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CHECKS AND BALANCES.

The pathway of that theory of "checks and balances" upon which our system of Federal, state, and municipal government have been founded begins to be sadly beset with thorns. In his deeply instructive article on the subect in the January "Scribner's" Professor Henry Jones Ford, of Princeton, declares that it is no longer taught in respectable universities as a desirable political method. He says, too, that it has been discarded everywhere in the world except in the United States and in some of the turbulent South American republics. In those happy realms the application of the check and balance idea sometimes produces fifteen revolutions in nine months, as Professor Ford duly reminds us. The grotesque fallacy that political liberty is conserved by segregating the powers of government among three departments which cannot interact upon one another came to us from Montesquieu, who embodied it in his "Spirit of the Laws" in 1748. That entertaining Frenchman got it from England by the simple process of misunderstanding British institutions.

As Montesquieu saw the British government it was separated into executive, legislative and judicial departments with impassable barriers between them. He thought to himself, "What a lovely plan for poor France, where we sit bowed in servile submission to an absolute monarch." So he wrote his ignorance into a book, and when Blackstone came to compose his famous "Commentaries on the Laws of England" he copied Montesquieu's blunder, though he modified it a little. Blackstone knew very well that the legislative, executive and judicial powers were not separate in his own day and never had been. In Elizabeth's time the crown dictated to Parliament pretty effectively. Later the authority of the crown was absorbed into Parliament through the invention of a responsible ministry. So far as the judicial power is concerned, its highest function has always belonged to the House of Lords, while on the other hand it is a bit of commonplace knowledge that the British courts have played a major part in creating the common law. But though he was well aware of all this, Blackstone complacently copied the Frenchman's blunder, and from him it passed across the Atlantic and became the cornerstone of all our constitutions and municipal charters. Strange is the course of human history.

Inasmuch as our lawyers are devout students of Blackstone, whom they revere as the primal fount of all wisdom, his notion of the separation of governmental powers has developed in the United States into what Professor Ford justly calls a fetish. So rooted is our habit of ignorantly worshiping it that any effort to abate its capacity for mischief is denounced as an attack upon democracy. We learn, however, from the Princeton professor, that this very separation of the powers of government is the worst enemy democracy ever had. To borrow his phrasing, the rule of the people cannot be made effective under our system "for lack of appropriate institutions." There is no suitable organ through which the sovereignty of the citizen can work. Professor Ford says farther that "the invariable result of the admission of the principle of the separation of powers into the constitution of a state has been political disease." He quotes a remark of Burke's to the same purport. That great political philosopher declares that the lack of an administration which corresponds to the legislature must introduce "hideous disorder" into government. In fact, we have only to look at the condition of our state legislatures and city councils everywhere in the United States to see clearly enough the "hideous disorder" which Burke predicted. Checks and balances have certainly borne their legitimate fruit of corruption in this land. Those "paper constitutions" of the French revolution which Carlyle makes so much fun of, and which vanished so rapidly one after the other, were all based on Montesquieu's notion of the separation of powers. In 1875 France adopted a constitution which placed the powers of government in proper relations with one another and it has endured all sorts of shocks without tottering.

The inevitable result of the separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers is paralysis of the government. That in fact is the purpose which Montesquieu openly avows for it. "These three powers should naturally form a state of repose, or inaction," he says. But of course society, not being dead, cannot submit to complete inaction. The government must move, and, as Professor Ford points out, when it cannot progress in an orderly and continuous fashion it will go by the impulsion of some outside force. Sometimes this force will be armed violence and then we have a military oligarchy. Sometimes it will be corruption and then we have a plutocratic oligarchy. In the degradation of our state legislatures and city councils Professor Ford discerns the direct consequence of the separtion of the powers of government. Hallam remarked in 1827 that the system would "either destroy the executive or degrade the legislature." With us it has done the latter. Under normal conditions the people ought to welcome a session of the legislature because it represents them and enacts their will into law. But nowhere in the United States are legislatures ever welcome. On the contrary, they are dreaded, and numerous devices have been adopted to make them infrequent. Our legislatures have become distinctly inferior to the executives, while compared with the courts they are almost negligible as influences upon public affairs. If this is the fruit of "checks and balances," perhaps the time has come to think of top-grafting the tree with some other variety of apple.

OLD AND NEW MOSSBACKS.

Each river bridge in Portland has had to fight its way. When the railroad bridge was projected twenty-five years ago—now known as the Steel bridge—it was considered a dreadful menace to navigation—by a few ax-grinders. The same kind of ax-grinders is now fighting the proposed Broadway span, using every trick within reach and doing its best to injure the public credit in the new improvement.

When the Steel bridge bill passed the Legislature of 1887, Governor Pennoyer vetoed it, but the measure was enacted over the veto. Precisely the same pretexts were trumped up against the railroad span as now against the Broadway viaduct. The proposed bridge was said to be unnecessary; ferries were good enough; O. R. & N. and Southern Pacific trains need not run to the West Side; ships and steamboats would be hampered and endangered; wharf owners would be injured in the use of their riparian property.

When the person, familiar with affairs of that day, reads the doings of today's Frank Kiernans, he almost thinks the old-time mossbacks and fossils have come to life again to plague Portland's pulsing energies.

The Steel bridge was an essential of a progressive community. The Broadway span will be built in spite of its selfish foes. And in after years, its opponents will belong to the same class of mossbacks and fossils as do those who fought the railroad bridge a quarter of a century ago.

WEARY WASTE OF WORDS.

Long and loud speeches are the pride of the Bryans and the Roosevelts and the La Follettes in this country. An "orator" nowadays is hardly warmed up to his subject until he has emitted 2000 or 3000 words—and had them carried by wires to the scattered newspapers of the country.

But, be it remembered, Lincoln boiled down his Gettysburg speech to 500 words, or less. That is less than half a column of today's newspaper print. Think of Bryan or Roosevelt or La Follette confining himself to 500 words. So vast a quantity of words would remain unsaid that the trusts would have everything their own way for gobbling up the people.

Yet Lincoln's Gettysburg speech is one of the imperishable classics of the English language. Its brevity and its spirit will tell future ages the tale of a great crisis, after histories shall be yellowed with age and festooned by spiders.

However, it may be added for the delectation of our present-day spellbinders that the Lincoln speech "fell flat" upon its hearers. Lincoln himself remarked when he had delivered it: "It is a flat failure; it won't scour." Edward Everett remarked: "It is not what I expected from Mr. Lincoln." Mr. Seward said: "He has made a failure; his speech is not equal to him."

Our orators fill columns of the fine-print newspapers and imagine that the way to make impression on the American mind. But it is certain that readers in later years will not wade through the waste. Few of them do so now. This habit even causes Presidents of the United States to fill their messages to Congress with 50,000 words.

The men who boil down their English are, alas, too few. Colonel Roosevelt will soon make a Western tour. He will "speak" en route. If he would devote his efforts to cut-short expression he would be treating the American people to a novelty. And perhaps he would be raising himself to a place with Lincoln. Here is a chance for the Colonel to lift himself to the level of the immortals.

All the West will join the wish that the Colonel boil it down. That is the rule and law of speech that is most needed for enforcement.

AN OLD STORY.

Unthinkable, and of course unspeakable, is the "perfect mother" idea that is being exploited by one E. A. See in Chicago in connection with two young girls who are his dupes, and their shallow-pated mothers. There is always room for suspicion of immorality of the grossly sensual type when men and women proclaiming themselves "seekers after truth" band themselves together under such titles as "The Inner Thought Circle," "Absolute Life" and similar appellations.

An almost world wide demonstration of the utter moral abandonment of such self-proclaimed "truth seekers" was made a third of a century or more ago, under the leadership of Victoria Woodhull and the bold and open name "Free Love." Good women and vain, weak men were swept into this maelstrom; homes were broken up and families of young children were practically cast adrift—while their parents, consorting with "affinities," rioted in the idea of "individual liberty"—so-called—which repudiated shamelessly the marriage tie and made game of its obligations.

This did not last long, but it lasted quite long enough to wreck many lives and smirch reputations that had been above suspicion. Sad and shameful evidence of this was brought out in the great Beecher-Tilton scandal as heard in the courts during the Summer of 1875, and which was silenced only by the strong personality and prodigious following of the great pastor of Plymouth Church, leaving the world at large sadly or cynically unconvinced of his innocence of the charges preferred by his accuser.

"The Woodhull doctrine," so-called, had its day and passed. Its wrecks have long been derelicts upon the sea of life or lost in the oblivion of the grave. Its feeble imitators have, however, appeared upon the scene from time to time, mostly under the cloak of religion. A most revolting example of this was furnished by Joshua Creffield and his deluded followers in this state a few years ago in the name of "perfect holiness." The indecencies of his teachings as witnessed in their effect upon homes and individuals, were appalling and ended only with his death, by violence and the incarceration in insane asylums and prisons of some of his most devoted followers.

The new cult, now under the limelight of police investigation in Chicago, like other movements of its kind, scorns the conventionalities of marriage in the relations between the sexes, speaks in high-sounding words of "perfect motherhood," of the generaton of "a greater race" and of a process of "purification" that is to bring these conditions about, which being sifted reveal gross sensuality, ruined homes and all the rest of the vile brood with which society has now and again been cursed under high-sounding but utterly meaningless names. A hydra-headed monster, it is useless to hope that it will be exterminated, whatever testimony may be brought out concerning its moral rottenness. It is a creature sired by duplicity and whelped by the strange credulity that springs from religious fervor and erotic emotions between which there is a pronounced degree of kinship. The best that can be done is to put the man in the case in prison and consign his dupes to a Magdalen asylum.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ARIZONIANS.

Senator Bourne's reference to the President of the United States in his recent volunteer "address" to the sovereign people of Arizona as the "man who happens temporarily to be occupying the (executive) office" is, and is intended to be, insolent and offensive. Yet perhaps nothing more respectful was to be expected, following the humiliating failure of the sycophantic campaign of the Oregon Senator to sneak into the President's confidence. The occupant of the White House happens to be beyond the arts and wiles of the accidental Senator whose ideas of statesmanship have not yet risen above perfecto cigars, golf games and sumptuous banquets.

The President has intimated heretofore that he does not like the Arizona constitution with its extraordinary variety of radical legislation and numerous declarations of novel and hazardous principles. The attitude of President Taft becomes of great importance to Arizona, since he will be called upon to approve the constitution, and to issue a proclamation admitting Arizona to the Union. He may do neither. It is ridiculous, therefore, for Senator Bourne to advise the people of Arizona to disregard wholly the opinions and resent the "dictation" of "one man" at Washington. That man holds the fate of Arizona statehood in the hollow of his hand, and it is well for Arizona to remember that he is the President of the United States.

Is it a proper or becoming attitude for any territory, knocking for admission to the Union, to define and declare its own conditions? Has the United States through Congress or the President nothing to say?

THE WELLES DIARY.

By publishing the diary of Gideon Welles the Atlantic Monthly has done an important service to students of American history. The last installment, which appears in the January number of the magazine, closes a series that has been read with attention and interest though not always with pleasure.

Secretary Welles was almost as much given over to prejudice as Andrew Johnson himself, of whom the Secretary of the Navy was an uncompromising partisan. Welles' judgment is warped wherever his feelings are concerned and he does not scruple apparently to color events to suit his preconceptions. Still his diary illuminates a critical period of history and as it will be read by the light of other documents one need not fear that it will pervert the truth a great deal in the minds of students.

The struggle between Johnson and Congress over the question of reconstruction finally merged, as scholars have pointed out recently, into a larger contest in which the constitutional powers of the President were at stake. The Senate having discovered its ability to wage factional warfare, and found itself invulnerable while it could wound its opponent almost fatally, proceeded at length to try to make the President its vassal. At least so the affair now appears to some observers.

The differences between the President and Congress were perhaps not irreconcilable at the outset. It is possible that they might have been settled amicably had it not been for Charles Sumner. That remarkable man was fully as pigheaded as Johnson, though it must be confessed that his motives were incomparably higher. No doubt much of the latter's obstinacy in his blunders was due to his lack of early training. This defect obscured his intelligence and prevented him from taking a broad humanitarian view of the negro question, or of any other question for that matter. He came of the small farmer stock in the Tennessee mountains whose men were accustomed to revere the slaveholding magnates as serfs did their feudal lords in an earlier age.

These petty property owners also detested the negroes as men who have to do their own work always detest a servile race which competes with them and degrades their toil. Johnson fully shared the reverence of his class for the lordly slaveholders and its hatred of the negroes. This prepared him to become the tool of the beaten Southern leaders and to oppose negro suffrage with them when the great questions involved in reconstruction finally came to the front.

Sumner's obstinacy, on the other hand, was not due to any lack of training or to any false reverence for a master class. He himself belonged to the aristocracy of his state and it is difficult to discern in his speeches much reverence for anything on earth except his own principles. These were fortunately of the most generous and enlightened character. Sumner stood in the front rank of the progressive movement of his day. How he would have felt toward the advanced projects of our time such as the referendum, the popular election of Senators and the like, it is vain to speculate. The old method of election kept him in office as long as he wished to serve and perhaps it never occurred to him that any change was desirable. The influence of corporate wealth in the Senate had not at that time made itself dangerous to the public welfare and the slavery domination had been destroyed. Hence there was nothing to raise the question of the popular choice of Senators in Sumner's mind. As soon as he perceived the drift of Johnson's policy he set out to oppose it in every way he could contrive. He published speeches, wrote public letters and made personal appeals to the President. Of course, nothing Sumner could do availed in the least to alter Johnson's predetermined ideas. He chose his policy and stuck to it like grim death. Thus the situation was made as difficult as possible by the inexorable obstinacy of the two master minds of the day, Sumner's and Johnson's.

Johnson took the oath of office just about three hours after Lincoln died. His latest biographer relates the old tale that he was drunk at the time and continued his spree for days afterward. While he was still under the influence of liquor some of the Southern sympathizers spirited him away to a resort where they kept him quiet and so won upon him that he was ready to do their will for all time to come.

This story lacks confirmation but it is certain that Johnson very soon began to act precisely as he would if it had been true. He proceeded to appoint rebel irreconcilables temporay Governors of one state after another, pardoned enough proslavery fanatics to compose an electorate in New Orleans and other cities and took additional measures which tended to place the negroes at a hopeless disadvantage. Had his course not been interrupted the enfranchised blacks never would have been allowed to vote in a single Southern precinct.

That Johnson was checkmated and the right of suffrage finally conferred indiscriminately upon the negroes is owing to Charles Sumner more than to any other individual. The course of events has raised curious problems as to his wisdom in the matter. In spite of all the reconstruction fuss and fury the negroes have been practically disfranchised throughout the old South and the people of the North quietly acquiesce. Even the Supreme Court seems to find it difficult to interfere and enforce the constitutional amendments which ostensibly guarantee their right to vote. Perhaps when history renders its final verdict it will be conceded that while Johnson went too far in his opposition to negro suffrage he was nearer right than Sumner after all. Mere humanitarianism is not always a safe guide for a statesman.

BENEFICENT ADVERTISEMENTS.

It is sometimes rather hastily assumed that the advertising matter which is published in a newspaper or magazine yields nothing but profit. It costs very little and it is paid for at an enviously sumptuous rate. There is a current notion, too, that advertising benefits nobody but the men of business who pay for it. They take that way to acquaint the public with what they have for sale and reap a golden harvest for their pains. Of course there is some truth in this view of the subject, but to attain perfect understanding of it one ought to pay a little attention to two or three other points. Perhaps the most interesting of them is the fact that the subscription price hardly ever meets the expense of publishing a newspaper or magazine. The cost of white paper, typesetting, special articles, and so on, in most cases far exceeds what readers pay for their periodical literature. Hence if it continues its career some other source of income has to be found. That is the reason why most publications are eager to obtain advertising. It saves them from a deficit which would be unavoidable by any other method.

We see, therefore, that the money which a periodical receives for advertisements is not pure profit by any means. Occasionally it sinks as fast as it arrives in the yawning chasm of debt on whose verge the hapless periodical forever trembles. And as to the advertising itself, the reader is in error who thinks that it benefits only the man who pays for it. How is it that the citizen shut up in the quiet security of his home learns about the new devices for making life comfortable, happy and safe?

What intelligent reader of the newspapers or magazines ever neglects the advertisements? He turns to them first of all, and peruses their fascinating tales more raptly than any other part of the periodical. We have heard of people whom advertisements beset with delight. The artistic pictures of all sorts of desirable wonders fill them, thrill them with longings unfelt before. It is hardly too much to say that advertisements for the last twenty-five years have been one of the most important factors in progressive civilization.

THE SINGLE-TAX "DIVIDE."

Even without single tax the "increment" of land is heavily taxed. Tax assessments include the high values that have been added to land by "social needs." In Multnomah County it is well known that the Assessor is constantly moving up his valuations of land close to "market prices."

The rule of assessment and taxation proved best by the world's long experience is to adjust tax burden to actual value. This is the right rule for taxes on land and on machinery, houses and cattle. "Social needs" largely determine the values of each and every kind of property. But labor and personal thrift make property available for use. It is wholly wrong to ignore the "increment" that labor and personal thrift give to land. Yet single-taxers would ignore it by taxing private property in land out of existence. They assume that "society" makes all the value of land. But without the individual effort in clearing land, draining, paving and otherwise improving it, land would be just as the Indians had it; nor would there be any "society" of the modern kind.

Value of all private property, land and other, is a product of labor and thrift as well as of "social progress." The argument for abolition of one kind of private property applies equally well for abolition of all kinds. There is really little difference, therefore, between the single-taxer and the socialist. Both seek to abolish private land ownership; and in addition, the socialist seeks to abolish private ownership of the means of production and distribution—which means community ownership of pretty much every kind of property.

A lot on Morrison street sells for $210,000. The "increment" in the lot is immense. But the Assessor at once puts a valuation on the lot that will compel the owner to pay taxes on the full increment. This tax valuation corresponds closely with the market valuation. Thus the owner is paying taxes on his wealth in the land practically the same as if it were in a factory or in the printing presses of a newspaper, or in a stock of merchandise. In fact, his money will pay more taxes in land than in personal property, because if it were in the latter form he might conceal large part of it from the Assessor.

Single tax is a scheme of worse social injustice. It ignores the labor element in land value and would confiscate it. For land is worthless without the labor that makes it productive or serviceable. The difference between the ancient wilderness and the present fields and cities in this country is due to labor and to heavy investment of capital. Single tax would confiscate this improvement and give it to the state.

Single tax will be advocated in Oregon next election. It was rejected by the state electors two years ago. It is a scheme to suppress individual thrift, to take possession of the lands of toil and industry and to bestow the proceeds on "all the people."

COURTS AND PEOPLE'S POWER.

Naturally the Supreme Court is puzzled and naturally it has called upon the flower of the Oregon bar to help it construe the judiciary amendment proposed and adopted under the initative in the recent election.

This amendment, literally construed, after admonishing the Supreme Court not to re-examine any fact submitted to the jury in the lower court, instructs the court to disregard errors by the lower court and somehow or other reach an opinion. All the evidence submitted at the trial may be sent to the Supreme Court. For what purpose? That is what the court is now asking.

It is observed that this interesting measure permits the Supreme Court to enter a different judgment from that rendered below, if it can ascertain from facts which it is not to examine that a different judgment should have been rendered. Would not such procedure impair the right of trial by jury? asks the Supreme Court.

These may be interesting questions for the lawyers to discuss but they did not bother the electorate a minute. Why should they? Did not somebody write a piece in the official pamphlet stating that the amendment was a good thing and would give the people more power? What do we care if the right of trial by jury is impaired or the whole system of judicial procedure upset and made indefinite? Let it be remembered that this amendment enables us—the people—to stick our thumbs in our vests and strut around with the proud feeling that the County Clerk, Sheriff, County Judge and District Attorney may be put out of business at any time we may want to take the trouble to do it.

We have secured a power of which we have been deprived ever since the constitution was proclaimed. We may never use the power, but it is a comforting thought that it is there in the closet ready to be brought out and exercised at any time. Power is what we want.

THE ORIGIN OF LIFE.

Intelligent minds have always been fascinated by the question how life originated upon the earth. The natural answer which occurred to the primitive world was that some deity breathed the breath of life into man's nostrils and that he forthwith became a living soul, while the lower animals were set going with still less ceremony. This was satisfactory as long as people were content to accept illusory solutions of their intellectual difficulties but it has now become a little empty. The reply that "the Lord did it" no longer appears to us to resolve the riddle of life, or anything else.

Another answer which seemed for a long time to suffice has also lost its charm. This was the supposition that life came to this world from some other sphere. It was brought on a meteorite, or perhaps in some remote antiquity people were able to travel from one star to another. Everything seems possible to some minds if only you go far enough back in the past. They forget that the farther back one goes the more barbarous and helpless he finds human beings. We are nearer the ability to journey from star to star today than anybody ever was before.

But even if life did come to this world from some other that does not tell us how it originated. It only evades the question. We are impelled to ask what set it going in the other worlds and the true answer is as distant as it was in the first place. Of recent years science has ceased to seek the beginnings of life in vague speculation. It has turned to the more wearisome but more effectual method of investigation and experiment. The best way to find out what life is and how it began is to watch the process by which inanimate matter becomes animate. Scientists not only observe this process in their laboratories, but they have learned to imitate it in several particulars. For example, they have been able for a long time to manufacture those substances which go by the name "organic" without the aid of living creatures.

An article in the Outlook for December 31 by Albert R. Ledoux specifies a number of these laboratory "syntheses," as they are called. Indigo comes from one of them. This dye was formerly obtained from a plant whose cultivation employed many men and much capital. Now it is made artificially and the indigo plant has almost disappeared from agriculture. The same is true of madder, another dye stuff. Alcohol is also an organic product. It comes by the vital process of fermentation from sugar, but chemists can manufacture it in their laboratories without the aid of ferments. They can build it up by starting from coal, limestone and water. Thus in dozens of instances the consequences of life can be reproduced perfectly. Still life itself is another matter. That has not yet been set up into anything that was inanimate to start with.

Professor Loeb seems to have come pretty near to the miracle of creating life when he fertilized the eggs of the sea urchin without the intervention of the male parent, but we must not overlook the important circumstance that he had the eggs to begin with. He did not make them. If he had done that, then science might have pointed proudly to a final solution of the problem of life's origin. The Lord could have been bowed out of doors and chemistry installed on his vacant throne. But at present there is little prospect of the throne becoming vacant. The fact seems to be that the mystery of life grows deeper as science penetrates below its surface. The philosophy of Henri Bergson frankly admits its miraculous nature, if by "miracle" we understand that which lies outside the field of intelligence. This great French thinker lays it down that everything inanimate can be brought under the authority of scientific laws, but life is a law unto itself and our intelligence never can understand it. It does not follow, however, that we can not learn, how life acts under various conditions and even imitate its results. But it is wise to keep clearly in mind the distinction between the manufacture of organic products and the creation of the force which made them at the outset. Between these two achievements the gulf is wide and deep.

Mr. Ledoux, in his Outlook article, seems rather to scout the idea that there is a "vital force." In this particular he is perhaps not quite up with the times. It is understood that the best biological thought of our day has pretty well abandoned the expectation of eliminating the concept of a definite life principle. That such an entity exists it is almost impossible to doubt in the light of all that we now know about living substances. Consider, for example, the way living tissue conducts itself when it is cut off from the animal body and placed in a suitable culture. A piece of bone will do for the experiment, or a bit of kidney or liver. Properly treated it will grow for a long time cut off from all connection with the body it once belonged to. Tiny pieces of skin will enlarge under the same conditions. Fragments of organs in this state can be infected with cancer and no doubt this fact will lead to fruitful study of that dread disease under conditions most favorable to discovery of its real nature.

What causes these fragments thus severed from their natural relations to continue to grow? Can we escape the conclusion that there is in their cells a force or principle, different from all other forces, which produces its peculiar consequences as long as it has the opportunity? The ready reply that a crystal will also continue to grow is irrelevant. A crystal will grow and reproduces its kind as long as it has a supply of the necessary material. The life force in the bit of bone or kidney makes its own material out of the crude medium in which it is placed. The difference is fundamental.

FRIENDLESS, NEGLECTED OREGON.

Possibly Oregon could obtain its irrigation fund dues by sending its proxies in the United States Senate to Borah, Smoot, Heyburn and Guggenheim. These Senators are the ones who "cut the melon" and awarded their own states the big slices, while Oregon's Senators felt no concern in the business.

"Proxies," however, are abhorred by both Chamberlain and Bourne, who are ever ready to aver that proxies are dangerous to the rule of the people. But in such case as this the people of Oregon don't rule. They are dependent on the industry and the fidelity of their Senators, and in this case their trust is evidently so poorly placed that they get almost nothing.

Yet, inasmuch as Senators Borah, Smoot, Heyburn and Guggenheim have proved themselves able representatives of their own constituents, they might be persuaded to do something for Oregon in its present plight.

Since Oregon's Senators care nothing for this state's irrigation needs—as shown by their past apathy and their present neglect—and since they fill the only two seats that the Constitution has alloted to Oregon, it is obvious that this state is poor indeed.

Perhaps the Oregon Senators would be willing for their more efficient colleagues to do something for Oregon. To that extent, at least, they might be willing to have the people of Oregon befriended.

The Oregonian desires to retract. It stated yesterday, in effect, that vigorous protest and resolute insistence from the people of Oregon had aroused the Senators Bourne and Chamberlain to activity in the matter of apportionment of reclamation funds. The statement was founded on a telegram from Washington City purported to be signed by the two Oregon Senators. It now appears that Senator Bourne's secretary, hearing that Secretary Ballinger and Congressmen Hawley and Ellis were likely to accomplish a reconsideration of the apportionment, hastened to appropriate credit for the deed to the Senatorial combination. We learn from dispatches from Washington that Chamberlain is in Mississippi and that Bourne is chasing a gutta percha ball over Georgia with a crooked stick. Neither one has made an effort to right the wrongs brought about by their indolence, indifference or incapacity.

Hope for the Indian has at last dawned. A little colony of the Alabamas, renowned in song and story, has been found in Texas, the members of which do not drink or gamble; have built for themselves snug little cottages which they inhabit in family style; are self-sustaining and, greatest wonder of all, are industrious, peaceable and law-abiding. Sad to say, they number less than 200 all told, a fact which emphasizes the belief that good Indians, like good little boys, are prone to die young.

The body of Senator Stephen B. Elkins will be laid to rest near his home in West Virginia today with simple obsequies, following similar services in Washington. Again is given a negative answer to the pathetic question in Gray's immortal "Elegy":

Can honor's voice provoke the silent dust
Or flattery soothe the dull, cold ear of death?

In the days following 1896, when clouds low and dark hung over the Democratic party, $1 a plate was enough to pay at a Jackson day feast, but in the flush of the November victory, with visions of the pie counter two years hence, doubling the price for 1911 ought not to be resisted by any expectant patriot in the ranks.

Americans, native born and naturalized, who are fond of free speech, ought to be glad their lot is not cast in Alsace-Lorraine, where the richest men in the German "suburb" were expelled for talking politics.

It is said thta Manuel Braganza, late of Portugal, is greatly in need of money. Judging from his picture, he is a husky young man who might find work at fair wages were he to look for it with due diligence.

Specific information is at hand concerning the net earnings of an Oregon hen of approved ancestry. They are a fraction over $2 a year. Is further argument necessary to enlarge the state's poultry industry?

Some of the 109 new locomotives ordered last week for the Harriman lines will be pulling freight trains into Central Oregon.

Champ Clark's successor will not find the job so easy with 32 more mavericks in the Congressional corral.

Lorimer's Scotch verdict at Chicago has not convinced his confreres in the United States Senate.

TOPICAL VERSE

McGinnis That Was.

McGinniss is dead; but, begorry,
He's left a great record behind;
He died at the height av his glory
—An' he was the glorious kind!
His inimies called him a grafter,
An' maybe he was, but I know
He was head av the legions av laughter
An' I'm happy to think av him so.

He was brimmin' wid blarney an' banter,
An' buzzin' wid humor an' fun,
He rollicked through life at a canter
Whin it wasn't a race or a run;
To women—the best or the worst one—
His voice was a tindher caress,
He'd spend his last cint like the first one
Wid a manner no words cud express.

He was fond av good dinners and suppers,
An' fond uv good liquors as well,
An' though he was oft on his uppers
Be hivins, you nivir cud tell!
For his smile was a warm one an' winnin';
His manner was gracious an' bland;
In virtuous ways or in sinnin'
Oho, but McGinniss was grand!

McGinniss is dead an' departed,
But he was a Man to the ind;
Big-handed, big-voiced an' big-hearted,
A frind that was always a frind!
From New Year's clear through to December
He wint the whole route, good or bad,
Ochone, we'll be proud to remember,
An' sure to be missin' the lad!

—Harper's Weekly.

A Postponed Tragedy.

"You have appendicitis," said the doctor
man to Jim,
"And I must operate at once, or else
your chance is slim."

"You shall not touch a knife to me,"
was James' firm reply—
"I'll have no operation, and I ain't a-
going to die."

"Unless I cut," the doctor said, "you'll
surely pass away;
You will be dead, believe me, sir, by 2
o'clock today."

So Jim was scared and yielded. The
carving was a shock,
But Jim was very thankful that he
lived at 2 o'clock.

For doctors know their business, and
it's very plain to see
That this one saved Jim's life, because
he didn't die till 3.

—Boston Traveler.

A Voice From the Plains.

Do I look like a city-bred creature,
A woman skimped tight at the hips,
With an inch of white flour on each
feature
And a daub of red paste on my lips?
Is my head weighted down with a cargo
Of horse hair, or oakum, or tow,
That you ask me if I'm from Chicago,
Or one of the set that you know?

Do I look like a girl that would wobble
When nature has given me feet,
Or tie myself up in a hobble
To make me a sight on the street?
Is my hat a ridiculous jummux
Of heathenish color and shape
That would sicken the sight and the
stomach,
Of even the foolishest ape?

Do I talk with an edge like a parrot,
Or giggle or simper, or flirt?
Is my hair bleached the shade of a carrot?
Do I wear a man's trousers or shirt?
Am I rigged up to strut like a dummy
In duds unbecoming and loud,
Or swaddled to look like a mummy—
My form showing clear to the crowd?

No, I'm not a city-bred woman;
I come from a place in the West
Where women intend to stay human,
Because they consider it best.
We have use for our brains and our
bodies,
And someth'ng to live for but style—
We are genuine women—not shoddies—
And life to our kind is worth while.

We are here for the good of creation;
We're women, not clothes signs or
birds;
We're working for human salvation,
And value good deeds and good
words.
Oh, yes, we have heard that you pity
Such badly gowned creatures as I,
But, thank God, I'm no child of the
city—
I'm dressed for the plains and the
sky!

—New York Times.

Mexichorus.

I'm glad I don't live in that dear old
Guerrero,
With all the insurgents and ladies
therero,—
It may be exciting but I don't carero.

Hohokus is better, I think, than Chihuahua;
It may be some quieter, but ou-la-lalahua,
You won't be shot dead for a single
rah-rahua!

So, though I detest and abhor old
Porfirio,
And shed for his victims the salt-flavored teario,
I'll keep on detesting and shedding
right herio!

—Horatio Winslow in Puck.

Aunt Hannah's Visit.

Take me back to Turkey Level; dat's de
place where I belong.
I hardly struck de city till I said "Dar's
sumpin' wrong!"
I stepped up on a omnibus and ax de
fare to pay,
De driver simply turn a crank and we
was on our way.
I's feelin' mighty nervous an' I's gettin' kind er cross.
Take me back to Turkey Level;
lemme ride behind a hoss!

I went to dat big house to see de white
folks dat I know;
A young policeman peeked out through
de bars an' says "hello!"
I stepped right in beside him, 'case he
didn' have no proof.
He jerked a handle an' we started
sailin' foh de roof.
I couldn't hardly ketch my bref. I
was a sight to see.
Take me back to Turkey Level. Steps
is good enough for me!

De way dem white folks does is sho'ly
curious to me.
I says, "Please light a fire, 'cause I'se
as cold as I kin be."
Dey turn a little spigot in an iron
fence so neat
And dey fill de little settin' room chock
- full o' fireless heat.
I never seen de like a' dat in all my
blessed days.
Take me back to Turkey Level,
'cause I wants to watch de
blaze.

Dey never makes no special diff'rence
'twixt de day an' night.
Dey twists a little button when dey
wants to strike a light.
An' when dey wants some music, dey
takes paper from de shelf
An' feeds it to de organ—den it goes
an plays itself.
De candle light is plenty an' mo'
comfortin' by far.
Take me back to Turkey Level.
Lemme hear dat old guitar!

—Washington, D. C., Star.