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OVERWORKING THE INITIATIVE.

No more, said Burke, is it given to man to tax and to please than to love and to be wise. It is verifiable everywhere, and in all times. Never was contentment associated with any system of taxation be found among men...

There is an abuse they strike at, namely, the prevalent habit of holding land out of use, to avoid growth of its value, through the labor of others and through the progress of the state, at the same time avoiding as far as possible taxes upon its advancing values. But this is an abuse that might be abated, or greatly reduced, without radical change of the tax system.

By far the greater part of the burden now falls on land. Practically all the remainder of it, under this system, would be transferred to the land. It is, substantially, the Henry George theory of single tax, actually it is the cry of the landless for imposition of all the burdens of taxation on the land-owners.

"The Constitution as it is" contains a proper mandate on the subject of assessment and taxation; and it is supported by as clear and positive and just statutes as can be made. All that is necessary is fair enforcement of these plain provisions; and enforcement is absolutely in the hands of the people, who elect at frequent intervals their Assessors and County Boards.

Moreover, it is perfectly practicable to put up the taxes on outlying and unimproved lands, and thus remove the abuse which is the main basis of the complaint that leads to this call for change of the Constitution. Under any system, so much money must be raised for the needs of the state, if the tax is to be removed from the farmer's improvements, machinery and products, it will necessarily be added to the tax on his land; and if you exempt manufacturing establishments, still more money will be added, will reappear in rents and in

costs of doing business, which in large degree must still be paid by labor, through prices charged to consumers. In all probability the proposed change, instead of giving relief to labor, would place it at further disadvantage.

Finally, what better method or principle of taxation than this, that all taxes shall be equal and uniform? Such now is the Constitution, such now is the statute. The only trouble has been that the rule has not been always enforced. But it can be enforced; and every one sees that great credit to this direction has been made in Oregon within recent years.

We have just closed a week notable chiefly for its various and extraordinary legal decisions. Judge Hanna, of the Circuit Court for Jackson County, adds his portion to the astonishing record by denying a Southern Oregon editor the right to plead the truth in a case for criminal libel.

There would seem to be no way of avoiding the plain meaning of the law. Judge Hanna seems to have found a way. The Oregonian doesn't know much about the merits of the statutes passed by the Medford editor. Very likely they were not warranted. But the Oregonian does know—if the reports from Jacksonville as to the procedure in Judge Hanna's court are correct—that there has been here a most surprising invasion of the liberty of the press and an unjustified denial of Putnam's elementary rights before the law as a citizen.

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would by a strict interpretation be so meaningless as to be almost humorous. What the 157 patriots of the Douma have really lost is the right to speak or write on any topic which in any manner affects the government.

The autocracy and its puppet czar have thus silenced quite a number of their critics without the customary official murders which in the past have been relied on to quell expressions of public opinion which were not in accord with the ideas of the czar. And yet it is questionable whether the czar can make a success of this new form of official leniency.

Nicholas, like his predecessors, has "lived by the sword," and the blood of thousands is on his hands. He has seen brave men and fair young girls, tortured and murdered in the cause of liberty. He has silenced their voices and removed their mortal presence, but he has left behind him a silence of the departed martyrs speaks more eloquently than the voices that are stifled forever.

A false, feeble, perjured Frank Bleigh. He must wear his next title of the dubious character of his engagement pledges so that she can deliver her affections on the installment plan. Thus a harmony of interest will be achieved which is clearly impossible when the lady bestows her heart without reserve while the diamond which she binds remains to be partially paid for.

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strength of the temperance movement in a quarter never suspected by the Murphys and Dows who devoted their lives to the cause, but who scorned to look beyond the moral or religious aspect of the case. Indiscriminate drinking not only prevents good work, but it leads to crime, and crime is expensive both for the criminal and for the community.

The Keeley "Jag Cure" emerges from the United States Circuit Court of Appeals with a bad reputation. We dare say that Dr. Keeley—if he lives—now bewails the day that he fully that first led him to wander from the peaceful Euclyptian shades of his "laboratory" and trust his unwary fortunes to the incalculable chances of the law.

A monster named Hargreaves was the ingrate. Dr. Keeley had warned the viper in his bosom, and it repaid the debt by striking him with its vipers. Having learned the mysteries of the "Gold Cure" from the great mother laboratory at Dwight, under the esoteric ministrations of the awful Keeley, away skipped Hargreaves to Memphis and set up a rival laboratory of his own.

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loss of brave New York firemen in a building twelve stories high once more demonstrates the necessity for strictest regulation by municipal authority in the matter of skyscrapers. Every building more than four stories high should be fireproof—not in the plans alone, but also in the construction. Present fire apparatus is too feeble to cope with structures rising a hundred feet or more in the air.

The mohair industry of the Willamette Valley will be exploited at Dallas, Polk County, by an Angora goat show January 15-17. The growth of this industry has steadily advanced since its first introduction, scarcely a dozen years ago, until it has attained substantial proportions. The exhibit

in the country. This fact was pleaded to the court by one of the lawyers, but the judge replied that "they could not take such a point as that into judicial consideration." Charming naïveté on the part of the court, was it not? The only consideration in the case was a piece of abstract logic, an elegant syllogism, concerning the practical consequences of their decision the judges knew nothing and cared nothing.

A TYPICAL RECEIVERSHIP. In June, 1906, that is, about eight years ago, the Republic Savings & Loan Association, of Brooklyn, passed into the hands of receivers. At that time the state banking department estimated the assets of the concern at \$288,000. This receiver valued them at \$94,000. Since then it has been managed by the receivers and their lawyers, presumably in the interest of the investors, and the result is astonishing. Upon the million dollars of assets only \$275,000 has been realized, and of this sum all but \$30,000 has gone for expenses, legal, clerical and other. It would appear from this result that a receivership may be a pretty costly piece of business for the investors in an insolvent concern; but the lawyers have no ground for complaint, so far as one can observe.

The beauty of the affair lies in the fact that it is typical. Eastern papers say that it costs upon the average 39 cents to collect one dollar under a receivership in that state. Persons familiar with the subject will probably agree that it costs about the same elsewhere. The bulk of the expenses are lawyers' fees. The receiver is an officer of the court, and his hypothetical duty is to close up the business of the insolvent concern as rapidly and cheaply as possible under the court's supervision. This is the theory of the case.

The practice is somewhat different. Actually the receiver does little, while his lawyers do almost everything; and they do it with the maximum of pomp, ceremony, red tape and delay. The principal expense of receiverships arises from payments to lawyers who are hired to keep the receiver from doing anything illegal. It would save at least one salary to make the lawyers themselves the receivers, though the ultimate outcome of this expedient might prove disappointing.

A more satisfactory course would be to appoint a state officer to take charge of insolvent state banks and administer them. Experience might render him so capable in course of time that he could get along with moderately frequent doses of legal advice, and one firm of lawyers might be sufficient, with the admonitions of the court, to keep him on the right track. In this way the creditors of insolvent concerns might escape with less plucking than they now suffer, though receiverships will always be expensive, make the very best of it, and pay him that hath not been taken away even that which he hath. It is the fate of the unlucky to become the prey of the lucky. The expedient of a state official to look after insolvent concerns is much liked by Eastern newspapers and may possibly be adopted in New York. If it were adopted, other states will be likely to follow suit.

THE NEW YORK WORLD'S antipathy to Mr. Bryan has gone to that extreme where it ceases to be funny and becomes pathetic. One is constrained by the perusal of some of the recent lucubrations of the great metropolitan party rebel to wonder what it would do were Mr. Bryan actually to be elected President of the United States. Would it be as much enraged as it now thinks it would be? Or would it discover in Mr. Bryan, the President, charms and graces which it fails to discern in Mr. Bryan the perennial candidate?

This question is no mere academic speculation. If there is a Democratic President within the next decade or two it will be Mr. Bryan and not John Johnson, of Minnesota, as the World so fondly hopes. Mr. Johnson is a good man, an excellent man, but the Democratic convention will not nominate him in spite of all the flattery and the flattery which it professes and which the World displays in a double-column editorial, the delectable young charms of Mr. Johnson are to the longing imagination of the World like daisies and buttercups in a riverside pasture to a Jersey cow; but the Democratic ass discerns no sweetness in daisies and buttercups; that seasoned animal prefers a well-cured hay which Mr. Bryan professes.

Mr. Bryan's hay is no so substantial as alfalfa. It lacks many of the staying qualities of timothy. Indeed it is no more nutritious, perhaps, than the hay of the sloughs, which an animal may chew upon all day and still be hungry. But for the Democrats, used as they are to feeding upon the east wind, it suffices. They prefer it to anything more luscious for fear of colic.

The World makes much of Johnson's luck in carrying Minnesota, which is a Republican state, but it is not safe to bank very heavily upon this feat. He carried Minnesota upon local issues. Upon these issues the voters ignored party ties, which in a National election they would remember. As Democratic candidate for President Mr. Johnson might carry Minnesota, and he might not. His extraordinary success in the gubernatorial race affords no grounds whatever for making predictions as to the Presidential contest, which is a different matter altogether and will be fought out on different issues.

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ODDITIES OF VERSE

The Siege of Belgrade. An Austrian army, awfully arrayed, Boldly by battery, besieged Belgrade; Cossack commanders cannonading came, Dealing destruction's devastating doom; Ever endeavor engineers essay, For fairs for fortune-fighting furious fray.

Some time ago the California apple-growers were very much alarmed because the Federal authorities threatened to forbid the use of sulphur in bleaching dried apples and other fruits, their fear being that their trade would be ruined by the rigid enforcement of the pure-food law. At the time The Oregonian ventured the opinion that the growers were needlessly concerned and that they would either find a way to cure their fruit without bleaching or the consumer would learn to use it unbleached. Now comes Chief Clerk Wiley, of the Department of Agriculture, with the announcement that apples can be dried with steam heat, after being subjected to a steam bath, and that when thus cured not only is all insect life destroyed, but the fruit needs no bleaching. He remarks that if they adopt this method the California growers can advertise to the customers that no sulphur is used in curing their fruits.

An ex-diplomat says that a very large majority of the disagreements and separations between American wives and their European husbands have their origin in the determination of each to adhere to the customs of the land of nativity. Except in the case of American women who have married titled rakes, he says the trouble arises from the most insignificant incidents. For example, one American girl insisted upon having a "square meal" each in the morning, while her English husband adhered to his custom of taking a cup of coffee and a roll in bed at 10 o'clock. If this is all the cause for disruption in the foreign homes of American girls, the ex-diplomat should be able to render his country good service by establishing a correspondence school of domestic diplomacy.

Comparatively few men are rich enough to endow colleges. There are in every city, however, men with wealth enough to enable them to offer suitable prizes for superior work in the public schools. The offering of a prize serves as a stimulus and aids in maintaining interest. Prizes need not be large, but should be numerous enough so that a large number of pupils may have a hope of winning. Comparatively few children go to college. In the grammar school or high school they complete their study of books, and it is there the greatest good can be done by encouraging persistent effort.

The cotton mills at New Bedford, Mass., paid dividends in 1907 to the amount of \$2,578,000, or nearly 14 per cent on the capital stock. Quite likely the capital stock was made up in part of water. However that may be, the stockholders who received this dividend and the employes who earned wages in the mills are not likely to listen with much credence to the assertion that the Roosevelt administration has crippled industry. A net profit of 14 per cent after all operating and repairing expenses have been paid would look good even to an Oregon farmer.

There is strong probability that Governor Hughes will seize an opportunity next month to advance his political fortunes. The occasion is a banquet by the Union League Club of New York in Washington's birthday where he will be the principal speaker. It is expected that on this visit—his first invasion of the West since he became prominent in the Presidential race—he will speak with precision on a number of National issues. Those who oppose as well as those who support him are guaranteed to be effective in maintaining political fences; there should be no trouble in getting the Senators and Congressmen to vote for a heavy appropriation for publication of a thousand editions of the pamphlet, each edition to consist of one copy for each legal voter in the country.

In various parts of the world there are those who are so sure we shall have war with Japan that calculations are offered on the chances of our war fleet getting into the Pacific Ocean in time. But how, if Japan shall send her war fleet into the Atlantic? Shall we bear the storm, presented from our affrighted Eastern cities, which never were willing for the war fleet to leave them?

Anybody can invoke the Initiative in Oregon. That sounds like treason to U'Ren, but anybody can do it. Here is a mistake that we may expect Mr. U'Ren to repair by giving us a law that there shall be no law unless it bears the U'Ren O. K.

The debt of the City of New York is \$604,487,913. It is about 10 per cent of the valuation of the real estate of the city. The burden of such a debt tries the resources of the metropolis severely; and yet the debt is to be further increased.

A dispatch from Tacoma tells of the death in that city of an old man who expired for joy at meeting old friends from whom he had long been separated. Strangely enough, this death is spoken of as a "sad" one.

Why was your warfare? Wherefore were you come? Xerxes, Ximenes, Xanthus, Xaviera? Yield; ye youths! ye yeomen, yield your yell! Zeno's Zephyrus, Zoroaster's zeal, And all attracting—arms against acts appeal.

Oliver's Impromptu. Oliver, a sailor and patriot, with a merited reputation for extensive rhymer, was on a visit to his cousin Benedict Arnold, after the war, was asked by the latter to amuse a party of English officers with some extemporaneous effusion, whereupon he stood up and repeated the following. Ernie's name, which would have satisfied Dr. Slop himself: Born for a curse to virtue and mankind, Earth's broadest realm ne'er knew so vile a being as mine; Night's sable veil your crimes can never hide, Each one so great, 'twould glut his torrid tide, Defun' your surest memory will live In all the glare that infancy can give, Curser of ages will attend your name, Traitors alone will glory in your shame, Almight' vengeance sternly waits to roll Rivers of sulphur on your treacherous soul; Nature looks shuddering back with conscious dread On such a tarnished blot as she has made, Let him receive you, riveted in chains, Doomed to the hottest focus of its flames.

Young lady newly married, being obliged to show to her husband all the letters she wrote, sent the following to an intimate friend. The key is, to read the first and then every alternate line only. I cannot be satisfied, my dearest friend! blest as I am in the matrimonial state, — unless I pour into your friendly bosom, which has ever been in unison with mine, — the warm sensations which swell with the liveliest emotion of pleasure — my almost bursting heart. I tell you my dear husband is the most amiable of men, — I have now been married seven weeks, and never have found the least reason to — repent the day that I joined you. My husband is both in person and manners far from resembling — ugly, cross, old, disagreeable, and — monsters, who think by continuing to — secure — a wife, it is his maxim to treat as a bosom friend and confidant, and not — playing, or mental slave, the woman chosen to be his companion. Neither — he says should always obey implicitly; but each yield to the other by turns. — An ancient maiden aunt, near seventy, a cheerful, venerable, and pleasant old lady. — lives in the house with us; she is the light of both young and old; she is civil to all the neighborhood round, generous and charitable to the poor. — I am convinced my husband loves me nothing more than his own wife, he flatters me more than a glass; and his intoxication (for so I must call the excess of his love) — often makes me blush for the unbecoming words which he utters of his object, and wish I could be more deserving. — of the man whose name I bear. To say all in one word, my dear, and to — crown the whole — my former gallant lover is now my indulgent husband; my husband's name is — I returned, and I might have had a prince without the felicity I find in — him. Adieu! may you be blest as I am in — able to wish that I could be more — happy.

Names and Order of the Books of the Old Testament: The Great Jehovah speaks to us in Genesis and Exodus; Leviticus and Numbers see Followed by Deuteronomy, Joshua and Judges away the land, Ruth glean a sheaf with trembling hand; Samson and Delilah, King's repent, Whose Chronicles we wondering hear, Ezra and Nehemiah, now, Esther the beautiful mourner show, Job speaks in sighs, David in Psalms, The Proverbs teach to scatter aims; Ecclesiastes then comes on, And the sweet Song of Solomon, Isaiah's prophecies, Nahum come, With Lamantations takes his pen, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea's lyes Sweil Joel, Amos, Obadiah's, New Testament, Matthew come, And lo! Habakkuk finds room — While Zephaniah, Hagai calls, Wrapt Zachariah builds his walls; Isaiah's prophecies, Nahum come, Concludes the ancient Testament. Names and order of the Books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, wrote the life of their Lord; The Acts, what Apostles accomplished, record; Rome, north Galatia, Ephesus, hear What Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians reverse; Timothy, Titus, Philemon, precede, The Epistle which Hebrews most gratefully reads; James, Peter, and John, with the short letter Jude, The rounds of Divine Revelation con-