The Oregonian

PORTLAND, OREGON.

Entered at Portland, Oregon, Postoffice as Second-Class Matter.
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
Daily, without Sunday, one year	6.00
Daily, without Sunday, six months	3.25
Daily, without Sunday, three months	1.75
Daily, without Sunday, one month	.60
Weekly, one year	1.50
Sunday, one year	2.50
Sunday and weekly, one year	3.50

(By Carrier.)

Daily, Sunday included, one year	9.00
Daily, Sunday included, one month	.75

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

Postage Rates—10 to 14 pages, 1 cent; 16 to 28 pages, 2 cents; 30 to 44 pages, 3 cents; 46 to 60 pages, 4 cents. Foreign postage double rates.

Eastern Business Office—The S. C. Beckwith Special Agency—New York, rooms 48-50 Tribune building. Chicago, rooms 510-512 Tribune building.

PORTLAND, SUNDAY, MAY 23, 1909.

THE VIRTUE OF THE NEGATIVE.

The problems presented to the voters of Portland present a medley that is alike incongruous, incomprehensible and insoluble. Some few of the propositions may be understood, but the general effect or consequence of their adoption no man can tell. Study of them all, for a week together, would only deepen the mystery, doubt and uncertainty. It is a jumble, farrago, hodgepodge; stuffed with incongruities beyond any power of intelligent selection.

The safe way to deal with the largest part of the list is to vote "No." Such of the many propositions as can be fully understood and approved may be excepted from the sweeping negation, but these are not numerous. We believe a majority of the electors are resolved already to set their mark against most of the propositions, as an act of prudence; while some of them will be disapproved on positive grounds.

Exhibits like this must tend inevitably to give the necessary quietus to this method of legislation. The method is that of theorists, utopists, hobby-horsical performers, each rejoicing in a chance to get his cherished scheme on the ballot. Notions of various sorts and of all sorts, too chimerical to get attention in any deliberative assembly, are "put up to the people" by petition supported by names gathered promiscuously about the streets, signed by persons who don't read the petition or care for its contents, but wish to be rid of importunity, and in many cases the names of non-voters or of fictitious persons come handy to eke out the required number, and to bring to the circulator his two to ten cents a name.

Of course, in their relation to each other the subjects of these petitions cannot but be largely at variance with and contradictory of each other. Suppose them, or a lot of them, enacted. Then disorder and chaos.

The charter proposed by the committee of fifteen seems fairly consistent with itself. The question is whether the people of Portland wish to establish the kind of government it would create. Again, if this charter should be adopted, there is much probability that a bunch of other propositions quite at variance with it, drawn from the long list submitted by various faddists, will be adopted at the same time; which would set up roaring war in the municipal government, all round.

In the circumstances now existing the need of a large amount of negative voting is imperious. Vote "No," by all means, not only on every proposition you actually oppose, but on every one you do not fully understand and approve. Prudence requires it. This course would, indeed, kill the larger part of the bunch; but just that thing should be done.

FARMERS' PERMANENT PROSPERITY.

The railroads of the United States last month raised $165,000,000 of new capital, and their new securities now on the market are expected to bring in more than $200,000,000 in May. That they are spending this money quite freely is shown by the remarkable activity in new construction and the many substantial orders for new equipment. The recent Supreme Court decisions and the known fairness and conservatism of President Taft have given both the railroads and the purchasers of their securities a confidence in the future that is having a highly beneficial effect on all industrial enterprises. Among all the classes that will profit by this return of old-time prosperity, none will derive greater benefits than the farmers. Here is the one class on which the effect of the 1907 panic fell but lightly, and, while railroad and industrial enterprises and all those dependent on them were in the pangs of deep distress, the farmers' prosperity continued without interruption.

Not even the hysterical money market with which the panic was ushered in prevented farmers from securing high prices for their products, and their big crop at high prices was marketed in 1908 before the return of prosperity had begun to be noticeable. This year the high prices for grain and livestock, dairy products, indeed everything that is produced on the farm, will stimulate production, and the increased output will find a market that is widening as the prosperity in industrial lines becomes more noticeable. The "dinner-pail brigade," which went into retirement in the closing days of 1907, is gradually getting back to work, and by the time the 1909 harvest is completed, most of that army of consumers who are such an important factor in making a market for farm products, will be in position to buy farm products which a year ago they could not afford, except in decidedly limited quantities.

There is no longer fear of an overproduction of farm products in this country, for the increasing population and greater purchasing power of the people are causing the demand to make steady gains on the supply, and each year witnesses a decreasing proportion of the grain crops of the country available for export. Even at that, with prices approximating those which the foreigners have paid us for the past two years, it would be impossible to produce an unmarketable surplus on American farms, for there is no easier method for paying off the trade balances for imported merchandise than with farm products. It was in this foreign demand that the farmer escaped much of the distress suffered by men in other callings while the panic was on about eighteen months ago. The purchasing power of the Americans was temporarily checked, but that of the foreigners remained normal, and it was the gold that came to our shores in payment for agricultural products that eventually eased the strain and brought order out of chaos.

THE RECALL.

In the new system "the recall" proves to be nothing but an instrument of personal spite. It is used in no other way, for no other purpose. The short terms of our officials really require no "recall," unless, indeed, we are to prescribe assassination as the most potent instrument of "recall." But then the official, finding he is becoming odious, will put himself in a bullet-proof tank and defeat our purpose and the popular will.

Short terms for officials, we once supposed, removed the necessity of assassination or recall. We made official terms short to do away with necessity of recall or assassination. But, as between recall and assassination, perhaps assassination would be better. It certainly would be more effective.

The fellow who is recalled may get back. But if assassinated he is done for. There's an end of him. Look at that Mayor of Estacada who was "recalled," yet now, against "the will of the people," he gets back. Or is the will of the people the variable quantity?

DISAPPOINTED LOBBYISTS.

Governor Hay, of Washington, can probably appreciate the truth of the statement that "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." The Governorship may not be exactly a crown, but it has brought with it in his case an unusually long list of vexatious problems, scandals in state official life and general disorder. In his attempts to bring order out of chaos, and at the same time lay a smooth course for the sailing of his own political ship, Governor Hay has rapidly accumulated a large assortment of political enemies. Among the latest to join this band who "didn't think he'd act that way" are the Seattle traveling men. At the last session of the Legislature there was passed a "hotel inspection law," and, according to a Seattle dispatch, "the traveling men lobbied for the bill, spent money on it and finally had the pleasure of seeing it pass."

One of the provisions of the law was that there should be three Hotel Inspectors appointed by the Governor. It might naturally be supposed that these traveling men "lobbied for the bill, spent money on it," etc., because they thought it was a meritorious measure, as perhaps it is; but it seems that the traveling men regarded the merits of the bill as a kind of side issue, and what they really wanted was to provide places for several Seattle and Tacoma traveling men. In appointing the inspectors, as provided by law, Governor Hay entirely overlooked the traveling men who had "lobbied for the bill and spent money on it," and placed the appointments elsewhere. Now the traveling men are very angry and are "preparing a letter of protest to the Governor, expressing their indignation at his appointments."

As the Governor seems to have taken the bit in his teeth and is running away from all former notions and customs of the time-honored Olympia standard, it is feared that he will not recall the appointments. If he fails to do so, there is still an alternative for the deceived traveling men. They might get up another lobby next session, and spend some more money in securing repeal of the bill. Without being familiar with the merits of the measure, it would seem that a law whose popularity and usefulness are so largely dependent on the personnel of the men appointed to enforce it, could be spared from the statute books without creating universal hardship. Yet, in passing laws for the purpose of providing positions for amiable and sometimes influential gentlemen, Washington is not establishing a precedent.

REVIVAL OF LIFE INSURANCE.

There can be little doubt that the life insurance business suffered in all parts of the country from the revelations of fraud and mismanagement which were made by the Armstrong investigating committee. A large number of small companies sprang into existence to gather up the business which naturally forsook the great New York societies, but they did not get it all. Multitudes of people ceased to believe in life insurance either as a protection for their families or as an investment. As a protection from the misfortunes which may ensue upon the death of the breadwinner, however, it is no less desirable now than it was before the investigations began, and probably more so. It is more desirable because, although the companies have returned in some particulars to the bad ways which Mr. Hughes forced them for a time to abandon, still upon the whole there has been improvement. Not so much of the policyholders' money is wasted as formerly and not nearly so much is lost through peculations of one sort and another.

The revelations of the Armstrong committee were followed by wholesome legislation in New York, which somewhat restricted the freedom of the companies both in the matter of investments and in the competition for new business. While this competition was raging at the height of its fury the new business secured brought a positive loss upon the old policyholders because it was obtained by rebates, remissions of premiums and all sorts of thriftless devices. The limitation of the number of policies which the large companies may write in any year has stopped this foolish practice and thus opened the way for better dividends. It has also somewhat restored public confidence in life insurance. Immediately subsequent to the investigation and the scandals it disclosed the business written in the state of New York fell from $256,000,000 yearly to a little more than $182,000,000. The companies located in the metropolis felt the slump most severely. Indeed, those from the outside lost but a small fraction of their business. It fell off only about $2,000,000, or from $99,000,000 to $97,000,000.

This was entirely proper since the better known of the small companies had been guilty of no such derelictions as had been brought home to the management of several of the great New York companies. They retained the confidence of their old patrons and continued to receive new business with little diminution. The punishment of the wrongdoing fell exactly where it was deserved. Now, however, the New York companies have regained much of their former standing with the public. The volume of insurance written in New York, including the local companies and those from outside the state, rose in 1908 to $195,000,000. This is still far below the high-water mark. Very likely that extravagant limit will never again be reached, but even if it is not nobody will have occasion for regret except reckless directors who wish to indulge in wild speculation with policyholders' funds.

WOOD PULP AND WAGES.

Representative James R. Mann, of Illinois, who most of the time lives and moves in the odor of unimpeachable "protection," has nevertheless come to the conclusion that the tariff on wood for paper pulp ought to be reduced, and in a speech before the House when the Payne bill was under debate he had the courage to make his views known. Some of his facts and arguments are so cogent that they ought to be widely read. To be sure, their rehearsal now partakes much of the nature of a funeral ceremony, since the Payne bill has received its quietus from Mr. Aldrich's dagger, but even funerals have their uses and it is sometimes worth while to dwell upon the virtues of a corpse. Mr. Mann's argument was based upon the fact that our only really available wood for pulp is spruce, of which the supply east of the Rocky Mountains cannot last more than twenty years longer, while that on the Pacific Coast is too valuable for lumber to be made up into paper. Thus, if we do not admit supplies from Canada, we shall soon be compelled to do without paper unless we can raise new forests to replace the old ones.

Mr. Mann, who is an experienced woodsman, estimates the time required to grow a spruce tree ten inches in diameter at 100 years or more. Hence, if forests were planted now it would be a century before they would be serviceable. Some less remote supply is urgently needed. The expectation that print paper might be made from cornstalks has proved disappointing, and as a matter of fact our only resource is to turn to the spruce forests of Canada, which cannot be useful to us unless the duty on wood pulp is lowered. The fear that decrease of the import duty would reduce wages in the paper mills is groundless, as Mr. Mann clearly demonstrates. Workmen in the paper mills in Canada receive wages fully as high as our own, while the cost of producing pulp there is decidedly greater. It follows, of course, that American wages could not be affected by a cut in the tariff, even granting that tariffs in general keep wages up, which is exceedingly doubtful. Mr. Mann does not believe that paper can ever be manufactured as cheaply in Canada as here. What possible need, then, have our paper mills for protection?

WILHELMINA'S BABY.

Whether the Dutch have as much reason for joy over the birth of Wilhelmina's daughter as they imagine they have or not, it is still a pleasant sight to see them disport themselves. The chief characteristic of the people of the Low Countries is not stolidity, as many people suppose, but rather alert intelligence, with political shrewdness and a fine artistic capability. All these qualities are displayed in the national rejoicings over the Queen's new-born baby. The intelligence of the Dutch warns them that they are a great deal happier in their own little homelike and cosy kingdom than they could possibly be as a fraction of the German Empire. The Kaiser's political theorists advise them that incorporation with the empire would be most desirable, and point out what a happy thing it would be for them to lie safe and secure under the protection of William's warships with his army to guard their cities. But history teaches the people of Holland that they have seldom wanted a fleet for their own protection when it was needed, while in times of stress the sea, their ancient and inexorable foe, has proven a better friend than any army.

Germany wants Holland for many reasons. Among them is the evident one that it would be a fine thing to have control of the Rhine from its highest navigable point to its mouths. Again, with the harbors, the cities and the defensible islands of Holland in her possession, Germany would enjoy an advantageous position on the North Sea face to face with England, and all the expanse of the Atlantic would lie open to her fleets, which must now pass out from the confined Baltic either through the dangerous straits between Denmark and Scandinavia or through the Kiel canal. Germany, who aspires to succeed Great Britain as mistress of the seas and queen of the world's navies, never can attain to her ambition until she has possession of ports on the free Atlantic. Hence the covetous eye which William has always cast upon the domains of the ancient and liberty-loving House of Orange. The birth of a male heir to Wilhelmina would have thwarted his schemes much more definitely than this girl can, because now the German plan will be to marry her to some person not far from the Kaiser's throne, in the hope of a future marriage which will unite the realms under one ruler. There cannot be the slightest doubt that from this time forward German policy will be to interweave relations more and more complicated between the Dutch and German thrones in preparation for the day when the same heir shall inherit both.

A similar contingency has come to pass in more than one case and has molded into a single kingdom nations long severed by the most bitter hatred. When James VI. of Scotland, for example, fell heir to the English throne the everlasting hostilities between Scotland and England forever ceased and the two kingdoms became one, not only in legal form, but gradually also in feeling and commercial interest. It cannot be expected though, that the union of Holland with Germany would be permitted by England without furious opposition. The Dutch, in spite of their small territory, possess a colonial empire second only to Great Britain's. They own territory in South America and Africa and islands in the southern ocean scattered all the way from India's coral strand to the Antarctic Circle. These colonies are an inheritance from the glorious days of the Dutch Republic, when the Captains of the Netherlands dominated the oceans of the world and her sailors swept the British fleet from the Thames. England would never endure to see them pass over to Germany with all the wealth and power which they would convey. Were Holland to unite with Germany, undoubtedly the first British step would be to make sure of the conquest of the Dutch colonial empire while the Kaiser's ships were blockaded within the Baltic. This is one among many evident reasons England has for keeping up a fleet greater than those of any other two countries combined.

It is not very certain that the birth of Wilhelmina's baby postpones indefinitely the union of Holland and Germany, but it makes that event somewhat more remote and delays the outbreak of the terrible wars which would ensue upon it. Sooner or later, in spite of births and treaties, the union is almost certain to take place, and then we shall witness the death struggle between the British and their German cousins. England has now enjoyed the commercial supremacy of the world for a long time, but there are students who discern in her present condition symptoms of decadence. The physique of her men has declined sadly. Work in the mills, with insufficient food and foul air, has depraved their bodies and sapped their manhood. Beside that, the end of her natural resources is in sight. Meanwhile, in technical education and in a vigor which seems more than youthful, Germany has forged ahead and seems to be taking the lead in commerce as well as in military affairs. The original advance of England was due to lessons learned from the Dutch. In the seventeenth century, when people all over Europe were perishing from scurvy and leprosy, the Dutch invented the culture of Winter roots, like beets and turnips. This not only supplied human beings with food which kept them in good health during the Winter months, but also made it possible to keep large herds of cattle the year round. Thorold Rogers says that the population of England was more than doubled in the seventeenth century by adopting the agricultural improvements of the Dutch. Among their other discoveries was that of clover culture and the growing of alfalfa, whose possibilities as a food for cattle we have known in this country for a long time; but we are just beginning to discover that it may replace wheat as a human food supply.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AT 89.

Remembering what an idol the modern world has made of its armies, one would be disposed to think that timely provision would have been made for the health and comfort of soldiers. To the ordinary mind it seems scarcely less necessary to keep soldiers alive and healthy in the field than to enlist them and furnish them with efficient guns, but military authorities have never been of this opinion except in theory. In practice they have adopted the same views of soldiers which Mr. Roosevelt holds upon the subject of babies. The latter philosopher dwells eagerly upon the beauty of bringing multitudes of babies into the world, but he has not deemed it worth while to consider how to keep them here after they are born. He sees the poor little things flit away to Paradise with apparent indifference. So it has often been with soldiers. The authorities spare no efforts to force them into the field, but as a rule the means of keeping them in fighting condition have been neglected.

Napoleon said an army traveled on its belly, and Sherman on his march through Georgia looked after the welfare of his troops with more than paternal solicitude. All great Generals, in fact, have tried their best to keep their armies in sound health, knowing that battles could not be won with invalids and corpses; but unhappily, most Generals are not great, and the few who are cannot devote their time and attention to hospital duty. That usually falls into the hands of slaves of routine, who would rather see a thousand men perish in misery than unwind an inch of red tape. It is incredible what cruel and crazy deeds the medical corps of armies are capable of until one reads accounts like those which describe the foolish sufferings of our army in Cuba or Miss Nightingale's efforts to bring order and humanity into the military hospital at Scutari during the Crimean War. The newspapers alleged that our sick soldiers in Cuba were permitted to lie without food or medicines because commissary officers had no routine orders to open cars of stores. When Florence Nightingale arrived at Scutari, she found the soldiers sick with cholera and fever, packed on the floor with those who had been wounded and all of them encrusted with filth and tormented by vermin. When she offered her services the medical officers told her that no help was needed.

That was in 1854, when Florence Nightingale was 34 years old. She is now 89 and great changes have been wrought by her efforts. Still much remains to do. In our last war more men perished from preventable disease than from wounds. No modern nation except Japan seems to have made much serious effort to apply the principles of hygienic science for the benefit of troops in field and hospital. There is a great deal of talk and discussion about the subject, but when war breaks out the same old confusion reigns and the same needless suffering ensues. The fact that soldiers will be wounded and fall sick seems always to take the military authorities by surprise. They are never ready for it. They appear to fancy that the patriotism of the troops will render them immune from gunshots and typhoid fever. Still Miss Nightingale's work has not been fruitless by any means, though its results may perhaps be more apparent in ordinary civic hospitals than in war. The nurse of the type of Mrs. Gamp has disappeared from the civilized world; but, although our Civil War broke out six years after Florence Nightingale made her historic pilgrimage to Scutari, nevertheless when the wounded soldiers began to pour into Washington there was virtually no provision for taking care of them. Walt Whitman, it will be remembered, lost his health nursing soldiers in fetid hospitals.

The world has lost a great deal by failing to take advantage of the executive gifts of women. It is very doubtful whether men possess the invaluable faculty of order, organization, arrangement and command in anything like the same degree as women. Certainly the executive geniuses among them need fear no comparison with the best of their male competitors. Florence Nightingale was such a genius, and it was through her power of organization and command much more than through any sentimental qualities that she was able to eliminate filth and infection from the military hospitals of the Crimea and teach the world how to care for sick and wounded troops. Sidney Herbert, who was the British War Minister at the time, knew of her qualities from long acquaintance, so that he did not move in the dark when he made her Lady-in-Chief of the military hospitals. Her first move justified his confidence. When it became known through the newspapers that volunteer nurses were desired for the Crimea multitudes of romantic women offered their services. Miss Nightingale rejected them promptly. What she wanted was not novel-struck heroines in quest of adventure, but trained nurses, and she obtained them from among the sisters of the Church of England and Catholic nuns. These women gave her loyal obedience and capable service. Without them her undertaking would have failed. It is curious to observe how religious bigotry, which never sleeps when its waking can work mischief, sought to mar the philanthropy of Florence Nightingale. Because she took Catholic sisters to the Crimea it was charged by Protestant imbeciles that she wished to make Papists of the sick soldiers. Probably we have got beyond this degree of folly today, but it is still true that we permit bigotry and superstition to mar our noblest undertakings and spoil the work of our best benefactors by malicious ignorance.

COLOSSAL SCHOOL LAND TREASURE.

A subscriber at Winlock, Wash., writes to The Oregonian asking:

What is the total amount of the school fund of Washington State? How much has been realized from the sale of school lands? What is the value of unsold lands remaining? Please give me and many others such information as you may have.

The total of state school funds is $6,861,475. Of this sum there is $5,560,910 in the irreducible school fund. Besides, the Agricultural College has $196,358 and the University of Washington $104,215. About $6,000,000 has been received from sales of timber and school lands to date. The principal must remain intact. Over $5,000,000 has been invested in bonds bearing 6 to 8 per cent interest. Since Washington became a state, twenty years ago, practically all the income from the money loaned has gone to support the common schools. Only a small part of the common school lands has yet been sold. Land Commissioner Ross estimates if all the state school lands were sold today at the average prices he has secured in the past two years, they would bring about $75,000,000, which, loaned at 4 per cent, would produce a permanent annual revenue of $3,000,000.

GEORGE MEREDITH.

The death of George Meredith, on May 18, at the age of 80 years, removed the most conspicuous figure in English literature remaining after the loss of Swinburne. He was in no sense a popular writer, although he had many admirers, some of whom worshiped him with a singular devotion. They were exceptions, however, in the world of readers. Most of those who turn to novels for their portion of literature, call Meredith obscure and many of them cherish for him a positive dislike. His influence has not been exerted directly upon the multitude, but rather through other writers. Here it has been profound. There is hardly one truly ambitious novelist of our day who does not display evident marks of a study of George Meredith in style, in manner of casting plots and in trend of thought. In some cases the borrowed plumes have been exaggerated, and we find the Meredithian elusiveness and love of innuendo carried beyond all reason. It is possible to classify most recent novelists according to their preference either for Kipling or Meredith. The cruder and more rough-and-ready writers, like Jack London, reek with Kipling on every page. Those who aspire to a more cultivated audience, smack of Meredith.

Meredith was a poet as well as a writer of prose, but his novels form his principal literary monument, and will be his title to everlasting fame, if he has such a title. His enormous intellectual power and striking originality made it impossible to ignore George Meredith while he was an active factor in English literature, but now that he is dead, it seems possible that he may not be long remembered. The difficulties of his style and his aloofness from the reader repel many, and it may happen that his merits will not continue to impress anybody but literary students. On the other hand, he may become widely popular. Qualities of style which strike one generation as obscure do not perplex their successors at all sometimes. Wordsworth was obscure to his early contemporaries, but to us no writer could be more pellucidly clear. They were puzzled because he talked of subjects upon which his readers had never thought. We have been educated until they are familiar to us and, therefore, we are at home in his poetry. Browning, it may be remarked, is not nearly so difficult to readers who begin with him now as he was ten years ago. Their minds possess an apperceiving nidus, as the psychologists call it, which takes in his ideas and makes them comfortable.

In Meredith's use of English there is no real obscurity. Everything he says is apparently straightforward. His sentences are not particularly involved nor is his use of words especially recondite. The difficulty in reading him does not arise from any such sources as those. The trouble is that he simply swarms with ideas, most of which are unfamiliar to us. He looks at things from points of view which we never dreamed of, and in looking he sees things to which we have always been blind. It follows that in reading him we are constantly put to it to assimilate what he says. The ordinary reader stands toward Meredith like a dull-witted countryman to an alert traveler. No matter how simple a question the traveler may ask of the dullard, it is not understood. It must be repeated. Time must be given to brood over it and digest it, simply because the tone of voice, the enunciation, the manner of speech are unfamiliar. Thus it is with Meredith, so far as most readers are concerned. He is a traveler from a strange land, and our wits are not nimble enough to keep up with his glib utterance.

He is made more difficult by his irritating habit of telling his tales by innuendo. If it is possible to make a remark elusively, Meredith always does so. Temperamentally he seems to abhor the direct statement. Things are hinted at, suggested, alluded to from afar, but he never lets us come directly at them. To the man whose time is valuable and who has not too much energy to spend on novel reading, this alone makes Meredith a sealed book. Most people do not read novels as mathematical recreations. When they sit down to a story, it is for mental refreshment, and few are able to extract anything like refreshment from algebra. To the average mind George Meredith's books are a species of algebra. Every sentence is an equation containing an unknown quantity which must be laboriously computed. Still, there is a class of readers to whom all this comes easy, just as there are gifted men who work problems in the calculus after a hard day's work, to rest and divert themselves preparatory to a good night's sleep. To such, George Meredith is a perennial joy, partly because, in spite of his eccentricities, he is a genius of the first rank, but partly also because he continually gratifies their conceit. "I can understand this literary enigma," he keeps them forever saying to themselves complacently, "although to Brown, Jones and Robinson it is Sanscrit." The mere fact that one can read Meredith currently affords substantial ground for self-laudation. Hence there has arisen a sect of Meredithians, much as there was formerly a sect of Browning worshipers. The latter have gradually merged into the general ranks, as their deity grew into popular comprehension. It may be the same way with the Meredithians in the long run.

With the despised Durum or "goose" wheat selling at $1.20 per bushel in Minneapolis, and No. 2 red at $1.34 in Chicago, it is not surprising that bread riots should be reported in New York. A recent addition to the list of Government ignoramuses who have publicly displayed their ignorance of the causes for present wheat prices, is Special Agent M. H. Davis, who writes from Europe as follows:

I confidently believe that if the wheat speculators had let the market alone, we would have exported at least 2,000,000 barrels more of flour to Great Britain and Europe on the current crop than the figures will now be able to show.

The present extraordinary scarcity and high prices for wheat offer conclusive evidence that the exportation of an additional 2,000,000 barrels of flour at a time when there was hardly enough to meet home requirements, would have caused famine prices for bread two months earlier than they appeared.

Not a few express the opinion that Mayor Lane played his game just a little too fine. He wouldn't "consent," yet wanted to be "forced." He desired to be an "independent" candidate, yet also wanted the Democratic nomination. But he couldn't make an active and open fight for the Democratic nomination, for that would have given the scheme away; yet he expected that nomination. Munly, however, beat him by a small vote. Then his cake was dough. The finesse failed. Lane, it is reported on good authority, believes he could have been elected, by his finesse, but that Munly will have no chance at all. There is general belief that Lane wanted and expected the Democratic nomination, and on top of it intended to be the "independent" candidate. But it was too fine a game and it eluded him.

The Washington Standard (Olympia) says "there are Democrats in Oregon whom the Republicans of the state delight to honor." Not for a minute. They have not elected Democrats because they delight to honor them. They are "getting even" with Republican rivals, whom they denominate " — — — —!" Fill up the blanks with the descriptive and emphatic words, to suit yourself, or from your recollection of the objurgatory epithets. Men like Rushlight, Albee, Kellaher and Nottingham are most extreme of Republicans. But they want to be "It." First thing necessary to this end is to beat all competitive Republicans. For this purpose they "delight to honor Democrats"—when they can't "make it" themselves.

All swelldom was aroused to intense interest bordering on excitement when the announcement that King Edward VII, while in Paris recently, appeared in public with his trousers creased at the sides instead of at the front and rear. Just as a general rush was to be made on the tailor shops to secure the "new crease" it was explained that the King was in Paris incognito, and probably had his trousers creased broadside as a feature of his disguise. As the man when incognito may wear anything from overalls to pajamas, the excitement abated and the run of fashion's votaries upon the tailors' goose was frustrated.

Of course the first consideration for the coming municipal election must be obtainment of efficient administration. By election of Mr. Simon this can be secured. He has capacity and knowledge fit for the duties. If, incidentally, a result of the election would be a step towards rebuilding the Republican party in the city and the state, doubtless there are some—indeed not a few—who might think that not objectionable.

Thirty-five proposals or amendments under the initiative are to be passed on by the voter in June. In the silence and solitude of the voting booth we will turn off laws at the rate of about 20 a minute. There's solemn deliberation for you. We are a wise people.

Former Congressman Livernash, of California, has had his name changed to De Nivernais, which is poetic but difficult. A bilious person like Livernash could have made things easy simply by cutting off the last syllable of his name.

They cannot be much longer delayed—those delightful evenings when it is just warm enough to sit on the front porch without a wrap or idly lounge in the softly swaying hammock under the trees, and take cold.

The weather man has at length made the anxiously looked for announcement that our unusually late Spring does not necessarily portend a disastrous flood in June. We told you so.

The Madison-street bridge appears to be good enough for everybody who has no special interest in some other bridge scheme. The next important thing is to get the Madison bridge.

Senator McCumber, of North Dakota, wants no lumber tariff. North Dakota has no forests or sawmills. A lot depends on where you live.

When in doubt, vote NO.

SILHOUETTES

BY ARTHUR A. GREENE.

Briny tears shed at a wedding are only the commencement of the pickle the bride and groom are getting into.

* * *

Many are broken on the wheel of fortune who never made a bet in their lives.

* * *

"I'll take the responsibility," said the Cheerful Idiot, holding out his arms to the baby.

* * *

All women are equally beautiful—with the lights turned out.

* * *

Hopeless old maidenhood and old bachelorhood is matchless misery.

* * *

Which travels at the lesser speed, heat or cold? Cold, because it is so easy to catch it.

* * *

Trifle Not With Cupid.

On a sunny morn a maiden
Met a boy at play,
With bow and quiver laden
Singing on his way—
"Trifle not with little Cupid,
Love will hold his sway;
He is not so blind and stupid
As some people say."

As he came he plaited rushes,
Singing merrily—
"Maiden, put aside your blushes,
Come and play with me.
Come and trip o'er hill and valley,
Round about each tree;
Love shall make your spirits rally,
Joyous, gay and free."

Hardly had the maid decided
With the boy to rove,
When his mesh, he nimbly twined it
O'er a branch above.
Round the tree they ran enraptured,
While his web he wove,
Till alas! his prize was captured
In the chords of love.

* * *

A Difference.

When Helen Jane, the modest miss,
Declares 'tis very wrong to kiss,
I really think that I see through it;
The lady, rightly understood,
Feels just as any Christian should—
She'd rather suffer wrong than do it.

* * *

A kiss is like rumor because it travels from mouth to mouth.

* * *

Some people shame the devil not by telling the truth, but by outlying him.

* * *

"There's a great plan in my head," said the husband to his wife. "Ah, I see," replied she; "you have it in a nutshell."

* * *

Men who endeavor to look courageous by wearing fierce mustaches are hair-en-scare-ens.

* * *

Time is money, they say. How willingly most of us would be willing to make an exchange.

* * *

No woman is happily married, according to her idea of things, until she has rejected three or four suitors.

* * *

When a man follows his own inclinations he seldom goes in the right direction.

* * *

Patience spends his life playing esquire to Success.

* * *

The only sure cure for gout is to reform one's habits.

CITY ELECTION MATTERS

Explanation of Measures Pertaining to Civil Service.

Both of the amendments involving the question of civil service are proposed by the special committee of seven appointed by the City Council. One authorizes the appointment by the City Council of a purchasing agent for the city, who shall be exempt from the civil service rules. To the appointive power is delegated the authority to fix the compensation of such an official. The other amendment places the burden of proof on discharged civil service employes.

The amendment creating the office of purchasing agent reads as follows:

All appointments to and promotions in the subordinate administrative service of the city shall be made solely according to fitness, which shall be ascertained by open competitive examination, and merit and fidelity in service, as provided for in this article. The provisions of this article shall apply to the incumbents of all offices, places and employments in the public service of the city, except the following: All officers chosen by popular election or by appointment by the Council, the members of all boards and commissions, the judges and clerks of elections, the deputies of the City Attorney, the chief deputy of the City Treasurer, the City Engineer and chief deputy City Engineer of the Water Department and the secretary of the Civil Service Commission, the Mayor's secretary, the members of the Health Department, the Building Inspector, Purchasing Agent and the Librarian.

Section 217 of the charter is amended so as to place the burden of proof in all cases on the discharged employe who is subject to the civil service rules. The proposed amendment reads as follows:

No employe in the classified civil service who shall have been permanently appointed under the provisions of this article shall be removed or discharged except for cause, a written statement of which, in general terms, shall be served upon him and a duplicate filed with the commission. Any employe so removed may, within ten days from his removal, file with the commission a written demand for investigation. If such demand shall allege, or it is shall otherwise appear to the commission that the discharge or removal was for political or religious reasons or was not in good faith, for the purpose of improving the public service, the matter shall forthwith be investigated by or before the commission or by or before some officer or board appointed by the commission for that purpose. The investigation shall be confined to the determination of the question of whether such removal or discharge was or was not for political or religious reasons, or was or was not made in good faith for the purpose of improving the public service. The burden of the proof shall be upon the discharged employe. On such grounds the commission may find that the employe so removed is entitled to reinstatement or may affirm his removal. The findings of such commission, or of such officer or board, when approved by the commission, shall be certified to the appointing officer, and shall forthwith be entered by such officer.

Any appointing authority may suspend a subordinate for a reasonable period not exceeding 30 days, but such suspension, if occurring more than once a year, shall be considered as a removal subject to investigation, in like manner. But if at any time the Council or other city authority shall abolish any office of employment, or reduce the number of employes, discharges shall be made in the reverse order of appointment, and if such officers or places shall again be created or reinstated, the employes so removed (except as to emergency employes) shall have preference for reappointment in the order of their discharge.

The commission shall, on or before the first day of January of each year, make to the Mayor for transmission to the Council, a report showing its work and actions, the rules in force, the practical effect thereof, and any suggestions it may approve for the more effectual accomplishment of the purposes of this article. The Mayor may require a report from the commission at any reasonable time.

The present incumbents of all offices, places and employments under the civil service rules shall hold their respective places, subject to the provisions of this article.