

The Oregonian

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OUR COURSE TOWARD GERMANY.

President Wilson's last note to Germany seems to leave no course open to him except to act if Germany fails to comply with his demands. He has called upon Germany to disavow the action of her submarine commander in sinking the Lusitania, to make reparations for that act, to pledge herself not to repeat the offense and to conform her submarine warfare hereafter to the precepts of humanity and to the principles of international law. He has warned Germany that, if she fails to comply, he will regard her conduct as deliberate and unfriendly. The whole controversy has been thrashed out and Germany knows precisely where this nation stands. If she still refuses to accept the American view of the case, nothing remains for the United States to do but to treat her as we would any other "deliberately unfriendly" nation.

The first impression is that this means a declaration of war, but that is simply the last stage in the development of unfriendly relations between nations. The first stage is a policy of non-intercourse. The President would not be so foolish as to ask the approval of Congress, at least not beyond the severance of diplomatic relations. He might then by authority of Congress either seize the German ships interned in American harbors and hold them as security for payment of our claims, or prevent their removal from American waters. In that case they would surely fall a prey to British cruisers. He might refuse to admit German ships of war or peace to our ports or to clear German ships from our ports. As the ocean has been cleared of German ships, the Kaiser could at present laugh at such an act of resentment as harmless.

The President might forbid commercial intercourse with Germany, but that would be of little effect unless it extended to commerce through third countries. He might prohibit commerce with Germany in fact, but that would be a public utility, into the hands of a dominating autocracy.

There ought to be some right of appeal or review in moving pictures. The business is too vast to be under the thumb of one person. And of all places, Oregon is the last that should countenance or support autocratic government. At least two members of the City Commission have been outspoken in support of popular rule. Yet they have helped place the business of a great business enterprise, which lacks only the element of necessity to be a public utility, into the hands of a dominating autocracy.

Of the numerous recalls attempted in Oregon since the adoption of that principle those that have been founded on aught but politics or personal spite or both have been the ones that have been the exception to a general rule. Two or three attempted recalls are now in progress in Oregon, but following another general rule, they are directed against local officers. The state as a whole has never voted on a recall.

But while it is true that in most cases the recall has been invoked over some personal or political issue of no grave consequence to the community served by the official attacked, in only one or two instances has the abuse of the principle been really flagrant. The effort to recall Justice Coke in Southern Oregon was one, but it did not reach the voting point. The recall election to which Portland was recently subjected was another. The one about to be held in Wheeler County has the aspect of one in which the special charges against the official are, but it is too far for personal and factional vengeance.

It does not altogether remove the stigma of abuse when an unwarranted recall movement is soundly whipped by the voters. It does not encourage the spread of or faith in the recall as a weapon. No one ought to know this better than the friends and advocates of the principle, yet strange as it may seem, the trifling, pernicious, unreasonable recall movements are almost invariably instigated by the loudest shouters for publicity in politics and the most forward advocates of the people's rule.

It begins to look as if those who violently oppose safeguards against abuse of the recall, initiative and referendum have in mind the possibility that they may some time wish to do a little abusing on their own account.

GERMANY DOES NOT BUDGE.

Germany stubbornly refuses to yield an inch in the stand she has taken in the Frye case. Her attitude regarding the Frye case is an example of this unwillingness to admit that she has wronged the United States in any particular. Whatever concessions of consequence have been made by either nation have been made under the United States' gun and bayonet, and they have not been the means of obtaining corresponding concessions from Germany. This attitude of Germany holds out no hope that the nations will be able to compose their differences.

The Frye was captured by the Prussian Friedrich with a cargo of wheat bound for Plymouth for orders, that is, to be ordered to any port designated by the charterers. Because Plymouth is a fortified place, the Elfrida Friedrich assumed that to be the Frye's final destination and hence ordered the cargo to be destined for the British armed forces and therefore to be contraband. He in fact assumed every fact necessary to justify condemnation. He began to jettison the cargo, but, fearing to be overtaken by a British cruiser before this work was completed, he took the crew on board his own ship and sank the Frye.

The United States claims compensation from Germany for both vessel and cargo under the Prussian-American treaty of 1828. That treaty contains these stipulations:

If one of the contracting parties should be engaged in war with any other power, the free intercourse or commerce of the subjects of the party remaining neutral with the belligerent powers shall not be interrupted. On the contrary, in that case the neutral party may navigate freely to and from the ports and waters of the other contracting party, and vessels making free goods, inasmuch that things shall be adjudged free,

ports, and often reveal an adverse balance. With such a balance in these two months what may we expect the total to be when grain and cotton are moving actively in September and October? By that time the shipment of war munitions will be at full tide. In the four years, 1910 to 1913, December exports exceeded those for June by 85 per cent. That ratio would raise the total for next December to \$440,000,000. The difficulty of securing ships may keep the aggregate far below that figure for any one month, but the trade balance in favor of the United States in the present fiscal year may easily exceed \$2,000,000,000 and may double that of the last fiscal year.

THE AUTOCRATIC INSPECTOR.

Moving picture censorship in Portland is an example of inspection gone to seed. The motion picture theaters represent an investment of many thousands of dollars. They in turn are the vendors of the product of a business enterprise that reaches every quarter of the globe and gives livelihood to countless employees in this country. What portion of the product of this great industry shall be disposed of in Portland is left to the will, judgment or caprice of a single individual, of whose ruling there is no right of review.

No theater manager in Portland knows whether it is safe to advertise a moving picture production. It may be faithfully founded on a literary work that is admitted to the mails by a sedulous government; that is openly sold in the bookstores; that is available for personal use in every public library. Yet it may not pass the moving picture censorship.

Certainly there should be a censorship of moving pictures. Film production offers an inviting field to those who have no scruples about commercializing gross appetites. Nobody recognizes this fact better than the theater managers. They are quite willing that there be a reasonable censorship. Yet no single person has the capacity to be a just arbiter of public morals. No single person is competent enough to judge of the effect upon the public mind of given pictures.

Moral impression is but a mental effect. It is as variable among individuals as sensations of humor, pleasure, sadness, excitement, or revolt. The world has not given us a theatrical producer who can always correctly estimate the popularity of a new play. Fortunes have been lost because to one man it seemed that a production would excite favorable emotions when it would not. No individual is better capable of estimating the moral effect.

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FOR PERSONAL USE.

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which shall be on board any vessel belonging to the neutral party, although such things belong to an enemy of the other.

In the case of the Frye, the vessel stopped for articles of contraband, which the belligerent is given the right to seize and destroy. The master of the vessel is to deliver up the goods supposed to be of contraband nature he shall be admitted to do so. In the case of the Frye, that case he shall be allowed to proceed on his voyage.

On the face of the facts, Germany violated this treaty by sinking the Frye, yet now asserts the right to sink the vessel under international law. She made a treaty with the United States which took the relations between the two countries outside of, as an exception to, international law, but she now claims that when the treaty denies to her rights which she could have exercised under the law of nations, that law superseded the treaty.

The United States would have been entitled to such indemnity had there been no treaty. It is difficult to see of what benefit this treaty—or any treaty with Germany—is to the United States. Germany is now willing to pay an amount to be fixed by a court of arbitration, but she still denies that the treaty was violated and offers to arbitrate the meaning of the treaty. Hence she will not consent that the award shall not include any sum to be added as penalty for breach of the treaty.

STANDING AT THERMOPYLAE.

A member of the New York constitutional convention the other day pitifully likened that body to a band of Spartans standing at Thermopylae against the hordes of radicalism. It was not an exactly happy illustration from his standpoint. The Spartans were overcome at Thermopylae by a rear attack. It is too bad that the stand at Thermopylae had already been appropriated by the radicalism.

But perhaps this latter Spartan band is also to be overcome in fact. We would not for the world intimate that Chairman Root has wittingly assumed the role of Epialtes, but he has given utterance to the following remarks which have served to render the prospects of a short ballot before the convention:

The people are tired of quibbling and technicalities. They have abundant cause for complaint. They are tired of the state government, and in all that time our state government has been as representative as a corporation. They are tired of the state government, and in all that time our state government has been as representative as a corporation. They are tired of the state government, and in all that time our state government has been as representative as a corporation.

There is another argument offered by opponents against adoption of the initiative, referendum and recall. It is asserted that the more power the people acquire the more they demand. We think this is true to the extent that the people will keep on trying to secure a government that is both efficient and responsive to public opinion. But as a producer of that elum, it is asserted that the more power the people acquire the more they demand. We think this is true to the extent that the people will keep on trying to secure a government that is both efficient and responsive to public opinion.

A GREAT LEXICOGRAPHER.

By the death of Sir James A. H. Murray the learned world has suffered the loss of an accomplished scholar and a laborious investigator. For the last thirty-five years of his life he was engaged upon the compilation of the Oxford Dictionary, a monumental work for which he was singularly fitted by natural gifts and indefatigable industry. This dictionary is designed to contain all there is to know about the derivation, meaning, history and use of "all the words in the English language."

The task which such an ambition presents to the lexicographer is like pouring water into a sieve, since new words constantly come into use and dead ones drop out. The best of the dictionary makers can do is to "cut a section" out of the river of language and supplement their work when the need becomes urgent. The concept of English or any other language as fixed and static is not tolerated by scholars like Dr. Murray. It is welcomed only by pedants and professors of Greek.

Dr. Murray spent so many of his working years, originated in a suggestion which the scholarly Archibald Trench made to the British Philological Society in 1857. His plan was to lay the foundation for an all-inclusive dictionary by raising "authoritative usages." Each word was to be caught at its first appearance in the language and steadfastly pursued through all its changes of form and meaning down to the present. This constitutes the famous "historical method" of dictionary-making by which Dr. Murray won his fame, for, after passing through one or two other hands, the Philological Society's plans and accumulated treasures were finally turned over to him and he proved to be the one man in the world best capable of using them.

The collection of passages from literature to exemplify the history of every separate word required co-operation by a host of readers. This was secured by a general invitation to book lovers to send in their suggestions. The response was encouragingly liberal. When Dr. Murray took over the work, 3,000,000 quotations had already accumulated and more came in constantly, so that every statement he makes about any word is fortified by an impressive palanx of authors. The wealth of material he had at his disposal contrasts pathetically with the meager resources of Dr. Samuel Johnson, our first great lexicographer, who had to do all his reading himself. Fortunately, he was assisted by a host of literary and lexicographical assistants, but one brain cannot do everything. He achieved wonders both in recording the history of words and in defining them, so that his famous dictionary is a treasure for the ages, but it should not surprise us to find many of his

THE MODERN CARTOON.

The Oregonian acknowledges its obligation again to that "Constant Reader" who wrote to say that there is no modern cartoonist more modern than the Oregonian's cartoonist. The cartoonist has given us an excuse to reopen a threadbare topic with the laudable purpose of taking the part of a much-abused class—the modern newspaper artist. For the present we shall leave the present-day writer and turn to the cartoonist, the modern newspaper artist. For the present we shall leave the present-day writer and turn to the cartoonist, the modern newspaper artist.

historical notes, as well as his derivations, fantastic. Dr. Johnson had a genius for definitions. He could set out the meaning of a word so clearly and tersely that in many instances our best current dictionaries merely repeat his language. But sometimes his personal feeling creeps into his definitions, and then the consequences were more satisfactory to the frivolous than to scholars.

Johnson's Dictionary was not the first in the language, but it was, for many years, so much the best that he was hailed as a sage of letters and a master of his contemporaries. Although not one of them helped him in an atom, they were ready enough to acknowledge his hard-won success and plier as much as they could of his glory. In these respects human nature has not much altered, though it must be owned that Dr. Murray had an immense amount of disinterested help. How much he would have had if he had been a lonely scholar working in a garret without the prestige of Oxford University to sustain him we may infer from Dr. Johnson's example.

For many years Webster's Dictionary, which superseded Johnson's, held its ground against all competitors in the United States. It was adopted in the public schools, pupils learned its "key to pronunciation" by heart, and its definitions acquired a quasi-official authority. Scholarly people regarded Webster quite so well as Worcester, but to the masses it became a sacred oracle. Nowadays Webster's glory is hardly so bright as it was years ago. New lexicographical prophets have risen in Israel almost by the score and the older ones are hard put to it to hold their own. The modern Oxford Dictionary is now the supreme standard, and both in England and the United States, and will probably remain so permanently. Its consummate plan, perfect scholarship and inclusive contents hardly admit of any substantial improvement. He labored five years on the first volume. No less pains have been taken with the others. When he died at the age of 78 it was done to the end of "U." It is a monument worthy of a great constructive genius.

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WHEAT MARKET CALMS DOWN.

While harvesting the wheat crop, the United States enters the second year of the war free from any such excitement as ruled the market a year ago. Though harvest is backward, we still have assurance of another record crop and fairly accurate knowledge of the world's supply and requirements has enabled dealers to arrive at the value of wheat.

Last August and for several succeeding months the fortunes of war were so uncertain that there was no knowing whether the crop of one country would be destroyed by a retreating army or by invaders or whether naval disaster would cut off Britain from the transatlantic food supply. This caused Europe to buy feverishly in order to stock up against the possible evil day. It is a relief that no crop will be destroyed by war except part of Russian Poland's and Courland's. Hungary's granary is untouched, so are Germany's, most of France's, Italy's, that of Russia proper and of Roumania. Britain began the new crop year with a greatly increased stock on hand, is harvesting a new crop and has no fear that imports will be stopped. The surplus of the United States is estimated at 400,000,000 bushels, and Europe will require from abroad 450,000,000 bushels. While Canada has greatly increased production, India will ship 45,000,000 and Australia 40,000,000 bushels.

No shortage is in sight. The war as a doubtful influence on the market has been so completely discounted and the needs which it has created have been so fully met that no room is left for excitement.

A citizen's advisory committee can help the City Commission not only to reduce expenses, but to arrive at a tax levy sufficient to pay the expenses which must be met. A year ago the Commission, in its anxiety to please the taxpayers, the levy to the bond and did not make allowance for the loss of revenue due to prohibition. It seems then to have gone on spending money as fast as before the cut was made, trusting to luck that it would come out all right somehow. Common sense would have the levy to the bond and did not make allowance for the loss of revenue due to prohibition. It seems then to have gone on spending money as fast as before the cut was made, trusting to luck that it would come out all right somehow.

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