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PORTLAND, SUNDAY, FEB. 21, 1909.

A SIMPLE PRELUDE.

There is to be a fight in this state on the proposition of total abolition or destruction of all the muniments of the old constitution. The proposed "amendment," for state construction and ownership of railroads, is a socialistic scheme, which would completely annul the constitution and abolish it altogether. It is completely socialistic; for if the state is to construct and to operate railroads, it may undertake everything else. It is an introduction of the socialistic plan of control by the state of all the means and instruments of production and distribution. This is the end and aim of socialism. One step will surely lead to another—and that to another. Every socialistic enthusiast is delighted with such hopeful introduction and prospect.

Mr. Selling, Senator for Multnomah, not only voted for this proposition, but quoted others—saying that "wealthy and brainy men from Multnomah had come to Salem, showing that it was wanted." These men are exceedingly shallow. Not so would their fathers have done—including the father of Mr. Selling. The father of Mr. Selling would not have dodged his representative responsibility, by the subterfuge of "passing the question up to the people." Nor did our "wealthy and brainy men" well consider what they were about;—they will be compelled, before this is over, to recede from their position, for protection of themselves as well as for protection of the state. They are unchaining the tiger and don't yet know it. Governor Chamberlain has sent to the Legislature a message in urgent support of the folly. Governor and Senator Chamberlain is merely a bubble, cast up amid the froth and foam—lapped by the tide in its ebb and flow. He studies the variable and changeful moods of that portion of the people with whom an opportunist demagogy may prevail. His goal is personal success. He has no sense whatever of responsibility to higher principles that must guide a state, or to fundamental principles that must lie at the bottom of the state. The only principle that he possesses is that of a sentimental and reminiscent devotion to the lost cause that was represented by the Confederate States, of which his native state was one. This makes him a nominal Democrat, and as such enables him to command always the Democratic party vote. Supported by this, he makes excursions for additional support into these socialistic fields.

The Mephistopheles of this business is J. N. Teal. He is an industrious man, an innovator, with no knowledge of the past and therefore no conception of the future. His object is notoriety. He has no talent or ability to make himself felt in any other way; and having little business of his own, he is ambitious to interfere with that of the state, and with that of the general body of his neighbors. He it was who led that delegation to Salem, for support of a policy that, if carried out, would strip every one of them of all they possess. This might be tolerated, if it didn't wreck the whole state with them. When Mr. Teal lost his position in the Harriman service he turned general agitator and promoter, but has risked very little of the estate with which he is understood to have connected himself by a lucky marriage.

The people of Oregon will turn down these shallow sophisters and socialists; and The Oregonian, to the extent of its ability and energy, will help them and cast in its lot with theirs. Its appeal will go to every man and to every woman in the state who has property and business and true sense of the sphere and function of the state; who believes in an independent citizenship, wishes to avert the curse of public ownership, and desires to maintain a true democratic-republican state, instead of a socialistic travesty of a state, wherein personal independence and private property will disappear.

For a beginning, this statement is sufficient. It is a simple prelude to a considerable body of plain talk on this subject by The Oregonian, between this present now and November, 1910.

THE PUBLIC'S INTEREST.

The Portland gateway case seems to be developing into a serious matter for the railroads. The testimony introduced at the hearing before the Interstate Commerce Commission in Chicago makes some interesting disclosures of precedents established by the Harriman lines, by which the Hill lines might be perfectly justified in refusing to open their roads for long-haul traffic over the Harriman system. This testimony further reveals an unusual degree of similarity in the policy of the rival lines toward each other. This policy, unfortunately perhaps for all concerned, has failed to consider the convenience of the patrons of the roads. It seems perfectly clear from this testimony that, if a traveler desired to make a round trip in Hill or Harriman mutual territory, the respective roads would place all obstacles in the way of his returning over the rival road.

The particular case which seems to have forced this matter to an issue is one in which Portland would derive some benefit by a victory of the Harriman forces; but, regardless of any advantages which might result, there seems to be a much greater principle involved than appears on the surface. That principle is the right of the people to demand some consideration in a policy which so vitally concerns the public as well as the railroads. No longer ago than Wednesday Mr. E. H. Harriman, in an authorized interview on the general railroad situation, said:

> Don't let me give you the impression that the railroads are entirely free from blame. I think they are in a measure responsible for the row raised recently. That is what inclines me to the belief that there is strong need of more co-operation between railroads and the people and through them with the lawmakers.

Mr. Harriman probably did not have the Portland gateway case in mind at the time he expressed his sentiments as reported, but he brought out the point which railroad managers in the past have either intentionally or unintentionally overlooked. In the present case we have two public-service corporations serving the same territory. They are permitted to charge rates which are presumably remunerative, and in return for these charges are expected to give the public the best service possible in the territory concerned. One of these roads, in its efforts to retain the greatest possible amount of traffic on its own rails, is accused of, and has practically pleaded guilty to, the charge of placing obstructions in the pathway of its competitor. Accused of the obstructive policy, the offending road sets up the plea that the complainant in some other part of the country, where the two lines operate in mutual territory, is following exactly the same obstructive tactics. It does not appear to have occurred to either of these lines that the person who really suffers by this unnecessary turmoil is the humble passenger who pays the bill, and who, by reason of the squabble, is put to unnecessary trouble and expense.

Mr. Harriman is right; the railroads are not "entirely free from blame," and he is also right in his belief that "there is strong need for more co-operation between railroads and the people and through them with the lawmakers." If the railroads were a little more considerate of the rights and conveniences of the people, there would be a material lessening of the anti-railroad sentiment, which is rather pronounced. Every west-bound traveler who has his route disarranged and is put to unnecessary trouble in rechecking his baggage at Portland will have anything but a friendly feeling for the road that is causing him all the trouble.

ORATORY.

In his Commoner Mr. Bryan has an article on "Lincoln as an Orator." But Lincoln wasn't an orator at all. He had no tricks of speech. He simply "talked right on." But when he spoke he said something. Now Bryan is an orator. He engages the attention of all—or most—who hear him. But he never says anything.

Oratory is not for the reflective but for the emotional mind. The greatest orator, therefore, is the best actor. It doesn't matter what he says. It's his way of saying it. The close thinker, the deep thinker, can't be an orator at all. His audience can't follow him.

It was publication of Lincoln's speeches that made his fame. Reading his speeches, people admired the closeness of his statement and the force of his reasoning. But merely as an orator he was inferior, infinitely, to Douglas. Hence Douglas carried the crowd and was elected to the Senate over Lincoln.

Before a general or miscellaneous audience Lincoln would have no chance at all against an easy, confident, claptrap talker, like Bryan. An audience must be entertained. It will not listen when required to think. For, as Shakespeare says, "action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant more learned than their ears."

DISHONEST STREET CONTRACTORS.

The generally accepted opinion in regard to street work is that property owners are forced to accept such service as is given by contractors in material used, the kind of work performed and the time taken in its performance, regardless of specifications in all of these lines by which they are supposed to be bound. In the language used by contractors to protesting property owners, they have "the city back of them," meaning, of course, the city engineer's office, and, as everybody knows, the city "needs money." That this is an exaggerated opinion based upon the supposed helplessness of the individual taxpayer, has been frequently shown in recent years by the united and successful resistance of a number of taxpayers to the demand for pay for work obviously, and sometimes notoriously lacking in vital points affecting its durability.

A case in point occupied the attention of the State Circuit Court in this city during several days of a recent week in which a number of property owners on East Burnside street stood together, resisting payment for an improvement of that street as made in 1902. The protestants were anxious with others, to have the street graded and macadamized at that time. Many of them had suffered from a plank improvement of that thoroughfare a few years before, and were anxious for a durable improvement, as street paving goes and were willing to pay adequately for such an improvement.

It was specified in the contract under which the work was undertaken that no rock larger than four inches in its greatest diameter should be used in the first course laid after the street had been brought to the proper grade, and that the top dressing should be of screened gravel properly packed and rolled. It soon became apparent that "four inches in diamter" for rock of the first course was being stretched to six, eight, ten and twelve inches—tons of such rock being mixed with smaller rock and deposited on the street. Remonstrance on the part of some of the property owners affected was disregarded and in due time the fraudulent foundation was covered to a depth of several inches with a mixture of loose earth, gravel and soft chipped or broken rock.

To make a compact, durable surface of this by rolling or any other process was of course impossible. Fall rains came on and the street was soon a quagmire with large rocks protruding here and there through the surface of the muddy pool. Summer came and the top dressing of the street literally "went into the air" in clouds of dust except as it was wet down by street-sprinklers, scraped into piles and hauled away in the city's dump carts.

In the meantime those who had resisted payment had had their day in court and upon some technicality were defeated. Appeal to the Supreme Court followed and the case was remanded for rehearing. Disagreement of the jury followed in this instance. The protestants rested, and lately, they were called upon to pay up or resist re-assessment. They chose the latter course and after a stubborn trial, in which, as at previous trials, many large rocks taken from the street when it was opened shortly after the work was finished, by the Water Company for the purpose of laying a main, were in evidence, and a number of property owners on the street, besides the contestants, had testified as to the nature of the improvement, the jury after many hours of deliberation compromised upon a verdict which ordered the property owners to pay twenty per cent of the original assessment, thus throwing off eighty per cent for defects in material and construction.

Individual interests in this case were small—insignificant indeed—as compared with the public interests involved. The result shows that if property owners will stand together to resist the imposition of first-class pay for inferior material used, in violation of contracts on street work, and present their case strongly and truthfully before an open-minded Judge, and intelligent jury they will not have to submit to palpable fraud under the name of street improvement. Whether it acts as a warning to fraudulently disposed contractors against juggling with specifications, or encourages property owners to resist payment made for fraudulent work in full confidence that they will get justice in the end by appeal to the courts and jury, this legal battle and its outcome will prove valuable as an object-lesson.

While the city, on the part of the contractors, feels that it was not utterly vanquished, the property owners in this case feel that they won a substantial victory since they are generally willing to admit that the work was perhaps worth one-fifth of the sum that was claimed for it, having served as a makeshift for traffic nearly seven years. A petition for the substantial improvement of this prominent thoroughfare will doubtless soon follow this decision, and it is safe to assume that the work will be done the next time with due regard to the specifications.

THE MORALS OF THE STAGE.

Persons who feel the burden of public morality upon their souls seem to be at their wits' ends for some way of purifying the stage. They confess that the theater is growing worse and worse every day. Plays which were deemed something dreadful ten years ago are now received as models of propriety, while the ones which scandalize us granting that we are ever really scandalized, are frankly indecent. How far is this to go? The president of the Theatrical Managers' Association in New York thinks it has gone far enough already, and would put a stop to its baleful progress by appointing a censor of the stage.

The censor is an ancient expedient. He has been tried and abandoned in almost every country in the civilized world. It is pretty commonly agreed by those who know anything about the history of the stage that no censor ever helped its morality an atom, while in his various embodiments he has done incalculable injury to dramatic art. A stage censor must either follow his own taste in licensing plays or he must follow the taste of some clique or faction. If he follows his own taste, then we have the lovely spectacle of one great domain of literary art subjected to the gross prejudices of a politician, for the man who rises to the censorship is always a politician, and one of the dullest sort, since no decent man wishes such a position, and no intelligent man feels competent to fill it. If the censor obeys a clique his decisions are inevitably as narrow as factional fury.

But there is no profit in discussing the proposal to put the stage under a censorship, because the public is not likely to permit it. The police already exercise as much censorship as the people will tolerate. We may gather from a hint here and there in the discussions that part of the present outcry against the immorality of the stage proceeds from commercial rivalry. One manager puts on a successful play, while his competitor is caught by a failure. What could be more natural than for the unfortunate manager to attack the morality of the other's play? All he needs to do is to define "immoral" as anything different from the tone of his own production and he can rail to his heart's content with no fear of an answer.

There is also a clear tendency among the old-fashioned New York managers to call every play immoral which seeks to do more than merely amuse an audience. Thus Mr. Charles Burnham says in the New York World: "If the play is good it entertains, and that's all clean-minded persons attend performances for." Bad plays therefore are those which try to do something else besides entertaining, and people who attend such plays are not clean-minded in Mr. Burnham's estimation. Evidently he has formed his opinions from a study of his own audiences. It cannot be admitted, however, that he is right or anywhere near right. A great many persons whose minds are as clean as any theater manager's in the world go to see plays which do much more than entertain. There is little mere entertainment in King Lear. It is a severe trial of the emotions to see the play through, yet many persons undergo the ordeal because they find noble exercise of the intelligence in its poetry and moral instruction in its plot.

"You don't go to the theater in the hope that you will gain erudition. One goes to a theater to distract his or her mind and attention from the ordinary troubles of existence and business." Thus saith further the sage Mr. Burnham. Of course he is partly right. Some people go to the theater for distraction pure and simple, but there are others who go not for that purpose, but for high intellectual enjoyment. They do not go when they are tired, but when they are at their best, in order to taste the full excellence of the play. No person wearied with business or anything else could enjoy Ibsen's Ghosts, and for such it was not written. The opinion of far the greater part of the civilized world, both ancient and modern, holds that the stage is a valuable means of education and that the cultivation it offers goes immeasureably beyond the entertainment of tired traders. The New York managers have pretty generally forgotten that the drama is the highest form of literature, and the stage the most effective means of popular education. Others are reminding them of it, however, and they retort the best they can by calling the newer plays immoral and declaring that people who go to the theater to think instead of grin are not clean-minded.

There is no immorality in the discussion of the vital problems of life on the stage. That is what the stage is for. Persons who think it exists merely to make somebody laugh and forget his money troubles are sadly mistaken. For that exalted purpose the vaudeville and dime moving-picture show exist. The true theater has a higher mission. The immorality which does really threaten it is of a character entirely different from what Mr. Burnham and his ilk decry. It is the immorality of indecent spectacles, of lewd dances, of suggestive songs. It is these things which corrupt the theater-goer, and they act upon the mind of the "tired business man" just as strongly as upon the young boy and girl. It may be asserted without the slightest fear of contradiction that no person not already hopelessly degenerate was ever injured morally by any play of Bernard Shaw's, of Ibsen's or of Pinero's. Nor can they be harmed by such a play as "The Easiest Way." Plays which discuss serious subjects earnestly and reverently are not to be feared. It is the amusing, the entertaining play, the one which appeals to the senses and not to the intelligence which contains the deadly poison and instils it into the minds of the audience.

LIBERIA.

An echo from a far-away time of perplexity and anxiety in the world of philanthropy is the word that heads this article. A sign of earnest effort for the elevation of his race long before he was born, the word, carrying, as it has always carried, a plea for aid and comfort, falls from the lips of Booker T. Washington. Now, as ever, it stands for the theory that the negro is, under proper environment, capable of self-government; it represents an effort, now within ten years of a century old, to provide him with this environment.

Facing negro slavery at a period when its abuses cried aloud to humanity for abatement, and the negro problem when there was practically no place in law or ethics for free negroes in the United States, wide-minded, but to an extent visionary philanthropists conceived the scheme of colonization upon the west coast of Africa of such members of the colored race as could be induced to turn their faces toward the land of their ancestors. The United States Government had begun to feel the prick of conscience in regard to its treatment of the negro, and in response to appeal gave countenance and aid to the scheme, and Liberia came into existence.

It has with varying fortunes maintained this existence for nearly a century, making, however, little progress, and, indeed, for the most part forgotten by the great world of civilization, upon the border of which it has struggled for all these years without gaining a secure footing. This is not surprising. As stated by Mr. Washington, the colony was composed at the start of a small band of people just out of slavery in this country, with no experience in government or in managing educational institutions and without responsibility for their own conduct. They were sent to a foreign shore and practically abandoned to their own efforts and devices. A little handful on the border of a mighty continent, the great interior of which swarmed with wholly uncivilized black men, it is surprising that for ninety years these colonists, their descendants and such straggling recruits as came now and again from the United States, have held a place on the map and even a precarious footing among the peoples of the earth.

The citizens of Liberia now number about 40,000, and back of them in the Hinterland are about 1,500,000 savages of their race. In the view of ex-Secretary Root, Liberia is an American colony, and as such is entitled to the consideration, aid and comfort of the Government. With this opinion as the basis of his plea, Mr. Washington urges the Government to render practical assistance to its struggling colony. The people need advice, direction and financial assistance in commercial, industrial and educational lines. For the purpose of finding out just what they need, it is urged that three commissioners be sent over there without delay. Since the United States Government stood sponsor for the colony when it was established, it is urged upon it as a matter of duty that the effort represented by the name "Liberia" be not allowed to lapse and the colony to perish.

LINCOLN'S RELIGION.

The question whether Lincoln was a religious man or not could never have been raised by a very intelligent person. Everybody who has accomplished anything in the world has been religious, though not all of them have been conventional or orthodox in their faith. Lincoln, like many other great men, paid little attention to the outer forms of worship. He was indifferent to churchgoing and seldom or never made a formal prayer, while nobody thinks of asking whether he was ever baptized or ceremonially united with the church. Concerning such a man as he was, these things do not matter. The external rites of the churches are like our clothes. To some they are important to others trivial. There are people who are uplifted by the knowledge that they are well dressed. Emerson tells of a woman who said that the consciousness of having seemly garments on outweighed with her all the consolations of religion. Plenty of men and women become gentle, refined and even virtuous in proportion to the excellence of their clothes, while there are others whom raiment makes contemptuous of those less gaudily arrayed. It all depends on what is inside a man as to the way outside things will affect him.

So it is with ecclesiastical rites. Some are helped by them to genuine religion, to others they are an impediment. Many mistake the rites of religion, which are but clothing, for religion itself, just as now and then a man's attire is mistaken for the man in spite of Burns and all the other poets. The clothes of religion are no more than a guinea stamp, like those we wear on our bodies. The gold would be gold all the same if it had never been to the mint. It was the pure gold of religion, not the outer covering, which Lincoln had. In other words, he possessed faith in the innate justice of the world. If he had not believed that justice was woven in the web of the universe, he could not have found courage to sacrifice his life for it. Men of his caliber do not throw away their lives for something they do not believe in. Since Lincoln gave his years and his energies for the establishment of justice among men, we are compelled to admit his confidence in its existence and its ultimate triumph. He was not of those who hold that the world is as good as it ever can be, that effort for the betterment of mankind is futile, and that contentment with present conditions is our duty. He was a great apostle of discontent with evil and unconquerable hope for good. With his hope went tireless effort, for Lincoln was anything but a dreamer. Above all else he was a man of action striving against terrible obstacles to make his ideals real in the life of men.

Believing as he did in justice and the surety of its ultimate reign on earth, Lincoln must have believed in a will supreme in the universe whose rule is justice. That he did believe in God we know from his own words on many different occasions; but if he had never said so we should know it quite as well, for a universe without a God is not one in which a man can sacrifice himself to high ends or labor for distant results. On the other hand, Lincoln never tried to formulate his idea of God in precise language. Perhaps he never even thought of doing so. Multitudes of devout people find their concept of God too large to be expressed in set terms. The limitations of language distort the noble outlines and minify the qualities of a being who is best known in pure consciousness. No person can truly tell to another what he knows about God. The revelation is always immediate. This is the reason why men like Lincoln are shy of discussing religion. It is something too near and intimate. They know well that words cannot convey its significance and are only too likely to give a false report of it, do the best they can with them. Lincoln never confessed his faith except in large, indefinite expressions which might suggest to illuminated souls what he meant but could not mislead those who sought something more tangible. To him religion was far from the tangible.

Of course Lincoln never set to work to tabulate the characteristics of the Almighty. If he had said anything upon the subject, he would have agreed with the great Russian poet, Pushkin, who addressed the deity as "being whom we call God and know no more." The efforts of theologians to catalogue the attributes of God only belittle the concept of him, while they are not devoid of absurdity, since to make the catalogue complete it would have to be of infinite length. How can we possibly know what his qualities are? Lincoln held invincibly to his faith that God is good and that he is consequently just. Whether his goodness agrees with our ideas or not Lincoln never tried to ascertain, though he must have felt that we, seeing through a glass darkly, can comprehend goodness only in part. His ways are above our ways and what seems to us just may be terribly wrong in the large view of one whose horizon takes in the outer orbits of space.

Lincoln's religion, therefore, was of that kind which most of the great men of the world have possessed and practiced. It consisted of faith, not ceremonies. It was a method of life rather than a creed. It gave him ground for hope, sustained his courage and provided him with an aim for his lifework. Anatole France has well shown in his "Garden of Epicurus" how little there would be to strive for and how hopeless our labors looking to the remote future would be if we had no belief in a God who would treasure up results and preserve achievement so that the world might grow permanently better. Lincoln believed that there was such a God, one who numbers the hairs of our heads and takes good care that nothing worth saving shall ever be lost.

THE FULL FLOWER.

Now here is the crowning triumph of the bunco game engineered by the Governor and his serviceable friends in the Legislature, through the emergency clause business. J. S. Coke, a Chamberlain partisan, is appointed to be a third judge in the Second Judicial District, where such an emergency exists as can be met only by the award of a job to one who has stood in on this deal and other deals. The salient feature of this whole discreditable transaction is that it was consummated over the written protest of Judges Hamilton and Harris, of the Second District, who declared that there was no need for three judges, but that two could do and were doing the work. What excuse can the Governor give, or anybody give, for this dirty traffic in judicial jobs, for which the long-suffering state must pay?

But we are now seeing executive "non-partisanship" in its full flower. No scheme for the creation of any new office to take care of some hungry political dependent has failed to meet the encouragement of the Governor who has boldly and without scruple traversed his written messages and stultified his record that he might, before he abandoned Salem for Washington, reward a Gatens or a King or a Slater, or others like them who enjoy the sunshine of the Chamberlain favor. What has become of the long-sustained assumption of "our George" to superior virtue in public affairs? It is gone, utterly gone, and there is now no pretense even that it was or is genuine.

THE NAVY'S VALOR.

The voyage of the fleet around the world will be remembered by historians as one of the great events of the Roosevelt Administration. Its effects will be far-reaching and will endure for many years. It is worth all it has cost and will take high place among the many proud achievements of the Navy. Curious investigators who trouble themselves to compare the record of our fleets with that of our armies do not find that the seafaring arm of the service has much to be ashamed of. The fleet under Paul Jones won pretty nearly the only victory we had to boast of in the Revolution before Yorktown. In the War of 1812 it won victory after victory, while the army was uniformly defeated until Jackson retrieved its credit at New Orleans. When the Rebellion broke out, the army officers who had been educated at West Point went over to the foe in such numbers that the troops were left without capable leadership, and it was the Navy which remained true to the flag and by its victories kept the country in heart and hope while the soldiers were learning how to fight. This last exploit of the fleet takes its place, therefore, quite naturally in a glorious list, and perhaps its results will turn out to be as important as those of any of the rest.

One outgrowth is, that though all the money the people should put into state ownership of railroads were lost, yet other and greater values would be created by the railroads. This is beautiful. It means the robbery of some of the people for the benefit of others, the transfer of values by the edict of the state from those who have labored for them and earned them and paid the taxes, for the benefit of speculators in lands in various parts of the state, who got the lands for little or nothing, and are holding them for speculative prices, to be obtained by taxation of all the people of Oregon. The moving force in this business comes from those Eastern Oregon land grants.

A Sherman County farmer, who sold wheat last Fall, has just purchased 100 bushels for seed at $1 per bushel. Before that Wall-street clique, which is reported to be organizing a fight to a finish against Wheat King Patten, goes too far with the game, it might consider the case—not necessarily of the Sherman County farmer—but of a good many thousand other short sellers who may be forced into the market to buy wheat at extravagant prices. As to the fortunate few who still have real wheat for sale; they can view the forthcoming battle with equanimity, so long as the foreign market continues to absorb the world's offerings at prices well above the normal figure of recent years. In his present campaign, Mr. Patten seems to be receiving material aid from those irresistible economic forces—supply and demand.

Something must have gone wrong with the plans of that reported Wall-street syndicate of bears who were organized for the purpose of puncturing Mr. Patten's wheat boom. The May option at Chicago yesterday soared up to a new record, and closed at the highest point of the season, $1.15½ per bushel. A few more days of such strength as the market is now displaying will result in another meeting of the American Society of Equity for the purpose of fixing $1.50 per bushel as a price "equitable alike to seller and buyer." The Minneapolis Market Record chides the society for its ingratitude in failing to extend a vote of thanks to Mr. Patten and his followers for their kindness in taking the slack out of the market and carrying the surplus until demand overtakes supply.

Stubbornly fighting every inch of progress made by the irresistible wave of decency and morality which is sweeping over the country, the gambler and his friends are being carried into oblivion. Even wild and wooly Nevada is seeking to escape from the unenviable distinction of being one of the few remaining states where the gambling parasite can ply his trade and is about to move up higher through passage of a law preventing licensed gambling. The bill has been made a special order for next Wednesday and a Carson dispatch announces that it will undoubtedly pass.

The Anti-Saloon League local option bill was defeated at Olympia Wednesday by a very close margin of two votes. The small majority by which the "wets" won, leaves an interesting field for speculation as to what might have happened had that noisy, sacrilegious, blatant humbug, Billy Sunday, remained away from the state capital. Christianity and the cause of temperance have suffered much at the hands of their alleged friends, but from no agency in recent years have they received so many body blows as from this professional assassin of language and religion.

"Nevada," says a Philadelphia newspaper, "perched upon the mountains and at a considerable distance from the Pacific Coast, is as valiant as the goat which, standing upon a roof, applies injurious epithets to the wolf on the ground below. Nevada, with the population of one of the wards of Philadelphia, is entirely ready for war with Japan." That isn't bad, at all.

California having scotched the race-track evil, an army of hangers-on now have the opportunity of doing an international service by taking the places of undesirable Japanese as fruitpickers. While the vocation may not be so remunerative it is more honorable.

Now that the agony is over, let every Oregon taxpayer inquire calmly into the sins of omission and commission by a Legislature whose members were chosen by the people to express the will of the people—and then despair.

"Colonel" Hofer grunts and grumbles at the death of the medical bill. The "Colonel" would allow a Chinaman with a certificate to practice and forbid his grandmother prescribing boneset tea.

Having provided for the emasculation of certain evils in Oregon, Dr. Owens-Adair moves on to Washington. Trouble is, her reform is not sufficiently drastic. But it may do for a beginning.

Five men fishing Thursday off Long Beach, Cal., encountered a serpent forty feet long with a head as big as a barrel. Jag-carists should secure some of that bait for anti-toxin.

After forty days and forty nights, like an elderly gentleman in history, perhaps Oregon also could see dry land and the dove, if it were not for the enormous taxes.

If on the first of next month tenants who have no leasehold are notified of a 5 per cent advance, they need not be shocked. Increased rentals are inevitable.

What makes the matter more irritating is that we haven't a Tweed or a Croker or a Murphy or a Ruef to blame. U'Ren is out of politics, or should be.

The man with the hunter lust, that generally unfits him for steady labor, can now do himself and his community good under the bounty law.

It is reliably reported that 30,000 homeseekers will arrive in Portland before May 1. Sh-sh, don't say a word about taxes.

They say at Salem that it's a $4,000,000 state. But it has a 30-cent Legislature.

King Alfonso refused yesterday to fly high. It was high time.

Gervais says it has a good opening for a dentist. Cavity, probably.

And the wonder is that there was not more vicious legislation.

Great is legislative grab.

SILHOUETTES

BY ARTHUR A. GREENE.

THE marked advance in the price of dried prunes which is reported on the market page is a severe blow at boarding-house keepers.

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It is hard for a woman to make a secret gift to a charitable fund.

* * *

Many men who are as good as their word are not very good at that.

* * *

The henpecked husband never fully understands the Declaration of Independence until his wife leaves town for an extended visit.

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Many people are so tardy that they will wait for Gabriel to blow his trumpet the second time on resurrection morn.

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If men would stay sober they would keep out of a lot of tight places.

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The country will soon be able to hear itself think. Roosevelt retires in two weeks.

* * *

A genuine friendship outlives many loves.

* * *

The Tucker scandal emphasizes the fact that the Army needs a war to keep it out of mischief.

* * *

Each yesterday should be a teacher to every tomorrow.

* * *

He who has heard the eagle scream is not easily frightened by the hooting of owls.

* * *

Too often we give flattery the keys to our heart and slam the door in the face of plain-speaking honesty.

* * *

When a man with only one leg gets into trouble he discovers the futility of lame excuses.

* * *

Any man who is father to a teething baby should be able to "make good" as a floor-walker in a department store.

* * *

The Household Pet.

Little Willie Snodgrass is his mother's
pride and joy,
Innocent and full of baby tricks.
Now he ties a can to Towser, now he
vivisects the cat,
Now he sweetly licks the next-door
neighbor's boy;
Pelting Sister Annie playfully with
bricks,
Pouring syrup into papa's Sunday
"kicks";
Always planning something cute,
Now he's learning how to shoot,
And his infant fancy dotes on cigarettes.

Everybody in the block
Says his parents ought to lock
Willie in the cellar for a spell.
When they try to comb his tresses,
Petting him with fond caresses,
Baby boy lets out a most unearthly yell.
He is cutest when he tries
Poking sticks in grandpa's eyes,
Which his father mildly argues isn't
right.

Mother says "Give him his way,
'Tis a joy to see him gay,
For the dear child's very far from well
tonight."
Then he plays the grand pianner
With a hammer in a manner
Bad enough to make a perfect angel mad.
Makes you dizzy when he's busy
This original "Bizzy Izzy"—
When he's happy, peace and quiet take a
hike—
Mother's cunning little toy, original
rough-house boy;
Surely, Willie is a very lovely tyke.

* * *

The more one learns the less he is certain of.

* * *

A genius misunderstood is a caged nightingale.

* * *

Every one should have a few enemies to boast of.

* * *

The surest way to keep from falling is to keep on looking upward and climbing.

* * *

The most effective argument against woman suffrage is the disgraceful conduct of the London suffragettes.

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A coward should not wear high-heeled shoes.

* * *

In lieu of argument, fools make bets.

* * *

A man is only as rich as he feels.

* * *

Many of us would be counted charitable for giving looking-glasses to blind men.

* * *

He who rides behind another never gets to the front.

* * *

It is better to eat porkchops and pay for them than to indulge in terrapin on credit.

* * *

Many pew-holders bring their clothes into church and leave themselves outside.

* * *

To convince yourself how little you know, just try to answer a child's questions.

* * *

Those who persist in "butting in" seldom make much headway.

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It's a pity there is no gallery in the House chamber at Salem, for that body seems to have played in vain during the entire session.

* * *

A rose by any other name costs about the same at the florist's shop.

* * *

Isn't it about time to declare an open season on peripatetic evangelists?

THE FORELOPER.

The gull shall whistle in his wake, the blind
wave break in fire,
He shall fulfill God's utmost will unknowing
his desire;
And he shall see old planets pass and alien
stars arise,
And give the gale his reckless sail in shadow
of new skies.
Strong lust of gear shall drive him out
and hunger arm his hand
To wring his food from a desert nude, his
foothold from the sand.
His neighbor's smoke shall vex his eyes,
their voices break his rest,
He shall go forth till South is North, sullen
and dispossessed;
And he shall desire loneliness, and his de-
sire shall bring
Hard on his heels a thousand wheels, a
people, and a king;
And he shall come back in his own track,
and by his scarce, cool camp;
There he shall meet the roaring street, the
derrick, and the stamp;
For he must blaze a nation's ways with
hatchet and with brand
Till on his last-won wilderness an empire's
bulwarks stand.

—Rudyard Kipling.