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Portland, Sunday, April 13, 1913.

THE TROUBLE WITH THE CHARTER.

Whatever may be the result of the vote on the commission charter, it will be practically certain that the verdict will not have been intelligently rendered. The pamphlet ostensibly designed to aid the electorate in determining the merits of the charter contains such a mass of irrelevant material that the tender of the average man is left bent on study to find the people on a rule the voter is thus left to vote whatever prejudices he may derive from listening to statements that this or that interest is opposing or supporting the charter for ulterior reasons, or is called upon to vote according to the faith in the sincerity and knowledge of the few who are familiar with the present charter and have made a study of the new document.

In a way it is to be a repetition of the attempt last November to obtain an expression from the people on the subject of commission government. At that time, it is true, the issue was involved by the submission of an alternative charter, but the question was presented at a special election held four days before a Presidential election. Interest in the state and national affairs. The voters were to choose four days later not only officers but to vote on more than 40 measures submitted by initiative and referendum. The opportunity given to study the official charter at that time was not a fair one, and therefore it is not surprising that some of the important features contained therein and reproduced in the present charter draft should be attacked now for the first time.

Protest was made by The Oregonian last Fall as to the selection of the date for the charter election.

The authority responsible for that mistake erred no more grievously than the authority responsible for the jumble of stuff now put out in pamphlet form. That there is a disposition to shift responsibility for later error is an argument in favor of centralized authority, but it does not help the voter determining whether the commission charter now under consideration is best or even good.

Concerning the late criticisms directed against the charter, the one that involves the preference voting system appears to be the most weighty.

On one hand it has been demonstrated that it presents an opportunity to defeat the will of the majority in the selection of city officials. On the other hand its legality has been seriously questioned. It is plain that unless the city has very broad home rule powers the state primary and general election laws must apply in Portland municipal elections. If the primary law cannot be set aside by the city, the men nominated by each party in the convention primary will be entitled to have their names on the June election ballot, even though the commission charter carries.

The general election laws prescribe a form of ballot which is not in accord with the form set forth in the proposed charter. The general election law also permits election by plurality. Adoption of the charter therefore means legal complications in determining who shall serve as the first Mayor and Commissioners thereafter.

If the primary nomination right be valued and the present primary law adopted, every still remains the possibility that some candidate may receive a plurality of first choice votes but not a majority, and will claim victory under the general election law, though not entitled to it under the preferential system.

These possible, even probable, controversies, we may still find that the desires of the people have been circumvented in the manner illustrated by Mr. Lombard.

This apparent defect in the charter has been cited as the most serious.

There is at least a plausible argument opposed to the assertion that the Mayor would have autocratic power to control legislation by exerting his authority to change assignments of departments and work among the Commissioners. This theory is completely a danger not only that the Mayor may be unfit but a possibility that at least two of the Commissioners may be bribed or willing to be coerced or abused. It places importance upon the chance that three out of five officials elected will be unfit for office. It would seem that the same danger would be just as strong if the duties of each department were established by the charter itself and the Commissioners elected to specific places. In a commission of five there is no control legislation and most of the details of administration, whether the Mayor or the people assign the Commissioners to their departments.

As to the preferential voting system, about the only thing in its favor that can be discerned is its proposed elimination of the expense of a primary election. If it is illegal it counters one of the strong arguments advanced to satisfy those who object to the high salaries proposed for Mayor and Commissioners. If it is valid it may be expected that the opportunity it offers for political manipulations will be used. It is a grave weakness that has been discovered at a date so late that the trouble cannot be remedied.

The trouble heretofore encountered in securing the submission of a suitable charter draft in Portland has been the injection of themselves into the drafting body by men of an experimental turn of mind. Defeat of the charter, if defeat it be, will not be a decision against commission government. It will be due to the interference of visionaries in drafting the charter and

to a strange carelessness in providing means of information for the voters by those who profess to be favorable to its adoption.

COLONISTS.

Unusually heavy is the press of colonists just at this season. With each succeeding day whole trainloads of new homebuilders are being brought to this domain of new opportunity and new inspiration. Every section of the state is sharing in this invaluable influx, for every section of the state has its peculiar opportunities and inducements to offer.

As the heavily-laden trains sweep into Western Oregon the contrast between old homes and new is immediate and powerful. The travelers have just left lands blanketed with snow where the icy grip of Winter has been slackened but not released. Here flowers are found and advanced. Early flowers are blooming on hills and in fields. The grass is green and long. The fragrant odors of the season freight the warm atmosphere. It is cloudy, perhaps, or a mild April shower is falling, but it is the shower of Springtime and bears no relation to this first cheering wholesome impression of the new land will be confirmed by time and experience. The newcomers will find among them they have indeed reached the country of opportunity and plenty.

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draft a bill and to reconcile the many divergent opinions. These latter are almost as numerous as the members, and all will demand expression when the bill comes before House and Senate. After the labors of the tariff debate, Congress will not be in the mood to enter upon an unlimited discussion of so intricate a topic. The best that can be expected is that a bill will be whipped into shape for consideration at the opening of the regular session in December. If the contrary should prove true, this Congress will develop unwonted energy.

SIGNIFICANT FIGURES.

It is improbable that a serious breach in the relations of the United States and Japan will result from the present anti-land law agitation. No doubt a solution of the problem will be found and the usual spirit of friendliness between the two nations will persist. At the same time the situation offers an opportune moment for a casual survey of our military status.

While California is gazing Japan with an objectionable anti-land bill the American military establishment boasts a mobile army of 20,000 men. True, the authorized strength of the United States Army is in the neighborhood of 100,000 men. But 20,000 is the total mobile force available for actual field service and it would take considerable time to mobilize this handful on the Pacific Coast should its presence there be deemed advisable.

Compared with this slender force Japan can mobilize in a few hours about 250,000 men. These are trained up to the minute. Added to this force she can mobilize effective reserves sufficient to bring her total mobile army up to 1,000,000 men. These reserves are far more effective than our own 110,000 National Guardsmen which would augment the United States regular establishment in the field.

The Oregonian isn't in sympathy with the yellow peril agitators. Nor does it foresee difficulty of a serious nature with Japan. But it believes that these figures are important and should be before the public mind. In California they might, if known, help foster discretion, and in other sections promote a sentiment favorable to preparedness in times of peace.

NEWS OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

One of the earliest inferences to be drawn from the registration statistics which Science has compiled from twenty leading universities is that the "boom period" of collegiate expansion has passed and gone. Five big institutions showed an actual falling off in their total enrollment for the year 1912. The largest gains were made by Columbia and California universities.

Harvard's lead in this particular seems to have been broken. In 1912 the gain in 1912 over the previous year's enrollment was only 303 students, which is pretty small when we remember how many departments it has. In 1912 there were only three colleges which could show an increase of more than 200 students. In 1911 the gain was 200. Decidedly our educational institutions are passing out of the period of mushroom expansion into what we may hope to be a steady development of something better than mere size and numbers.

Columbia, with her 3003 students, headed the list for numbers. In 1912 she stood fifteenth with only 2365. Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois were far ahead of her. No doubt the time is approaching when Yale will be classed among the minor colleges as far as enrollment goes, though of course in precious old money she will remain a power. The time will come when Yale will be classed among the minor colleges as far as enrollment goes, though of course in precious old money she will remain a power.

An interesting feature in almost all the universities and colleges is their new cult of the Summer session. Beginning as a sort of diversion where indolent professors imparted vacation information to dilly-dallying students, it has become an important part of the college year. The courses are included in the regular work of the institution and the students expect to profit as much as they do at other seasons, or even more. One great advantage of the Summer term is that it permits an exchange of professors among the colleges. Almost every institution sends elsewhere for some of its instructors. This gives the home teachers a much-needed vacation and provides for the students something of that variety which they obtain in Germany by rotating from one university to another in this country we have developed a loyalty to particular colleges which sometimes goes beyond reason and positively restricts the educational advantages of the students.

The numbers we have quoted above refer to the entire student body at the various institutions, including law, medical and graduate students. Columbia does not retain her leadership when we consider only "college undergraduates"; that is, the men and women working for the bachelor's degree. Harvard leads in this category with 2800, while Columbia has only 1400. New York, with its metropolitan advantages, attracts mature men and women more strongly than freshmen and sophomores. The University of the City of New York, in spite of its reputation for being one of the most rapidly developing institutions in the country, its enrollment exceeded Yale's last year by more than a thousand students, while it is rapidly acquiring prestige for vigor and progressive educational methods. Its president, John Hopkins, belongs in the same group of Johns Hopkins students which gave Woodrow Wilson to the country. Albert Shaw, editor of the Review of Reviews, was also one of them. They formed a band of extraordinary successful men. No doubt in the early days of Johns Hopkins they caught something of that primitive vital impulse which we are told accounts for the creation of life itself.

As one might expect, Cornell heads the list in respect to agricultural students. Her enrollment is 1185. Wisconsin comes next with 892. The divinity schools of the various colleges do not compare favorably with their counterparts in numbers. Northwestern University, a Methodist institution in Illinois, has more than any other, but its enrollment only footed up 223. The Baptist Chicago University has 132 divinity students, while Yale has but an even 100 and poor Harvard only forty-eight. Harvard's orthodoxy has always been suspected, and her paucity of candidates for the ministry may possibly tend to prove that the country is reverting to a stricter view of religious doctrines than it formerly held. The pulpit does not apparently offer an attractive career for young men of this generation, which is a fact that is being recognized by the church. Some say it is because the salaries are comparatively small, others account for the falling off in divinity students

by lamenting the rigid traditions to which they are obliged to subscribe. Perhaps both factors may have some effect. Compared with divinity, the new science of forestry is turning out to be highly attractive to students. The classes in this subject are not counted separately at California, Harvard, and so on, but they are at Syracuse, where we find 177 in the new department, and at Ohio University, where there are seventy-four.

Probably the universities are proud of their "graduate departments" rather than of others. Here is where we find the students who have taken the bachelor's degree and are forging onward in "true university work." These departments were imported from Germany not many years ago, but they have developed wonderfully. Columbia has the greatest number. None of the other universities have nearly so many, but Harvard makes a fair showing with 532 and Chicago with 490. The largest school of journalism in the country is at the University of Wisconsin, which enrolls ninety-five students in that delightful subject.

FREE GOVERNMENT LAND.

Ever since the 320-acre homestead law was enacted, some four or five years ago, the eastern portion of the country has been flooded with literature telling about the wonderful opportunities awaiting the homesteader in the various counties in Oregon east of the Cascade Mountains. That there have been good lands in this state subject to homestead entry ever since the original homestead law was passed is quite true, but the area has, of course, diminished with each succeeding year. So far as the western portion of the state is concerned there is now very little land open to entry that is worth having.

East of the mountains there is still a large amount of suitable land, but it must be remembered that homesteaders have been picking and choosing from them for almost fifty years, hence the best of them were long since taken. It is true, however, that in almost every one of the eastern counties there are some claims worth having, but as they lie in the foothills and consequently quite rough, they are still passed over as they have been all these years.

The people in quest of homesteads almost universally want bottom land, or at least level land. The rough, hilly, and mountainous land of the east—every person they meet—may tell them that the north slope lands in the foothills are better than the lower lands, but all such advice and information nine times out of ten is of no avail. Level land or none for them.

There have been many homesteads taken in Eastern Oregon that never produced grass enough to pasture a jack-rabbit. These cases are exceptional, the lands lying on alkali flats or in the foothills. The lands that are not of great extent, but that are good for raising stock, have been good claims open for entry at the time such selections were made, and the locators more than likely showed those lands also. Had they been taken the settlers would have been still on them, housed in the lands and happy and content. The lands taken were soon abandoned, and the homesteaders left, broken in purse and spirit.

As to the 320-acre homesteads it is true that as a rule they lie at a high altitude, there is often a dearth of fuel and drinking water must be hauled some distance. The lands obtained from wells sunk to a great depth, from 400 to 1000 feet. The cost of one such well is greater than the value of several sections of the land. As to the chance of raising a crop on these arid or semi-arid lands, the average from three to twelve inches, say eight inches year in and year out.

It is wise then to invite settlers, poor men with families, to take these lands? Is it not better to tell the truth about them, to tell that they are not rich lands, and that the lands have been anything else, will not be anything else for years and years to come? It might be well for each community in Oregon to have in connection with its Commercial Club a locators' committee to see that incoming settlers do not locate on lands whose failure is as sure to follow as day is to follow night.

A PHILOSOPHY OF DESPAIR.

The New York Times deprecates the publicity which has been given to the social evil by recent investigations of vice and wages of women in Illinois and of the police in New York. It looks back regretfully to the days when discussion of the subject was shunned by public and private. It says publicity does not visibly lead to religious conviction, to any reform in morals, or to any practical remedies, but modesty and purity of mind are endangered. It despairingly says: "When the evil is so widespread that good will continue, there will always be an underworld." The Times concedes that the white slave trade is a monstrous crime against humanity, which must be stopped by the sternest enforcement of law. It believes that segregation would tend to control some of the worst evils, but it has no hope of the enactment of segregation laws. It has pronounced the only practical end of publicity unattainable.

This is the philosophy of prudery and despair. It assumes that knowledge and recognition of the existence of evil are themselves evil. It assumes that for him or her who closes ears and eyes to everything which bears on the social evil, that evil ceases to exist. It assumes that ignorance is purity. Because a practical remedy cannot be secured without that education of public opinion which is necessary to enlightenment and because that education would require public discussion of the forbidden subject, the Times would make no effort to provide the remedy.

Knowledge of the existence of the social evil does not corrupt, provided the evil is presented as an evil and is not attractively dressed up to counteract it. That knowledge is the first safeguard against the evil, provided it is extended to include knowledge of the awful consequences. No clean man or woman to whom is presented a true picture of the life of the libertine and the prostitute will deliberately choose that life. If he or she has already begun it and has strength to turn back, he or she will do so. Knowledge of evil is power against evil.

Try as we may to shut out from our minds the existence of the underworld, we cannot do so. It does not stay under. It is constantly beckoning and tempting. It is spreading its poison through the upper world. It is involved with every problem which we have to deal with—education of children, home training, woman's and child labor, wages, divorce, the preservation of the home as the social unit.

unit, the white slave, the liquor question, police graft. Even questions which appear to be purely economic, such as the tariff, the monetary system, trusts, the cost of living, agricultural development have an indirect bearing on the problem. We must learn what relation each one bears to the social evil, that we may successfully combat it.

That we may do this we must know all about the social evil, its causes, its strength and with what weapons it is armed. All of us must know these things, then we as voters can agree on what are the best weapons. If segregation be one, knowledge will convince the people and they will adopt it. True, there will always be an underworld, but we can keep it under and rescue many from its clutches. Instead of the philosophy of despair, let us be guided by the philosophy of hope, which has brought humanity to its present stage of civilization and enlightenment.

REASON FOR A NAVY.

Unless we now adopt a definite policy of naval construction, we shall be outmatched in 1920 by Germany, France and Japan, leaving Great Britain in a position to slay all the other naval powers. We must decide now what naval policy is necessary to uphold the Monroe doctrine, the open door in China and our Asiatic exclusion policy against any attack. We must then either provide and maintain that power or prepare to abandon our construction. The stronger nation challenges any one of them. We cannot stand off the world with a bluff at a navy.

But, say the Little Americans and peace advocates, that policy would engage us in the mad race of armament which is now bankrupting the great nations. They tell us that we would better show Europe the folly of her ways by refusing to join in this race and by declaring that we will arbitrate any disputes we may have. The answer to that argument is that the best demonstration of Europe's folly would be to prove our ability to stand the strain and then say: "We can keep this up longer than you can, but are willing to stop