mr. Fletcher gave quite a list of states or parts of states which were out of control and he said:

> Villa controls practically the territory that he covers on this day, as far as I can see. He has a mobile force and goes about practically as he likes, more or less. They do not seem to have been able to stop him yet.

It may fairly be assumed that Villa controls any territory where he "goes about practically as he likes." A map republished from the New York Times by the order of the committee showed that Villa controlled in this manner all of Chihuahua, half of Durango, a third of Coahuila and a corner of Sonora, and the accompanying article said:

> Carranza today (June 22, 1919) controls little more than one-half of Mexican territory and his hold on that is not at all secure.

When asked whether he looked "upon the Carranza government as the fulfillment of the mission of a government for the people of Mexico," Mr. Fletcher cautiously answered:

> I would rather testify as to facts than to give any opinions.

When pressed for an answer as to whether "it is fulfilling its mission as a government," the best he could say was:

> Where it exercises full control, it is endeavoring to do so, and so claims.

He recalled fifty or fifty-one outrages on Americans during the twenty-eight months of his residence, but could not state how many Mexicans had been "prosecuted and executed as a result." "Sometimes an effort is made to get the bandits," he said, "and sometimes they get them and sometimes they don't," but he did "not remember very many" Carranzistas who had been arrested or convicted for murder of Americans. He knew of cases where they had captured murderers of Americans and was told they "made short shrift of them" but could not recall one prosecution and conviction.

During the war, as far as he knew, the Carranza government maintained neutrality toward the United States and he could not locate any German wireless stations, but he admitted that the newspapers that were under the control or influence of the Carranza government were "very hostile" and that the Germans maintained the same propaganda as in other neutral countries.

Asked to suggest some diplomatic solution for the unsatisfactory relations with Mexico, he excused himself on the ground that "it is the business of an ambassador to execute rather than to formulate a policy."

In view of the restraint under which Mr. Fletcher testified, what he did say is plainly indicative of disapproval of the policy which he was called upon to execute. If he had approved that policy, he would no doubt have defended it. His resignation is evidence that his disapproval had developed into disgust which made his position intolerable. It is practically a declaration that the Wilson policy in Mexico has failed.

Fears for the future of the world's phosphate supply, important to its agriculture, will be allayed by reports to the department of commerce that reserves of phosphates in the single island of Nauru in the Pacific ocean are sufficient for the probable needs of all the world for at least 200 years. Reports indicate that from 30,000,000 to 100,000,000 tons are available, possibly more. The quality is said to be almost pure. There are several other phosphate islands in the Pacific ocean, so that the problem of the future is indicated to be one of transportation rather than supply. In addition to this, there are no indications that the domestic supply of the United States will be exhausted for a long time, and possibilities of developing new home deposits are always to be reckoned with.

IN THREE WORDS.

The public will note with mild interest the fact that an effort is to be made at Salem today to organize a new political party. It is, or is designed to be, the grand consummation of the project of certain labor politicians and certain other farmer politicians to pool their issues and control government through party. The idea is not new; nor do we discover any particular novelty in the principles said to be favored by the promoters of the enterprise.

For example, one proposed panacea is the "abolition of all taxes on the products of labor and the raising of all revenues from community-made values in land and other natural resources." If we understand it, it is a modified single-tax, by which towns and cities, where land values and population have a definite relation, shall pay all taxes, and neither the manufacturer nor the farmer shall pay any taxes. It is an old friend in a new dress. But we surmise that the public will recognize its discriminative and hurtful nature, and will render judgment accordingly.

There is a real opportunity for the land and labor party to perform genuine service. It is to recognize the fact that the old remedies by which the state is to do it all, and the individual as little as possible, are overused and outworn. Let the land and labor party adopt a platform in three words, and stick to it, and urge all others to conform to it, and Utopia will be achieved. It is:

WORK, PRODUCE, SAVE!

WHAT TO DO WITH THE EX-KAISER.

If the thoughts of the allied premiers could be read, it might be learned that they secretly rejoice at Holland's refusal to hand over the ex-kaiser for trial. The one thing which could make William again really dangerous would be to try, convict and punish him, either by death or banishment to some lonely isle. That course would be apt to put him on a pedestal as a martyr before the eyes of the German people. It would give the monarchists an excuse to say that in his person the allies were gratifying their hatred of the German people. They might then rally enough force to enthrone one of his sons.

Such letters as William has written to Prince Fuerstenberg are the best means of stripping his martyr's robes from him, for they present him as a whining, contemptible figure. The allies might destroy his last chance of playing the martyr if they were to apply just enough pressure to induce Holland quietly to push him across the frontier into Germany. The pressure might then be transferred to Germany in order to compel that country to smuggle him into Switzerland. If the allies were then to connive secretly at his being passed on from one country to another until he became a modern impersonation of the wandering Jew, he might become so weary of travel that he would volunteer to remain in any place to which the judgment of the allies sent him, provided they would but let him rest.

When we consider the mental torture which he would endure when meditating on the contrast between the position of world emperor to which he had aspired and the position of despised, hated exile which he would occupy, such a life sentence seems far more severe than a sentence of death.

DECLINE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

The statistical showing made for religion by the "Year Book of the Churches" probably contains no surprises for any one who has thought on the subject. There has been, since 1916, a material increase in church membership, and a falling off of enrolment in the Sunday schools. During most of the period under review the country has been at war, or emerging from war; religious convictions already formed have been heightened, resulting in formal alliance with a church where the bond was only nominal before; the war welfare work of the churches has commended them generally. The population of the United States has been increased by about 3,000,000 in the three years covered by the statistics, and the membership of the churches by about 2,700,000. At this rate of progress, as anyone who likes mathematics can compute for himself, the church might hope within relatively few years to attain the perfect score. The membership rate of gain is practically double the gain in population.

If, however, there is a tendency anywhere to over-complacency this will be checked by reading the figures for the Sunday schools. While their elders join the church, the youngsters stay away. Decline of Sunday school membership not only actually more than offsets increase in church membership, but it is still greater in proportion to numbers. The "Year Book" estimates that decrease in Sunday school membership has been more than 3,500,000. The United States census bureau made a count of these young people as of January 1, 1917, and found that there were 19,951,675 of them. The decrease is about 17.5 per cent in the years in which the population of the country has increased by about 3 per cent. Only to have kept pace with population increase, a gain of 600,000 members was required. This net loss of 4,100,000 in Sunday school membership, unless something is done about it, will be reflected in the statistics of adult membership a decade or two hence.

It would be informative, and otherwise interesting, if we might have an inquiry to determine the reasons why the young people do not turn out to Sunday school as they used to do. It is not many years since every child who regarded himself as anybody in the community of children was dressed in his best on Sunday mornings and posted off to Sunday school as a matter of course. Quite often he was fortified in advance by certain parental aid in mastering central truths and golden texts, to say nothing of Bible verses committed to memory in the spirit of competition when not of reverence. The foundation of wholesome taste for Bible literature, and in particular facility in Bible quotation, was usually laid in the Sunday school of bygone days. It is not surprising, after reading the figures just revealed, that a college examiner should have discovered a few months ago that out of twenty-five Biblical allusions in Tennyson's poems submitted to a class of sophomores, not a single student was able to identify as many as 50 per cent. Familiarity with the Bible is on the decline because the Sunday school is on the decline. No one but a hidebound atheist will contend for a moment that this is a good sign.

No doubt the church will attack the problem and solve it in due time. It will not find the job easy. There are counter-attractions innumerable where a generation ago the Sunday school, at least in the smaller town, had the field practically to itself. And parental authority seems to be on the decline too. Half a generation of holding the public school teacher responsible for everything that happens to little Willie begins to show its effects in other places. It is up to the adult church-goers who have just swelled the membership totals for 1920 to line up the young folks, or the church will be in a bad way, statistically and otherwise, along about 1935.

MEANING OF THE CABINET CHANGES.

Appointment of Edwin L. Meredith to be secretary of agriculture, following closely on that of J. W. Alexander to be secretary of commerce, is instructive as a sign of the present drift of affairs with President Wilson and his cabinet. Only five of the original ten members of the cabinet remain. Seven men have passed into and out of the cabinet and the third men in seven years have been appointed secretary of the treasury and attorney-general respectively. In the case of the treasury, all of the changes have come in little more than one year.

Of the seven new men who have come to the head of departments since March 4, 1913, three—Glass, Palmer and Alexander—have been taken from congress and a fourth—Meredith—is heralded as a practical farmer and business man, and all of these four have been appointed since the opening of 1919. We should be tempted to infer that Mr. Wilson is throwing overboard the professors in favor of a crew of practical politicians with legislative experience and of practical business men, but for his promotion of Professor Houston.

Retirement of old members, to whom Secretary Lane is soon to be added, suggests that they see no hope of further distinction to be gained by achievement, when the president is an invalid, congress is under republican control and defeat of the democracy in November is foredoomed. For the cabinet there is much grief, little joy, ahead.

The new cabinet members are old wheel horses of the party, whose political fortunes are tied up with it and upon whom the president relies as the forlorn hope of turning the tide of popular disfavor. It devolves on them to discover new issues, to throw a new, favorable light on old issues and to watch for and exploit republican blunders. That is the job before Palmer, Alexander and Meredith, and Senator Glass can help much through his experience in the house and in the treasury department.

HIGH COST OF CLOTHES.

Attorney-General Palmer is credited by Daily Financial America with having halted the rise in the price of food during the last three months and is called upon to turn his attention to the still rising price of clothes. Clothes prices have had much to do with the further decline in the purchasing power of the dollar, which was only 45 cents on December 1 as compared with six years ago.

There should be room to squeeze out some profiteering when a $100 suit of clothes is said to contain only a little over $7 worth of wool. All materials combined cannot raise the cost of materials much over $10. That leaves $90 to divide among labor, manufacturers of cloth and clothing, wholesaler, retailer and freight. There should be room for some contraction without inflicting severe punishment on anybody.

It would be instructive to discover how much of that $90 represents excess profits tax, which may be paid by every man through whose hands the goods pass. When ragged Europe calls for clothes, it is not to be expected that they are sold in America at less than the export price, and the tax affords a convenient excuse. If congress by economy should reduce expenditures to a point where this tax could be either repealed or materially reduced and then, if Mr. Palmer should put his sleuths on the trail, it would probably be discovered that this tax, which was intended to be paid by the rich manufacturer and merchant, is actually paid by the poor with several profits added.

A GOOD TIME TO INVEST.

A consequence of inflation of French currency is related in a dispatch to the New York Evening Post which contains a useful hint to Americans. Circulation of French bank notes was increased during the war from four to nearly thirty-four billion francs, but owing to doubt as to the result of the war, and since Armistice day to fear of bolshevism, the peasants stored away the bulk of it. Since confidence has returned, they have brought out their hoards and have been buying freely. This action makes inflation actual rather than potential, as it puts the hoards in circulation. It increases demand for goods, sends prices up and aggravates depreciation, further dislocating exchange. In order to retire this surplus, the French government and corporations are issuing bonds which will convert it from "spending money" into fixed capital saved from income.

Americans would do well to follow the example of the French people who buy these bonds. Though the cost of living has risen, wages of many working people and incomes of many business men and farmers have risen in greater proportion, leaving a surplus over reasonable expense of living. By spending this surplus on luxuries and by relaxing the economy which they formerly practiced, they help to sustain the present level of prices and to raise it further, and they neglect provision for the rainy days which are sure to come. If they were to continue their former manner of living and refrain from buying luxuries and were to invest their surplus in sound securities, they would help to check the upward trend of prices and would provide a sure income for the future.

They would also profit in another way. They would pay in depreciated money for securities which have a good prospect of being redeemed at maturity in dollars worth one hundred cents. In purchasing power a dollar is now worth only about forty-five cents as compared with 1913. There is every reason to expect that before securities bought with this money mature, prices will have fallen and the purchasing power of money will have correspondingly risen so that the forty-five-cent dollar of the present may ultimately be redeemed at one hundred cents. By carrying investments made in periods of high prices over to periods of low prices fortunes have been made.

Abundant opportunities will come from the approaching settlement of world affairs. We may expect the loans to the allies to be covered by long-term bonds which will be a mortgage on the resources of those nations. There is no good cause to fear that, when the world has settled down, they will not be able to meet their obligations. Though Britain and France are now heavily burdened, they were both in much the same position after the Napoleonic war, but the period of their greatest prosperity followed. Disarmament will help to release revenue for payment of interest, and development of backward countries will add to their wealth. Securities may also be issued by the basic industries of all European countries and should prove as stable as those of the great industrial corporations of the United States. The laws of European countries carefully protect the investor, requiring full reports and publicity. Many of these securities will be placed on the American market, for this country is now the world's great reservoir of capital.

By making such investments, Americans will also aid the recovery of Europe from its present disordered state and will hasten the expansion of American commerce and of American industry. They will thus promote the prosperity of the United States, which will thrive best when its European customers are prosperous. Self-interest will coincide with the general purpose to promote prosperity in America and to aid recovery of the world from the effects of the war.

Samuel Gompers was 70 Tuesday and protests he is not growing old, which is true in his case, but many other elderly fellows are so active they do not note the passing of the years. The war made halcyon times for old men not aged. Before then we had a Forty-five club in this city composed of fellows who felt old and feared the discard. Now one of them is seldom found. Possibly they dyed their hair and got new teeth and sport coats. Anyway they ceased to meet and murmur. No, Sam Gompers at 70 is not old and there are others.

President Sproule of the Southern Pacific reflects the spirit that made American transportation systems the business models of the world when he says that beginning March 1 the freight and passenger departments will resume solicitation of business. Competition is the lever that has raised American commerce to its foremost place.

Ambassador Fletcher has quit his Mexican post and it is said by way of explanation that "his presentation of American demands has made it certain he could not return to his post with benefit to either government." No doubt Carranza must be wearied by this time of reading so many notes.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, noted Russian composer, refused to play in concert in St. Louis until promised twelve bottles of genuine beer. If he drinks all this before the concert he should be able to give quite a realistic rendition of what bolshevism really is.

"What is going to happen? I have nothing favorable to hope for since Nicholas' tragic end," the kaiser is reported to have said in a recent interview. Sounds somewhat different from: "I'll stand no nonsense from America after this war!"

Bricklayers at the Walter Reed army hospital in Washington are drawing $9 a day, while army surgeons there get only $6.50 a day. That ought to be easy to remedy. Let the surgeons take out a charter in the carpenters' union.

There may be peculiar joy in dying while drunk. Nobody ever has come back to tell of it. Those who are translated on current moonshine, however, surely cannot have the ecstasies of those who went on the real stuff.

Democrats in congress are bitterly attacking Admiral Sims because he told the truth about Secretary Daniels. Let 'em save their breaths. No congressional gas barrage will ever kill off this blunt old seaman.

In explanation of the mysterious wirelesses, perhaps there is a home-rule agitation on one of the planets and they are seeking assistance in solving a problem that has no solution on this.

At that, the subscriber to bonds of the Irish republic is playing safer than the man who waits for Attorney-General Palmer to get results in his campaign against high living costs.

When people stop attempting to board the rear platform of a forward car, a large percentage of streetcar accidents will cease. Even platform men are careful about that.

The ex-kaiser is indignant at publication of the "Willy to Nicky" letters he wrote to Czar Nicholas. This is ungrateful. Think of all the fine publicity they gave him.

This is the anniversary of the birth of McKinley and everybody who prospered during his administration ought to wear a flower in his memory.

A government nut specialist is coming from Washington to investigate nut conditions in Oregon. This applies to those that grow on trees.

Chicago druggists are refusing to sell wood alcohol, which must distress those who have formed the habit.

Henry Ford is getting down to the "rail" thing in motordom with his new kind of street car.

Editors rarely commit suicide, according to statistics. Their enemies save 'em the trouble.

Ambassador Fletcher gives up Mexico as a bad egg after four years' trial.

Stars and Starmakers.

By Leone Cass Baer.

Donald Bowles, a former Baker player, has been seriously ill at his home in Los Angeles, but is now convalescent.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Bachelder, special representatives of Henry W. Savage, are in Portland arranging for the arrival next week of Mitzi. Mrs. Bachelder is one of the few women of this country who has broken into the sacred realm always considered by man to his very own—that of the theatrical press representative. This is her third year under the Savage regime, all in the interest of the tiny musical comedy star, and if the public doesn't realize by this time that Mitzi is "America's foremost prima donna comedienne," Mrs. Bachelder says it is no fault of hers.

* * *

Speaking of Mitzi, that little personage has dropped her last name, Hajos, altogether. She said she got tired pronouncing it for strangers. So now she is billed simply as Mitzi—which she pronounces Meetsy. (Hajos is pronounced as if spelled Hayosh.)

* * *

Over in London Peggy O'Neill is rehearsing in the Courtneidge production "Paddy the Next Best Thing," scheduled to open at the Queen's theater in Manchester February 23.

* * *

Ann Pennington has already denied ever having even heard of Stewart Robinson, to whom she was reported engaged. Mr. Robinson makes it unanimous in the following wire from Chicago to a New York paper:

"Thanks for crediting me with such excellent taste, but there is no truth in the report I am engaged to Ann Pennington. Cannot understand how such story originated. Absolutely no foundation whatever. Please deny prominently in justice to Miss Pennington and myself."

* * *

Margaret Illington is going into vaudeville in a playlet written by Henry Arthur Jones, with a cast of four people.

* * *

The wife of Frank Moran, who is playing the Keith circuit, is on her way to this country with their eight-year-old boy, whom neither parent had seen for five years. Moran and Weiser, the same team of comedy hat jugglers, were playing in Hamburg, Germany, in 1911, when the baby was born.

When the team was back in Hamburg, three years later, the child was stricken with measles. Due to play in England shortly after, the team left for London while the child remained in Hamburg.

The war broke out and in accordance with the many restrictions, the Moran child was left in Hamburg.

Mrs. Moran sailed for Holland December 27 and has since procured the child.

* * *

Bessie Clifford, American singing and dancing comedienne, who has been playing abroad for the past ten years, has booked passage to sail for home January 17, on the Mauretania. Ten years ago Bessie Clifford came here with Victor Morley in "Three Twins."

* * *

Eva Tanguay has reconsidered her declaration to retire forever and is in vaudeville again. Reports say Eva's clothes are still bizarre and wild, but that she isn't. Something has tamed the I-dont-care one of other days.

* * *

Mabel Taliaferro was married last week at Darien, Conn., to Captain Joseph O'Brien of Orange, N. J.

* * *

Stuart Robson, son of the late Stuart Robson, was married to Yvette Ledoux, of Boston, January 7. The bride is the daughter of the former United States ambassador to Portugal. Both are playing in pictures.

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Mabie Fealy was married on January 9 in Cincinnati to John E. Cort, son of John Cort.

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The Shuberts have made an offer to Eve Balfour, the English actress who has been in this country for several weeks. Miss Balfour was at one time leading woman for Sir Herbert Tree and is one of the biggest film favorites in England.

* * *

Donald Roberts has completed his fourth leap into matrimony by being wedded to Hazel Boyne of the vaudeville act "Not Yet Marie." Roberts is only 33 years old, but it looks as though he was on his way to shatter the records hung up in the matrimonial sweepstakes by the veterans of the golden circle De Wolf Hopper and the late Nat C. Goodwin.

The trio of former spouses include Jessie Loweth of Washington, D. C.; Maude Cooper of San Francisco and Della Ashby of Chicago. The latter was a grandniece of General U. S. Grant and a niece of the Potter-Palmers of Chicago.

* * *

Willard Mack is going to introduce a new emotional actress to the American stage. The actor-author has given Leonora Masso a contract for the next five years with a sliding scale of salary starting at $100 weekly for the first year, $250 for the second, $400 for the third, $500 for the fourth and $750 for the final year of the contract, with a guarantee of 40 weeks annually. Miss Masso was formerly of the "Follies," but left the show some time ago to seek the more serious field in the theater. In giving her the contract Mack wrote he was willing to stake his professional reputation as an actor and author that she would be the greatest emotional actress of the American stage within five years.

* * *

A musical comedy proposal has been submitted for the consideration of Alice Lloyd. It involves a starring engagement for her next season in conjunction with her husband, Tom McNaughton, now with "The Magic Melody" at the Shubert. Miss Lloyd is currently appearing in vaudeville.

The chances are Miss Lloyd will accept, although she has another proposition to head a specially-formed road show for a circused tour of Canada. The road show plan has been suggested by the newly-formed Canadian Theaters company, which stands ready to guarantee the tour.

* * *

Madison Corey and Thomas Stark have dissolved partnership as play producers. Stark has purchased Corey's interest in "The Grass Widow" now on tour. Corey plans to make individual productions.

LEGISLATIVE BILLS AND VETOES

Remarks by Up-State Press on Striking Events at Salem.

Lebanon Criterion.

There was one good point in the "straight party vote" law enacted at the recent special session of the legislature, and that is it would force such men as Oswald West, Senator Chamberlain, Senator Pierce and other staunch democrats who are wont to appeal to the "peepul" for votes upon the ground of non-partisanship. Unfortunately, Governor Olcott vetoed the law, he, too, being one of the men in Oregon public life who appeal to non-partisan views in sustaining their political status.

Highway Vetoes Proper.

Union Republican.

From this altitude it would appear that Governor Olcott was not far wrong in vetoing certain road measures that were designed to change the road plans of the state as adopted by the state highway commission. If we are to have a highway commission, that body should not be hamstrung by petty annoyances via the legislature that are calculated to upset plans already made and announced.

Much Unmerited Abuse.

Silverton Tribune.

The special session of the legislature has passed into history. It cost the taxpayers considerable money to introduce a lot of bills for the governor to veto, and if the success of the session is to be judged upon the comments rather than its record, it was a complete failure. But this is one of the prerogatives of the taxpayer. Without regard to the actual facts, the assembly is sworn at, and the special session of the assembly is, of course, not an exception. It will be found, however, that the record does not merit all the abuse that is tendered that body.

Not the Resigning Kind.

Jefferson Review.

The legislature got funny and asked Olcott to resign as governor and let the people say at the primaries who they wanted to fill that position. Not any of that resign stuff for Ben. He tried that people's choice business two years ago, and he wasn't it.

Recommended Laws Commendable.

Gresham Outlook.

If the session had not been limited to one week the governor would doubtless have had more bills to veto. The special session was called to pass legislation relating to four or five specific and urgent matters, but it went far outside of the recommendations of the executive. Within the limits recommended the new legislation is on the whole commendable.

No Good A-full.

Aurora Observer.

A cog certainly slipped in Olcott's political machine when he called the late unlamented special session. The results make that clear. The best it accomplished might well have awaited a regular session, and many things it did might better never have been done at all.

Stfle Asking Why.

Eastern Clackamas News, Estacada.

Brother Brodie of the Oregon City Enterprise wants to know why the governor called a special sesssion, after declaring that such was unnecessary when pressed to call one for the purpose of ratifying the woman suffrage amendment. Probably a good many are asking this question likewise, seeing that the ostensible reason was not very convincing.

Unfair to Columbia County.

St. Helens Mist.

The Mist believes that if Governor Olcott had known that the St. Helens-Pittsburg road was a part of the state highway as outlined by the state highway commission at the time Columbia county voted bonds for the highway and that the promoters of the bonding programme used this important road as a sop to fool the voters into supporting the bond issue and then spent only a measly $25,000 on the road, that he would not have vetoed the bill—that is, if he wished to play fair with Columbia county.

Abolishment of Parties Now Logical.

Corvallis Gazette-Times.

There isn't a line of legitimate argument against permitting a man to vote a straight ticket with one cross mark if he wants to, yet the governor offered the plainly absurd reason that the proposed change "went to the heart of our form of government." The only logical sequence to such a position would be to recommend to the next legislature the passing of a law to abolish political parties entirely.

Straight Ticket Properly Killed.

Oregon City Enterprise.

The executive may have been expected to kill the straight party measure. We congratulate his excellency in exercising his constitutional prerogative in the right way. We wonder why he did not muster up enough courage to veto the fish and game bill that took from his hands the power that rightfully belongs to the governor.

Not One of His Mistakes.

Capital Journal, Salem.

Governor Olcott has made mistakes and will probably make more. He would not be human if he did not. But he has made no mistake in swinging his veto ax upon measures that could in no way be called essential to the "immediate preservation of peace, public health and safety" and approving only those measures deemed necessary for public welfare.

Product of Risky Venture.

Eugene Guard.

Then they came thick and fast in the attempt to get a share of the newly authorized $10,000,000 road bond issue. The governor took a chance in calling together in extra session the weakest bunch of legislators, controlled by a few shrewd politicians, that has ever assembled at Salem to go through the biennial farce of legislating for the benefit of the people of the state. Now he must undo a great deal of their work by a liberal use of the veto power.

Meaning of Word Illustrated.

Astoria Budget.

The speed and frequency with which Governor Olcott is using his veto on the bills enacted at the emergency session of the legislature may teach the legislators the meaning of the word emergency.

Too Much Like Corn Sheller.

Grants Pass Courier.

There are some mightly fine men in the legislature; in fact, most of them are a fine type of men. All they need is to get over the mania for law making in quantity and go about law making for quality.

About Through With Politics.

The Dalles Chronicle.

It is argued that the straight ballot bill which Governor Olcott has vetoed sought to inject more of party lines into politics. It was a reversion to old-time methods.

Whatever the status of the bill may or may not be, it is evident that the state and the nation want little of politics in the next election.

Escape of Game Bill Mourned.

Scio Tribune.

Governor Olcott should have refused to sign the fish and game bill as well and give it the ax. He would have saved the people much trouble, for when they get a chance at it they will repeal the entire law.

Those Who Come and Go.

Prices for stoves and stovepipe will keep moving upward for another year at least, according to Joseph B. Kettenhofen, who has returned from a study of the eastern market. "An article—a range—which sold for $39 in 1914 is now $118," says Mr. Kettenhofen, "and stovepipe has advanced about 800 per cent. There is such difficulty in getting raw material that between 50 and 75 small stove factories in the central states have had to close and the big factories are refusing to accept future orders. The fault appears to rest with the decreased production of raw material, a result of shorter hours and decreased efficiency." While in Milwaukee Mr. Kettenhofen was told that the reason Berger was elected after being cast out of congress was not because the people supporting him are socialists, but because they resent having their beer taken away. There used to be 3000 beer saloons in Milwaukee and now a person can be arrested for having in his possession a recipe for making home-made beer. The big breweries are preparing to manufacture chocolate candies.

Sans white collar or tie, dressed roughly and looking like two-bits' worth of bad luck, H. A. Bratton of Chewaucan walked into a Portland jewelry store and bought a watch for $110. He wanted to buy some diamonds, too, but the jeweler thought he was wasting time on such a poverty-stricken customer. At home, which is in the Chewaucan valley, Lake county—postoffice address Paisley, on Chewaucan river, 40 miles north of Lakeview—Mr. Bratton and his brother are the second largest cattle owners in Lake county, and he is president of the First National bank of Lakeview. Likewise, he and his brother own a ranch, consisting of a section, near Springfield. Portland business men are not accustomed to the ways of the wealthy cowmen of central and eastern Oregon, for these sheep and cattlemen may have a bank roll bigger than a dog can jump over and yet spurn the $15 silk shirts which the boys at Broadway and Washington wear.

Smoke creek is where H. N. Aldrich has his sawmill. Mr. Aldrich is registered at the Imperial from Silver Lake, Or., but he operates his mill on the creek 15 miles northwest of that place in one of the finest bodies of standing timber in Oregon, which means the world. Before the days of the white man and after his advent the Indians used to make their camp on Smoke creek and when the early settlers came in they saw the smoke from the campfires and called the stream Smoke creek. This creek begins and ends in the woods and is four miles in length. Before the whites came the woods through which the creek flows abounded in game, but the wild life has been mostly exterminated since then. A few days ago Mr. Aldrich sold his sheep, about 2000 head, and he is spending some of the proceeds in Portland. He also has a fine alfalfa ranch at Tumalo, in the Deschutes country.

P. O. Powell, Yale graduate and typical Oregon farmer from Monmouth, was in the city yesterday. Mr. Powell is especially interested in the dairy business and says that the creamery association in his vicinity is a thriving institution, with Portland as its market. The West Side highway link between Monmouth and Independence has been completed, he says, but other road work in that locality has been suspended pending spring weather conditions.

Charles Painter of Brighton is at the Hotel Oregon. Brighton was one of the first sawmill towns in the United States to get into the game of turning out spruce for the British government before America got into the war. The chief concern of Brighton now is to be connected with the beach resorts to the south by a good, first-class highway, but the highway commissioners hold out little hope.

J. P. Duckett, one of Sisters' prominent citizens, is at the Perkins. In a year or two Sisters will be one of the best-known towns in the state, as it will be on the highway which will percolate across the Cascades between Eugene and Bend. The government is now working on part of the road in the forest reserve and was making good progress when the winter storms set in. About the only people who know much concerning Sisters now are anglers and hunters.

"We had snow Saturday, and Sunday there was a rain storm which did a lot of damage in Hood River," stated E. A. Frenz, a merchant of the orchard town, who lived there before Hood River apples were known. "The storm took out the road between the Columbia highway and the boat landing, and it is estimated that it will cost $6000 to replace the destroyed work."

The Oregon Dairy council, at the suggestion of F. G. Deckenbach, always hurries up its meetings during the baseball season, but yesterday the council met until a late hour in the afternoon. The ball season isn't on yet and there isn't the rush. Mr. Deckenbach was here at the Imperial attending the meeting. Besides being a prominent resident of Salem, he is a considerable factor in the dairy and creamery business and in selling the juice of the loganberry.

"Is there a message here for Mr. Ray?" inquired a man at the desk of the Multnomah yesterday afternoon. "Are you expecting a reply to the message you sent this morning?" asked the clerk. "Yes." "Well," explained the clerk, "the message wasn't sent because the telegrapher couldn't read your penmanship."

Peter Nelson, leading merchant of Bay City, Or., is at the Multnomah while browsing among the wholesale houses. There is considerable road work going on near Bay City and the port commission has let a contract to dredge a channel from Tillamook bay entrance up to the wharves at Bay City.

Among the hardware dealers in town yesterday were T. O. Yates of Stanfield, U. S. Hull of Siletz, J. R. Ivie of Sheridan and Alfred Muns and B. A. Kendall of Redmond.

E. L. Hathaway of Seattle, who is in the purchasing department of the largest mail-order house in America, said institution being in Chicago and not Seattle, is at the Benson.

B. R. Richter, who owns a big ranch near Roseburg and who formerly had a big place near Trout Lake, Wash., is among the arrivals at the Hotel Portland.

A. J. Shei, a merchant of Salem, is at the Benson with Mrs. Shei and Mrs. T. L. Milgaard of Thief River, Minn.

S. C. Stewart, a banker of Lebanon, Or., is at the Seward, accompanied by Mrs. Stewart.

G. A. Edmunds, representative for Tillamook county in the legislature, is registered at the Hotel Portland.

Attending the meeting of hardware dealers is W. E. Cravin of Independence. He is at the Multnomah.

Charles R. Higgins, one of Asteria's colony of bankers, is among the registrants at the Seward.

H. P. Holmes, a lumberman from Klickitat, Wash., is registered at the Multnomah.

More Truth Than Poetry.

By James J. Montague.

THE TREACHEROUS RABBIT.

Rabbits and guinea pigs are being employed to test drinks for wood alcohol.—News Item.

As soon as we learned of the horrible danger
That lurks in the Scotch and the Bourbon and Rye,
One buys—after dark—from a bleary-eyed stranger,
Who leers when you ask where he got his supply.
We purchased a rabbit to be our protector,
Avowing that when we were seized with a thirst,
Before we imbibed any illicit nectar
We'd wait until bunny had tasted it first.

"His animal instinct," we said, "is unerring,
The Demon of Rum hasn't made him its slave;
No rabbit, no matter how recklessly daring,
Would drink himself into a suicide's grave."
So we opened a bottle and placed it beside him,
Uncorked it to set its effluvia free,
And, somewhat excited, we eagerly eyed him,
Impatient to know what his verdict would be.

By the tilt of his nose we were sternly admonished
That a drink of this stuff meant our untimely end,
Which left us prodigiously pained and astonished,
For the hootch had been sent by a very dear friend
He leaped at the bottle we afterward gave him,
Took a couple of gulps, then emitted a bleat,
And though we first-aided, no power could save him—
He breathed a long sigh and fell dead at our feet.

We think we are cured of the alcohol habit,
But, whether or no, we are sure we'll refuse
To put any trust in the canniest rabbit
When it comes to selecting a safety-first booze.

* * *

On the Curb.

Bubble, bubble!
Oil and trouble!

* * *

More Than Enough.

Marines Rout 300 Haytians.—Headline. How many marines—two?

* * *

Look Out!

The Berlin government has put on an air service to Holland. The kaiser may make his getaway yet.

* * *

The Silver Lining.

Railroad stockholders who are wondering if they will get anything back should remember that never has there been such a demand for second-hand cars.

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Habit.

By Grace E. Hall.

When birth has laid within the cradle bed
Of destiny, a tiny living thing,
And record dates are entered overhead,
While spirit-bells the chimes of ages ring,
A sly mechanic slips in infant hands
An implement, whose weight is slight indeed,
Yet ever strong in welding human plans,
And ever felt in hours of human need.

This fragile babe so helpless, new to earth,
Grasps quickly at the instrument so brought,
With awesome comprehension learns its worth,
Employing it with seeming crafty thought;
A chain at last is forged by tiny blows,
Each link a habit made of cunning ways,
But, O, the weight forever grows and grows,
And burdens him throughout his earthly days!

In Other Days.

Twenty-five Years Ago.

From The Oregonian of January 29, 1895.

Salem.—On the joint ballot in the legislature this morning Dolph received 42 votes for United States senator, Hare 19 and Hermann, Weatherford and Williams eight votes each.

Chicago. — The conspiracy case against Eugene V. Debs started today with the introduction of the first witness for the government.

There is talk in musical circles of the erection of a music hall to cost not more than $75,000, leaders of the newly organized Apollo Choral society fostering the plan.

C. H. Chapman, president of the University of Oregon, will speak at the library Saturday evening on "The Library and the Public."

Fifty Years Ago.

From The Oregonian of January 29, 1870.

Washington.—The ball given last night by Minister Thornton in honor of Prince Arthur was attended by between 500 and 600 persons.

Chicago.—On account of the great number of robberies and burglaries still occurring here, citizens are talking of forming a vigilance committee.

R. J. Ladd was fearfully injured yesterday when caught in the machinery of the sawmill of Rogers & Stimson at the foot of Jef