Morning Oregonian

ESTABLISHED BY HENRY L. PITTOCK.

Published by The Oregonian Publishing Co., 135 Sixth Street, Portland, Oregon.

C. A. MORDEN, Manager. E. B. PIPER, Editor.

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Subscription Rates—Invariably in Advance.
(By Mail.)

Daily, Sunday included, one year	$8.00
Daily, Sunday included, six months	4.25
Daily, Sunday included, three months	2.25
Daily, Sunday included, one month	.75
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Daily, without Sunday, six months	3.25
Daily, without Sunday, one month	.60
Weekly, one year	1.00
Sunday, one year	3.00

(By Carrier.)

Daily, Sunday included, one year	$9.00
Daily, Sunday included, three months	2.25
Daily, Sunday included, one month	.75
Daily, without Sunday, one year	7.80
Daily, without Sunday, three months	1.95
Daily, without Sunday, one month	.65

How to Remit—Send postoffice money order, express or personal check on your local bank. Stamps, coin or currency are at owner's risk. Give postoffice address in full, including county and state.

Postage Rates—1 to 16 pages, 1 cent; 18 to 22 pages, 2 cents; 24 to 48 pages, 3 cents; 50 to 64 pages, 4 cents; 66 to 80 pages, 5 cents; 82 to 96 pages, 6 cents. Foreign postage double rate.

Eastern Business Office—Verree & Conklin, Brunswick building, New York; Verree & Conklin, Steger building, Chicago; Verree & Conklin, Free Press building, Detroit, Mich. San Francisco representative, R. J. Bidwell.

THE ART OF WASTEFUL SPENDING.

For a legislative body that is about to die the present congress has shown commendable activity, in no case more marked than in its move for reorganization of the departments with a view to economy. The house has passed a joint resolution establishing a joint committee of house and senate, debate on which brought to light many facts on what should be a very interesting question—where the people's money goes.

According to Representative Campbell of Kansas, for many years much overlapping and duplication have gone on in the departments, and the high cost of government is due to the fact that "for twenty years the socialist rather than the political economist has dominated the activities of this government." He said that "every group of people who have imagined that they could better mankind sought a bureau or commission." It started with $25,000 or $30,000 a year, but "grew into the hundreds of millions."

More than forty bureaus are actively operating in the interest of the public health. Several of them are operating on the rat, each of them issuing publications on how to get rid of rats. This sort of thing proves the truth of Senator Aldrich's estimate that, if government business were run like that of a private corporation, $300,000,000 a year could be saved, and Mr. Campbell raised this estimate to $500,000,000.

This condition cannot be changed by reform from within, yet Representative Pou of North Carolina urged that the committee should be composed of "experts in governmental departmental administration," though these are precisely the kind of experts who have built up and who run the bureaucracy that it is desired to trim down to business size.

A few startling examples of waste of money were given by Representative Blanton of Texas, who did not spare his fellow-democrats. He had checked the vacant office rooms in government buildings in Washington and found that there were enough to house every single department, yet the government was paying out hundreds of thousands a year for rent of private buildings. The shipping board alone rents quarters in Washington and Philadelphia at a cost of $558,279 a year, though it "could be moved, lock, stock and barrel, into the office space now vacant in the new navy building." He gave a long list of private buildings that are rented by the government, and the rents paid, and then named the government buildings which are partly or entirely vacant. He named one with 155,000 square feet of floor space and 24 miles of corridors; another group of three large war emergency buildings which are half vacant; and the census bureau and adjutant-general's buildings, where several hundred offices could be made available "by proper destruction of thousands of dead files."

An example of the waste of room with resultant inefficiency through useless duplication of files was given by Mr. Blanton with regard to the war risk bureau. In July a woman returned to the bureau a check for $15 because it should have been for $30. She wrote again in August and again in September and then appealed to Mr. Blanton. He spent a whole afternoon, aided by several clerks, in searching three files kept on three separate floors before finding the returned check, but could not find one of her letters. If all papers relating to each soldier were kept in one file, efficiency would be promoted and two-thirds of the office space would be saved.

Under the prohibition law liquor is stored in 376 bonded warehouses, which require 1128 shifts of guards paid by the treasury department, when concentration in a few warehouses would greatly reduce this expense.

Office room is wasted in housing idle employes whose salary is also wasted. Mr. Blanton said:

> I went through one of these buildings and saw a room which contained over 100 employes, and not a single typewriter was clicking, but little bunches of young men and young women were standing in groups here and there laughing and talking.

He asked the supervisor: "Do you permit this?" and received the answer: "What else can I do?" with an explanation that if the supervisor made a complaint he had to put it in the form of a charge, which he must substantiate in a trial. This was almost impossible, for there were always enough witnesses to back up any inefficient employe and there were organizations to protect them. If he failed to prove his charge, he said: "It will be my neck that will be broken."

Mr. Blanton hired a photographer, went to Secretary of War Baker and asked for authority to go through his department and "take some pictures I would like to preserve." Mr. Baker asked what he wanted to do with them and this conversation followed as given by the congressman:

> Well, Mr. Secretary, to be frank with you, I want to be able to show congress when it meets that you are not entitled to the extra number of employes for which you are asking. I want to show the fact, among many others, that out here in these corridors in front of your office and elsewhere in this building there are 15 to 20 negro porters and messengers doing nothing but laughing, talking and smoking their fine cigars.
>
> He said, "Well, I cannot let you do it. I cannot let you do it." "Why?" "You are interfering with an executive department of the government. Congress has nothing to do with the executive branch of the government. Your function is to legislate; my function is to conduct this department."
>
> I said: "Mr. Secretary, you ask us to appropriate. Is it our duty, as you see it, just to appropriate the sum for which you ask?"
>
> He said: "Yes, sir; you ought to take my word for it and not seek to personally investigate behind what I ask for."
>
> "How are we to know whether the appropriations are proper or not?"
>
> He said, "You ought to take my word for it and let your committee attend to such matters."

That is a good word-picture of the way that money is wasted and of the way in which the wasters, even to heads of departments, protect each other from exposure. Each little faddist gets his little bureau to cultivate his little fad, and soon it becomes a big bureau, paying salaries to hundreds who do not work, but hold social converse. Duplicate filing systems are established, which make information inaccessible, but which require more furniture, more stationary, more offices and, above all, more clerks. Two or more bureaus—usually more—do the same thing, each not knowing that the other is doing it, and overhead expense is multiplied. Employes organize to protect each other's jobs, and they "soldier on the job" because the supervisor cannot fire them and dare not make charges because they testify for each other and cause him to be fired. The head of the department excludes investigating congressmen who aim to expose loafing. He regards them as officious meddlers, whose business is to vote money and take his word that it is properly spent.

When this is the practice, the wonder is not that the government costs so much but that it does not cost more.

TWO IN ONE.

The taxes for state purposes to be levied for next year, it is revealed by the budget, will be the largest in the state's history.

This is cause for disquietude, but it needs be pointed out that the people by their vote in one election advanced the state's requirements in the sum of more than $4,850,000.

This was in the special election in May, 1920, when various millage taxes for maintenance of the three higher educational institutions, the elementary schools and soldiers' sailors' and marines' educational aid, were adopted by large majorities.

This advance is subject to analysis. The higher educational institutions faced a crisis caused by increased costs of existence and vastly greater demands upon their facilities. At the time of the election the tax rolls had been extended for the year, but the law appropriated an amount equivalent to the millage tax for that year notwithstanding. The new millage tax for the three institutions is 1.26 mills. But this tax not having been levied in 1920, as apparently required by the law, it will be levied in 1921 in addition to the 1.26 mills levied regularly for the latter year.

In short, the new millage tax in the coming year will be doubled. The property owner will next year pay two years' new taxes for higher education. The tax for the three institutions is about $1,245,000 higher than it will normally be.

The situation is recounted to emphasize the unusual burdens to be placed upon the taxpayer next year and for the warning therein contained against attempts to create new liabilities unless they be imperative.

FOR A FREE BRIDGE.

The interstate bridge, spanning the Columbia river between Portland and Vancouver, is a money-maker. The net profits to Oregon since March, 1917, from tolls have been nearly $300,000. For the time being 75 per cent of these profits go to the state to reimburse it for deductions made in the past from sums due from the county to the state as taxes. Soon, if not immediately, the state will be fully reimbursed.

Under the present law 25 per cent of the net profits go into a special county fund, which it is required shall be used for replacing or reconstructing the bridge when necessary. While these large profits have been accruing the county has, out of tolls collected, paid such principal and interest on serial bonds as accrued. It is now also paying out of tolls to each of the four members of the interstate bridge commission $50 a month salary and to a special auditor for the bridge the sum of $150 a month.

It is now proposed that instead of a sinking fund for replacing the bridge, the profits be devoted to county road construction and other county purposes.

Collection of tolls for using so necessary a structure as an interstate bridge is an antiquated custom. It ought not to exist in this situation longer than necessary. The profits from the bridge, if they cannot be immediately applied to retirement of bonds issued for construction of the bridge, would better be placed in a sinking fund and that fund invested in municipal bonds until such times as the bridge bonds mature. This would greatly advance the day of a free bridge across the Columbia, for when the sinking fund became large enough to retire total principal, the tolls could be abolished.

Either course or an immediate reduction of tolls would be welcomed by the public. A special auditor is unnecessary; the payment of salary to the bridge commissioners is but a neat way of increasing the pay of the county commissioners and the district attorney.

The general history of public use of profits from a public enterprise is that it does not reduce taxes. The profits are looked upon as velvet and are expended, when made available, for frills and non-essentials, just as some of the profits are now used to increase salaries of county officers, maintain an unnecessary position and take care of extravagances in county hospital construction.

Both Portland and Vancouver would profit immeasurably from a free bridge. The bridge now carries only a fraction of the traffic it would carry were there no tolls. All commercial and productive enterprises would become more closely knit. To sacrifice business and commerce for toll profits, which will only be squandered in riotous county living, is absurd.

The story from Hawaii to the effect that a fund is being raised to tap the active volcano of Kilauea in an effort to use the tremendous volume of pent-up gases for industrial purposes is another illustration of the scientific tendency to forestall disaster well in advance of the event. It has a parallel in Italy, where scarcity of fuel is being atoned for both by energetic development of water power and by efforts to harness the volcanoes of the south. Scientists know that the power and heat of volcanoes exist in sufficient quantities to solve a good many problems of industry if they can be controlled, and progress already made is provocative of hope. There is no practical way of estimating how many mills could be run with the force that would blow the top from a mountain, but it is sufficient to warrant a considerable outlay if the thing can be done.

WHERE RESPONSIBILITY BELONGS.

The unpleasant and unprofitable experience of State Treasurer Hoff in the purchase of bonds from Morris Bros., Inc., leads him to suggest that the legislature create a commission to invest the state's moneys, which come mainly from the industrial accident commission.

It is commendable of Mr. Hoff that he should desire to safeguard the interests of the state by placing so great a responsibility in other hands; but is it desirable thus to create an entirely new function of government?

There are various kinds of commissions. Some are organized with a view to permanent and exclusive employment and are, or are supposed to be, on the job all the time. Others have only occasional duties, and meet at intervals, and dispatch their business with all possible speed, and their members then take the first train home. If Treasurer Hoff proposes one kind, it may be fairly objected that it will be too expensive, if the other kind, it may or may not do the work.

The state treasurer is the custodian of the state funds, and he should have other qualifications than trustworthiness. He should have experience in finance, and knowledge of the state's business. He should have a direct accountability for the safety of the public moneys, and for the wisdom and security of the state's investments. It smacks of evasion that the treasurer should turn an important part of the service he is elected to render to someone else. If he needs advice—as, of course, any treasurer does—let him seek it from the proper sources. But let the responsibility rest where it belongs.

THE STORY OF CONSTANTINE'S TREACHERY.

Recall of King Constantine to Greece by the people is a startling change of front, for the causes of which we must go back to the beginning of the war. At that time Greece was strongly pro-ally and, with the king's consent, was ready to declare war and aid in attack on the Dardanelles. Russia prevented the allies from accepting the offer and from that day the king's pro-German intrigues spread. When the allies later asked for help, Venizelos favored granting it, but the king refused and the premier resigned. A new chamber was elected in March, 1915, and Venizelos was sustained, but the king delayed summoning it and kept anti-ally ministers in office till October. During the interval the pro-German propaganda continued, and the king maintained neutrality toward Serbia in violation of the treaty to defend that country. He recalled Venizelos and summoned parliament in the fall, but after the premier had invited allied troops to Saloniki Constantine dismissed him just too late to prevent the allies from landing.

Autocratic rule continued to the day of Constantine's enforced departure and when Venizelos returned to power he published a mass of documents proving that the king corresponded with his brother-in-law, the Kaiser, and plotted treacherous attacks on the allies while he was making loud professions of benevolent neutrality. Guerilla bands infested the rear of the allied army, German money was smuggled through the lines to the king, and danger of an attack in the rear by Greece prevented an advance into Serbia. On December 1, 1916, French and British forces marched to Athens, and Constantine agreed to regard the move simply as a demonstration, but the allies were surrounded by several times their number of Greek troops, which started a massacre of both the allies and the Venizelists. A threat of the allied fleet to bombard the city stopped the slaughter, but the king showed his approval by decorating a number of the officers who organized and directed it. Queen Sophia telegraphed to her brother that "it was a grand victory over four great powers" and said:

> We are prepared for anything. Please inform us when the army in Macedonia will be sufficiently reinforced to undertake a final offensive.

The kaiser said in his reply:

> The intervention of Tino (Constantine) with his most efficient forces against Sarrail's left wing will be most decisive in Macedonia.

Constantine was not ready to throw off the mask. He preferred to keep up the pretense of neutrality while he sent 5000 irregulars under Karavitis to harass Sarrail's army. On December 23 the Greek minister in Berlin telegraphed that in the event of a rupture with the allies, General Falkenhausen would go by airplane to Larissa and continued:

> In either case the immediate organization of irregular bands under Karavitis is of prime importance. Please let us know without delay what is the assistance you want in munitions, money and food. Karavitis' aim will be to cut the Monastir-Saloniki railway and to harass Sarrail in the rear.

The allies had maintained a blockade of Greece which became strict after the Athens massacre, and on January 2, 1917, Queen Sophia telegraphed to Berlin, "I consider the game lost unless your offensive begins at once," but Constantine still had plans of joining Germany, for four days later he telegraphed Hindenburg details of his forces available for service in Thessaly and Macedonia, and ended:

> We are anxious for immediate information as to whether a German offensive on the Macedonian front is in prospect and when it is likely to begin.

The reply being too indefinite, open hostilities were abandoned, and in announcing this decision to the kaiser on January 9 Queen Sophia thus referred to her beloved subjects:

> May these infamous swine meet with the punishment which they deserve.

Americans naturally ask why the allies did not drive out Constantine and his whole crew. If they had done so, Greece might at once have joined them and they might have rescued Serbia and saved Roumania in 1916. They had the treaty right, for Britain, France and Russia were bound to secure Greece a constitutional government. But the British were opposed to dethroning kings, the Russian and Italian governments shared their scruples, Constantine's brother Nicholas was married to a Russian grand duchess, who detested Venizelos as a demagogue, while Italy opposed him as the maker of greater Greece, which would interfere with Italian claims on the Adriatic, and France must humor its allies. It was the king business which caused the allies to temporize till Russia was in revolution and till the United States intervened.

Constantine, who is a stranger to good faith, now promises to stand by the allies and to observe the treaty of Sevres. They know him too well to trust him. They enriched Greece at the expense of Turkey in belief that Venizelos would continue to rule as their constant friend. They now find the power that they gave Greece is in the hands of a treacherous foe, who is likely to make his kingdom a center of pro-German intrigue. Remembering their sufferings from the blockade while the allies dallied with Constantine, the fickle Greeks feel no gratitude to the allies, and the latter consider revision of the treaty with Turkey, fearing to leave the shores of the straits and Smyrna in the hands of a people who have turned to the man who betrayed them.

The finest figure in the tangled drama is Venizelos. On learning of his defeat, he withdrew to Nice, angrily forbidding his friends to make any effort to hold power by force and saying that nothing should be done to interfere with the will of the people. Acclaimed as one of the great statesmen of the peace conference, he sees all that he has won for Greece in the hands of his enemies, but he expresses the hope that his country will be able to retain it.

DIPLOMACY MUST AID COMMERCE.

Writing for the Empire Mail on "What American business men admire in England," F. A. McKenzie says:

> The Americans are studying with very close interest the new groups of associations, combines, monopolies and banks here which are working in co-operation with departments of the government to recapture world trade. They are particularly impressed by the way in which the board of trade, through its department of overseas trade and in other ways, co-operates with big business. In America it is not so. When I was last in Washington, the department of state which had the most to do with the control of big business was being run by young men of the academic reformer type, with a vigorous sprinkling of young men of the very active destructive type. They went after big business, not to help it, but to suppress it. When they found some cause for prosecution against a great firm they were happy. They pressed their cases with all the savage glee of the zealot. When the American big business man realizes what our board of trade is attempting to do for British trade, he wonders and envies.

That attitude of the Wilson administration toward American business men has been at the bottom of its worst errors of policy, both at home and abroad. It goes far to explain its Mexican policy, any protest against robbery and murder of Americans being met with the reply that they were exploiters of the Mexican people or were inciting war. During our years of neutrality in the war, demands for defense of our rights and for preparedness were attributed to greed of munition manufacturers. Charges of profiteering against private enterprise covered schemes for the government to go into business. Any suggestion that foreign policy should defend American investments abroad and should aid foreign commerce was branded "dollar diplomacy" by "young men of the academic reformer type."

That is one of the things that the people expect Mr. Harding to change. They realize that, in order to keep employed, the American people must sell their surplus products in foreign markets, and that foreign commerce is necessary to keep the American merchant marine afloat. Loss of foreign markets is loss not only to the manufacturer and merchants, whose profits the reformers consider unholy, but to the workmen whom they employ and to the farmers whose crops they sell abroad. Foreign commerce leads Americans to invest in foreign enterprises, to acquire property in foreign ports and to live abroad. Full expansion of American commerce and investment requires that the full protection of the government be extended to Americans abroad in all their undertakings. Jeers about exploitation and dollar diplomacy will no longer pursue pioneers of American commerce.

Now someone says the phases of the moon affect poultry. A hatch set at the right time is said to produce stronger chicks. As the novice in hens will believe anything and try it once, other conditions may prove this true occasionally. The poultry crank sets his hen when she is ready, if he does not own an incubator. Some people believe anything they read in a "chicken" paper.

District Attorney Evans announces he will try to have the Oregon divorce laws made so extraordinarily stringent that unfaithfulness will be the only ground for divorce, and divorced persons will be prohibited from marrying again. What's he trying to do—work up more prosecutions for his department?

A national reform association whose self-appointed mission is to bring about a proper observance of Sunday announces in Chicago that it has no objection to motion-picture shows on that day if admission is free, which is a difference with a slight distinction.

Portland is due for a reduction in the price of milk—1 cent a quart, but expressed otherwise nearly 7 per cent, as much as the best bond pays. Some people get rich figuring that way and not spending the money.

After the Japanese capture this coast and take Dr. Coe's bronze statue of Roosevelt, and then lose their war, their next act will be to return the honorable affair intact.

The license clerk at Seattle complains that too many slot-machine marriages are being perpetrated in that city. Well, Seattle is a handy burg for anything.

Galli-Curci is to be married again, this time to her accompanist. If he can continue to strike the right note for all occasions, he's certainly a wonder.

Portland teachers will be the best paid in the land, though perhaps not all in money; it's worth a good deal to live here.

Galli-Curci is on the way to operatic fame. She is about to remarry.

Hard luck for the fat man to find all the bargains are not man size.

"Whisky poisoning" is the medical term for death by pickling.

Honesty is not a policy: It's a habit, and the best one.

The Listening Post.

Doctor Says Patients Forget Services During Holiday Season.

"I SELDOM can give my family much of a Christmas," was the somewhat unexpected statement made by an apparently prosperous local physician as he awaited a call on that supposedly happy day. "You would think that people would have the greatest consideration of others at this time, but in our case this does not seem to be so. Collections, that's the rub. We cannot get in the money. Late in November many of our patients begin spending for Christmas and from that date they are broke until the middle of January.

"I called on a woman yesterday who has owed me $250 for some time—thought I might get a little to help along. She greeted me effusively, explained that she would try and pay me something about January 15 and then showed me a magnificent set of platinum cuff links set with chip diamonds that she had purchased for her husband and a super-toy coaster wagon that was for her step-son. Fully a score of other gifts were in the room and she volunteered the information that the cuff links cost her $125 and the coaster $68 and that she had only about $400 for her Christmas fund and she couldn't make that sum go around.

"I had cared for her through a severe illness and for her son when he broke a limb several months before and felt that I had earned my fee. They were grateful for my services and I did my best. My little folks did not have a very happy day as I could not buy the gifts they longed for and had I insisted on payment from this one as well as other of my patients I should have lost part of my practice."

* * *

He was a tone picture in cream and light brown from his beaver hat to his highly polished oxfords and his smile exposed a wide expanse of ivory as he entered the pawn shop. Inserting his hand in his face he pulled out his splendid set of teeth, which were elaborately mounted on a yellow gold plate.

"Gimme about eighty dollahs," he said as he laid the principal ingredient of his engaging grin on the counter. The broker rapidly wrote out the ticket and passed over four $20 bills and the negro dandy, with a nonchalant wave of his hand, went on his way.

"Crap-shooter," volunteered Harry the pawn-broker, "I have his teeth nearly as much as he has himself. They are worth only about $40 for the gold that is in them but whenever he has a bit of hard luck he comes in and hocks them. As soon as he wins he takes them out, but one night he came in, there was a big chicken dinner on, and begged me to lend him his teeth so that he could go and eat. I took a chance and he had them back first thing the next morning."

* * *

Seasonal gifts undoubtedly should be those most appreciated, and one plump young matron who takes the Fulton car to ride home was the recipient of seven boxes of cigars among her many Christmas remembrances. Feminine cigarette smokers in public have evoked storms of protest, but here is a home-body sort of woman who is a devotee of Lady Nicotine in one of its most wholesome forms. Those who are fortunate enough to be included on her calling list state that it is a treat to see the delight she takes in her after-dinner smoke, but always in her own home. Hubby, a popular business man with a host of friends, never touches tobacco so the picture of the fireplace with twin ash trays fades out as Wifie does the smoking for this family.

* * *

"Off to 'Hot Furnace' for a couple of weeks," the tourist told some friends as he cranked up his car, and then at their vague looks he explained.

"Yes, 'Hot Furnace' is the place and you all know it well enough as California. California was named by the Spaniards 'Caliente Fornalia,' which translated means hot furnace, in allusion to the climate. And Oregon! I was taught in school that your state was also named by the Spanish explorers, "Oregano," their name for wild marjoram which grew abundantly along the cost."

* * *

Spring weather in the middle west has nothing on Oregon's winter in the estimation of a former resident of the Gopher state who is spending her first year in Portland. This week she picked roses out of doors—some novelty for one accustomed to a sub-zero climate at this period of the year. And this floral bouquet is now being pressed between the leaves of the family cook-book prior to making the trip to Minnesota in confirmation of the story of a country where the climate is a perpetual spring.

* * *

Two vets in the Legion clubrooms in conversation, the tercentenary of the Pilgrims being prominent in the press.

"Did your folks come over on the Mayflower?" queried the first vet.

"Naw, we came on the Metagama, crowded to the guards; regular old cattle boat." THE SCOUT.

WAR'S AFTERMATH.

Still the wounds of war are bleeding,
Tears are flowing, yet unstanched;
Voiceless lips and hearts are pleading,
Faces yet with woe are blanched.

Still the wounds of war are bleeding,
Yet the world, on pleasure bent;
Passes out-stretched hands, unheeding;
Scorns the lives, for freedom lent.

Yet the wounds of war are bleeding,
Yet the prayers of war arise
To the One, who, interceding,
Pleads with love that never dies.

Give! and with your gift, bestowing
Love, to ease another's pain;
Measure, full and over-flowing,
He will give to you again.
—MARY ALETHEA WOODWARD.

Normal Value of Foreign Coins.

PORTLAND, Dec. 28.—(To the Editor.)—What is the normal exchange value of the Canadian dollar, also the German, Polish and Austria-Hungarian marks? SUBSCRIBER.

The rate of exchange prior to the war was virtually stabilized as follows: Canadian dollar, $1; German mark, 23.8 cents; Austria-Hungarian crown, 20.3 cents. Polish coins have come in since the war.

Those Who Come and Go.

While other victims of Morris Bros., Inc., failure were having a pow-wow at the courthouse to plan for salvaging as much as possible of their savings from the wreck, James S. Stewart, Oregon's premier road booster, who got caught in the smash to the tune of $2000, was attending a meeting of the State Chamber of Commerce. He said he did not want to run the risk of losing an opportunity, should the same present itself, of slipping through a resolution for more state highways and more money to build them. Referring to his personal loss, through the defalcation of the president of the bond house, Mr. Stewart said it might be, after all, a blessing in disguise, as he had planned to buy a flivver for his family in the spring, and now the family will probably have to hoof it for a year or two longer, thereby effecting quite a saving in gas, tires and other costs of operation, besides giving the main highways a chance to get paved before he can use them. Mr. Stewart is one of those 18K optimists who always see the silver lining shining brightly through the darkest cloud. But if Jim's friend, Harry Lauder, ever hears of the Stewart loss Jim can never excuse his lack of canniness with the "inner-rim" certificates.

"Cattlemen have been after me, since I arrived in Portland this morning, to do something to get after packers," says H. J. Overturf, representative for Deschutes, Jefferson, Crook, Klamath and Lake counties, who arrived in town yesterday from Bend. "I don't know what can be done, for I doubt if economic evils can be cured overnight by an act of the legislature. However, something may be accomplished to aid the cattlemen. One thing is certain, the cattle business in Oregon will have to be assisted in some manner or it will disappear from the state. You don't hear of retail butchers going broke, and from the prices consumers are paying for meat they do not suspect that the producers are up against it. Cattle men are being forced to quit the game and the industry is facing a big loss in Oregon. Some cattlemen think that the way to handle the situation is to get after the packers. Another thing is certain: stockmen are determined to be heard at the legislature, and maybe they will have some plan to propose which can be worked out." Mr. Overturf says that one gawmill in Bend has shut down and the other is working only one shift and they may be laid off after the first of the year.

The only member of the state senate who lives on the John Day highway, considered the third most important traffic artery in Oregon, is O. B. Robertson, of Condon, who is in the city on business. Because of this geographic position, Senator Robertson will be a member of the senate committee on roads and highways, of which Senator Hall, of Coos and Curry counties, will be chairman. While the state highway commission has made a good start on grading the John Day highway, and has already finished grading many miles of this thoroughfare, there is still much to be done. In the coming year the commission will probably see fit to let contracts for grading between Condon and Arlington, where the John Day highway connects with the Columbia river highway, and the commission is also expected to put under contract sections of the John Day highway in the eastern end of the state. There are many places where the highway has not yet been located.

"In the northern part of Lane county our school population has dropped off, but in the southern part it shows a substantial increase," says Charles E. Oliver, school superintendent, who arrived from Lakeview yesterday to participate in the teachers' conference at the Multnomah today. "The homesteaders in the northern section of our county have pulled up and left. They couldn't make a living on land that was just level and had nothing else to recommend it." Mr. Oliver states that the snow has made its appearance in his end of the state and that it was a foot deep when he left and was worse than that in the drifts. The state declines to take him across country to Bend, so he came out by the more circuitous route of the railroad.

Irrigation around Payette, Idaho, has made that section wonderfully productive and has not only resulted in producing trainloads of foodstuffs but has also had the result of making otherwise worthless land very valuable for taxation. Land which was scarcely worth looking at a few years ago is now under cultivation and is commanding $400 an acre, according to A. J. Berry, of Payette, at the Multnomah.

Will G. Steel, sometime of Portland, and of Crater Lake and of Medford, is registered at the Perkins from Eugene. Mr. Steel has probably done more than any other one man to make known the beauties of Crater lake to the world. It was to find the lake in the mountain top that he came to Oregon as a boy and he had lived here many years before he found anyone who could give him information as to its location.

According to L. E. Maxham, of Baker, at the Multnomah, if there should be a fire in the lobby of that hotel someone would have to send for the forest department to fight the flames. The lobby is encrusted with Douglas fir, more than half a hundred of the trees being used in giving the lobby a holiday appearance. There is also an immense Christmas tree, brilliantly illuminated.

One of the big hay ranches in the Brogan section is owned by Clarence Oxman, who is in Portland to see about a hay deal, wherein he sold hay to cattle feeders. Some idea of the extent of Mr. Oxman's hay operations may be gained from the report that he raises about 1000 tons.

When George Iverson registers at the Multnomah he puts after his name: "Medford, the capital of southern Oregon." Mr. Iverson says that Medford is jumping to the front faster than any other community in the state, and that it will be a great commercial center in time to come.

The oil business in Wyoming is getting along swimmingly and the wells are bringing millions of dollars into the state, according to John Snosgrove, who is at the Multnomah from the town of Rock Springs.

H. M. DuBois and A. C. Hampton of LaGrande are at the Hotel Portland. They are here to participate in the teachers' convention, which opens its sessions today.

Maker of grape juice, M. H. Church of Kennewick, Wash., is at the Perkins. He says there is a constantly increasing demand for grape juice.

Martin King of Kamela, Or., locomotive engineer, is spending the holiday season at the Hotel Portland.

Jay W. Dunn, one of the commissioners of Lincoln county, is an arrival at the Imperial.

Mr. and Mrs. Lee Joyce of Kerry, Or., are at the Perkins. Mr. Joyce is a merchant.

HOW BOTULINUS GERM ATTACKS

Toxins Generated Which Can Be Destroyed by Heating Canned Foods.

RIDGEFIELD, Wash., Dec. 27.—(To the Editor.)—In The Oregonian, December 20, there appeared an article announcing the discovery of the source of the germ which has caused many deaths from the eating of infected olives.

The discoverer, Dr. Geiger, surgeon in the United States health service, warns against home canning on the ground that the home canner is unable properly to sterilize the fruit or vegetables as the germs are able to resist 230 degrees of heat for 30 minutes. He also announces that the germs, which come from the ground, have been found on fresh fruit, vegetables and fish. He says fresh vegetables may be cleansed by washing in clear water.

Being a home canner and not wishing to "kill off" my family with poisonous food I will appreciate it greatly if you can make the following points clear:

1. If washing in clear water will cleanse fresh vegetables so they are safe for ordinary cooking, why will not the same process do as much for the vegetables to be canned?

2. If the germs can resist such extreme temperature for 30 minutes, what good will it do to boil food an additional 10 minutes upon taking from the can or jar? I use a reliable thermometer in much of my canning and I know it is hard to bring the temperature up to 220 degrees in 10 minutes.

3. How many authentic cases of death from home canned vegetables are on record?

4. How many of the 163 known cases of botulism in California came from home canned vegetables or olives?

5. How much of the $50,000 raised by the national canners' association was used to trace the source of the germs and how much to spread fear of home canned food among the housewives of America?

Evidently the United States government did its work too well when it taught the women of America to can all kinds of food successfully.
ADA C. CLEMENT.

The botulinus germ itself is not harmful but it manufactures a poison which is exceedingly deadly. Heat of ordinary cooking will kill the poison, but not the germ. Hence the caution to cook canned food, in which the botulinus germ may have survived and may have generated more poison while the food product has remained in the can, the purpose of this cooking being to destroy, not the germ, but the poison itself.

Precise statistics of deaths from home and other canning products have not been collected, nor can it be stated with accuracy what disposition has been made of any funds raised by canners. The deadly character of botulinus poison, however, is so real as to warrant suitable precautions. One of the chief of these is to destroy all food having a suspicious odor, particularly an odor suggestive of old butter or musty cheese. On no account ought this even to be tasted without first being subjected to heat sufficient to kill the poison, if not the germ itself. An authority on food chemistry says that though the poison is extremely dangerous, "the germs themselves are relatively harmless even when taken into the body, and that the poison is rarely produced at the body temperature of warm-blooded animals."

No one has advocated cessation of home canning; simply the same precautions are urged in use of home-canned vegetables as is observed in use of those commercially canned.

WOMAN'S PART IN ERA'S UNREST

Writer Traces Part of Turmoil to Wives Needlessly Employed.

PORTLAND, Dec. 28.—(To the Editor.)—Nearly all of the hundreds of married women now holding young men's jobs do not have to work out and neglect their homes as they do, for most of them have husbands holding positions paying from $150 to $300 per month, who ought to be ashamed to let their wives usurp and hold the places of men who must work or starve. In all of the hundreds of positions in the city, for which as many young men are fitted, it can be safely said that 10 women can be found there to one man, and it is a well-known fact that only about 25 per cent of these women and girls really need the work.

Many of them disdain any thoughts of home service, and look with scorn upon the idea of learning the art of home making, especially the younger women. We are strongly in favor of rendering every deserving woman, young or old, due respect, every consideration and assistance, under all conditions and circumstances, but not like some short-sighted sentimentalist who would sacrifice every man's vital interest to gratify a woman's fancy or selfishness.

There are many cases similar to the following example: A man living in a rented house, with wife and child, was out of work on account of the closing down of the place where he was employed. He made application for a position with a large paper and supply store, a vacancy having occurred there, he being experienced in that kind of business. But on the day he was to appear he found that a married woman, who had just drifted in from Montana, had secured the job a few moments before, so he is now facing a hard winter, trying to pay rent and support his little family without employment or any prospects.

Since a majority of the young women expend most of their wages in unnecessary ways, and especially on expensive clothing, we are not at all surprised at the great expansion of the trade of the great department stores in the city and the dry goods business everywhere. We notice that one of the large stores in the city has just increased its capital stock by $5,000,000.

Many young men have given up the idea of matrimony entirely, as it would seem impossible for an ordinary man to support or maintain a wife who had contracted the habits and extravagant ideas prevailing among female office and store employes, and in consideration of the fact that in so many cases but a few months intervene between the wedding ceremony and the divorce court.

In considering the matter of the present-day state of unrest and turmoil, many people think that crime is on the increase and are trying to discover the real cause, and seem to attribute it to unemployment. Well, it may be so, for it is a fact that a man must procure that which he must have, by his own efforts. It is not a matter of choice or fancy, as in the case of so many women, but his case is imperative, and if deprived of the opportunity of honestly earning his maintenance, he is often, perhaps, tempted to devise ways and means of obtaining it regardless of the laws of society or the state and the evil consequences.
UNBIASED OBSERVER.

Grass Rope Curbs Spirits.

London Tit Bits.

A singular feature seen in Japan New Year's day is a grass rope running from house to house, with symbolical decorations. It is believed to ward off evil spirits during the year.

More Truth Than Poetry.

By James J. Montague.

CLEARING UP A MYSTERY.

When Yank or Briton nobly serves
his nation,
He gets a welcome at the city hall,
And sundry speeches of congratulation
From dignified officials—that is all.
But when a Frenchman does a deed of glory,
With ululating thousands at his heel
He's dragged, still powder-stained and torn and gory,
Upon the stage at the Hotel de Ville.
And there, some podgy geek
Implants a dozen kisses on each cheek.

And this explains, what you perhaps have wondered,
Why Frenchmen—who are heroes to a man,
And ne'er retreated when the cannon thundered—
Grow long and bristly whiskers—if they can.
These brushes are not worn for pride or pleasure,
By Gallic heroes they would be eschewed,
But they provide the best defensive measure
Against the common form of gratitude.
You'd grow your lilacs, too,
If fat officials started kissing you!

And now that osculation's interdicted, and handshakes substituted over there,
Hirsute adornment's sure to be restricted
To people's heads—if they possess the hair.
All honor to the gallant men who wore 'em,
For kisses were the heroes' certain lot,
So every Frenchman had a reason for 'em
Which those who wear 'em over here have not.
Why gents let whiskers sprout
This side the sea is what we can't find out.

* * *

We Knew That Long Ago.

The market expert who tells us that feathers are down must have been browsing through the dictionary.

* * *

The Greater Need.

We learn that alcohol can be made from gasoline, but if the converse were true it would help more.

* * *

Natural Indignation.

It does not surprise us that U. S. senators are indignant because they have been denied the right to send free telegrams. They remember the days when they used to frank cows and pianos through the mails.

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John Burroughs' Nature Notes.

Can You Answer These Questions?

1. Do blue jays store nuts for winter use?

2. Is buckeernut adaptable for building purposes?

3. Where may the red salamander be found?

Answers in tomorrow's nature notes.

* * *

Answers to Previous Questions.

1. Are there different varieties of the wild field strawberry?

Of the field strawberry there are a great many varieties—some growing in meadows, some in pastures and some upon mountain tops. Some are round and stick close to the calyx or hull; some are long and pointed, with long, tapering necks. These usually grow upon tall stems. Your corpulent berry keeps close to the ground; its stem and foot-stalk are short, and neck it has none.

* * *

2. How does the drumming of the woodpecker vary in sound?

When the woodpecker is searching for food, or laying siege to some hidden grub, the sound of his hammer is dead or muffled, and is heard but a few yards. It is only upon dry, seasoned timber, freed of its bark, that he beats his reveille to spring and woos his mate.

* * *

3. What is the "sweat bee"?

One variety of the solitary bee, with a bright buff abdomen, is called "sweat bee" by the laborers in the field because it alights upon their hands and bare arms when they are sweaty—doubtless in quest of salt. It builds its nest in little cavities in rails and posts.

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Silent Places.

By Grace E. Hall.

God, keep some silent places for us still,
Apart from those where man forever goes,
Some altars lit by sunset on the hill,