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### THE SEMI-WEEKLY ASTORIAN.

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### FROM BUNCHGRASS TO WHEAT.

The Post-Intelligencer relates the following interesting story of a thriving county in Washington:

The population of Franklin county has increased over 400 per cent in the past four years. Hills that formerly were covered with native bunchgrass are now decorated by sheaves of wheat. Valleys once clothed in sagebrush now enclose gardens and orchards. The land that for centuries remained a desert has been reclaimed from its wild condition and converted into an oasis of vegetation. Where the traveler suffered for water and was smothered by the sandstorms of the Columbia river valley is now situated the thriving little town of Connell.

Four years ago the present site of Connell contained only a lone section house for the Northern Pacific railway employes. It was the only place for many miles where the stranger could find enough food to stay his hunger or water to quench his thirst. A few roaming cattle and many howling coyotes marked the only signs of life across the wide area of arid country, comprising Franklin county, from Pasco to the eastern border. Men shunned the country as they would the famous Death valley of the lower Pacific coast.

The pioneers of agriculture have brought about a wonderful change in Franklin county. Scores of harvesting and threshing machines may be seen on the hillsides collecting the golden harvest. Where once the supplies necessary for workmen could be taken to the fields on a pack mule the railroad company requires the use of many cars. To the right and the left the traveler beholds an immense field of grain. It is all wheat. New fields plowed from bunchgrass yield 25 to 30 bushels to the acre of the bread food of the world. Such is the transformation scene of one county in the state of Washington.

### THE BISHOP AND THE SALOON.

We can well believe that Bishop Potter is in receipt of indignant letters from good people condemning him for giving his approval to the new anti-treating saloon, says the New York Tribune. The idea that a clergyman should encourage the sale of intoxicating liquor under any conditions will fill many people with horror. The total abstinence movements of the last 50 years have created a widespread feeling in this country that Christianity and alcohol in any form are absolutely incompatible. That is an idea which prevails nowhere else to any such extent. In Germany the general use of liquors is a matter of course. In the Middle Ages "As abstemious as an Italian" was a proverb, but every Italian, priest or layman, drinks his wine. In England churchmen and nobles do not hesitate to give countenance to liquor selling under proper restrictions. The European attitude is one of encouraging temperance and reducing the abuses of overindulgence, without attempting to proscribe all alcoholic drinks as absolutely and irretrievably evil. Here the tone of society, at least in the rural districts and in most of the Protestant churches, has been much less tolerant, not necessarily of drinking, but of the drink traffic. A great number of people drink in their homes and clubs who will strongly disapprove of Bishop Potter's opening of a saloon, no matter what its aim or rules. We are glad, however, that Bishop Potter did open the saloon, and even those who do not share his point of view must give him credit for the courage of his convictions and the purity of his motives.

No doubt there are some devotees of abstinence who would rather see drunkenness flourish than see temperance promoted by moderate drinking. To them the success of the new departure would be distinctly deplorable. Most people, however, will be glad to give anything a fair trial which offers any prospect of reform. Only a trial can show whether or not the present scheme has the germ of good in it. Certainly much would be accomplished if the classes of people for whom this saloon is established could be guarded from excess. If they could be taught to indulge a moderate appetite as a matter of course, as the great mass of the Italians and Germans do, in decent surroundings, much would be accomplished. The great evil of drinking is not the drink, but the dramshop, with all the degrading things which have come to accompany it, and its encouragement or excess. On the other hand, the

American temperament and climate do not make for moderate drinking. A given quantity of liquor is more dangerous here than in England. It is possible, however, that the lack of facilities for comfortable, self-respecting moderation among the poorer classes here is partly responsible for the greater temperamental tendencies to excess. If that is true, the new saloon may be working in the right direction. The plan to sell in model saloons only beer and light wines has had many advocates. This establishment includes spirits in its list. This may seem an objectionable concession, but perhaps if it is to secure any patronage worth while among those whom it is most desired to draw away from the rumshop, they must have full liberty of choice, and not be treated like persons under guardianship.

The whole question is a difficult and complex one, involving the adaptation of institutions to human nature. There is no use in this community of trying to make men conform to somebody's deductions of what they ought to do. That has been often tried and failed. Bishop Potter tells the truth when he says: "The effort to shut up the saloon by legislation and place it under the ban has been one of the most tragic and yet comic failures of modern history." Men may shut their eyes to the fact, or declare it unchurchly and shocking for the bishop to make an admission which they believe must give comfort to Satan, but it is nevertheless a fact that we have not begun to solve the saloon problem by legislation or the temperance problem by the preaching of total abstinence; and a wise servant of humanity is he who seeks a basis of truth for his endeavors. That Bishop Potter has reached the truth or that the new saloon is the solution of the problem is doubtful, but the attempt to deal with conditions as they actually exist and supply to men a practical and attractive refuge from evil resorts is certainly commendable.

### WAGES AND PRICES.

In drawing conclusions from the data that the department of commerce and labor submits as to wages and the cost of living in 1894 and in 1904, it should be borne in mind that 1894 was a year of 50-cent wheat and seven-cent cotton and of "hobo" armies and soup-houses. Industrial conditions in that year were at their very worst, and in contrasting them with conditions at the present time allowance must be made for that fact.

The statistics collected by the department show quite clearly that, while the prices of most of the necessities of life have materially increased since 1894, the average rate of wages has increased in a still greater degree. This is gratifying, of course, so far as the wage-earning classes are concerned, but it is likely to be viewed in an entirely different light by persons whose incomes are derived from investments in mortgages, bonds or stocks or from savings bank deposits. The return on money thus invested and deposited tends downward, and with a rise in the cost of living the fact inevitably signifies that people having such investments or deposits must have greater trouble in making "ends meet." Many wage-earning working people are undoubtedly to be included in this category, which means that while they have profited by the rise in wages, they have suffered by a decline in the return on savings and investments.

It is this thrifty and desirable element of the population which is so often overlooked when discussing the question of wages and of the cost of living. It seems to be assumed that, if wage-earners are fairly prosperous, the rest of the population must also be prosperous—an assumption that totally ignores the fact that if wage-earners are prospering at the expense of the rest of the community, there must be a diminished consumption of things on the part of the latter. This is an economic fact which it seems to be impossible for most leaders and members of labor organizations to grasp.

No doubt the statistics put forward by the department of commerce and labor will be made to do service in the present campaign, but newspapers and orators that employ them for partisan purposes should keep in mind that they are handling a two-edged sword.

From Berlin comes a story that Japan's most brilliant soldier, General Kuroki, is a Pole, his father having fled to the orient after the revolte in 1831, and on his deathbed having charged his son to avenge the wrongs of Poland upon Russia. The story reads like that of Hannibal, sworn to eternal enmity to Rome, and lends a romantic interest to the achievements of one now acknowledged to be a genius in strategy and the ablest general developed so far in the Russo-Japanese war.

Most of the damage has been done, but before there is another great war the powers should really get together and prescribe some rules for the government and limitation of war experts.

The administration will apparently have to serve notice on those Panamans that the tariff follows the flag, whether the constitution does or not.

The English secretary of war wants the British army reduced. Mad Mullah and the Tibetans are ready to second the motion.

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### DON'T LIKE THE PROSPECT.

#### Strikers Leave Chicago to Return to Their European Homes.

Chicago, Aug. 8.—Fifty foreigners, nearly all former employes of the stockyards packing houses, left early today for their old homes abroad. They are discouraged, they say, with the predicament that faced them with no settlement of the strike in sight, living expenses high and their savings dwindling away just before the advent of cold weather. The majority of them spoke no English, though they had been in the country for years. There were Bohemians, Poles and Italians in the number, and all were of a thrifty class who had saved the greater part of the money they had earned in the yards.

#### Forest Fires Rage in Flathead Country.

Butte, Aug. 7.—The forests are still burning in many parts of Flathead county, and great damage is being done. Telephone communication with Columbia Falls and Whitefish is cut off and it cannot be definitely stated the amount of damage done. It has been reported here by people returning from Whitefish that the church building and two residences had burned as a result of forest fires near the town and that the framework at the brick-yards had burned. It is thought the main portion of the town will not be damaged, unless a very heavy wind sets in. The fire is on both sides of the railroad track, leading from Whitefish to Columbia Falls, and is raging fiercely.

The fires have cut off travel between here and Whitefish, the road for many miles this week being in a blaze of flame. Near Dayton creek a bad fire is devastating the timber. Great clouds of smoke made their appearance during the night and this morning. So dense was the smoke one could not see the distance of three miles in any direction. Reports received are that fires are raging in all directions, and on Tuesday 14 distinct fires could be traced northeast and west of KallsPELL. It is supposed, with the heavy wind of Tuesday afternoon, that the fires have spread with great rapidity.

Word has just been received that a ranchman living near Whitefish had all his buildings and grain, as well as the timber, destroyed by fire, and that he and his family barely escaped with their lives. The whole side of the mountain east of KallsPELL was on fire Tuesday night, and it was spreading at a rate to indicate that the whole mountain would be stripped of its timber. Forest Supervisor Haines and his force are doing all they can fighting fires, but his force of men is inadequate to cope with the situation.

W. C. Sawyer, of Pendleton, is visiting in Astoria.

### WORMS

"I write to let you know how I appreciate your Cascarets. I commenced taking them last November and took two ten-cent boxes and passed a tape-worm 18 in. long. Then I commenced taking them again and Wednesday, April 5th, I passed another tape-worm 22 in. long and over a thousand small worms. Previous to my taking Cascarets, I didn't know I had a tape-worm. I always had a small appetite."  
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