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ONE IDEA OF FAIRNESS.

And now comes our virtuous friend the Oregonian, teeming over with pure sentiment, appealing for fair trial of the direct primary law. "No attempt to repeal or nullify the law should be countenanced until it has had a fair trial," declares our upright contemporary, after first having imputed questionable motives to those who have opposed the abortive measure.

The opponents of the direct primary law are quite willing to be fair, but they are decidedly adverse to being duped. The direct primary law is just as clearly unconstitutional as any law ever was, and we have the decision of the supreme court of our own state for it. Why, then, do we find the Oregonian asking "fair play" for the measure? If the law is void, why not have it declared so at the earliest possible date? Why prolong a muddle that will cause more trouble than was ever before caused in Oregon because of bad legislation? Is there anything to be gained by this sort of thing? If so, we would be obliged to the Oregonian if it would set forth the benefits.

The advocates of the direct primary law have all along been strikingly unfair. They knew the title of their pet measure would appeal to the cupidity of the masses, and they worked the situation for all it was worth. Even during the campaign, and ever since the law was enacted, they have been kept busy defending it. Never once have the exponents of the measure pointed out one beneficial result which could possibly accrue, except that democrats would, under the operation of the law, be prevented in a measure from interfering with the republican primaries. If there is any merit in the law worthy the designation, why doesn't the Oregonian or the Salem Statesman point it out? Why do these and other journals insist that the unconstitutional law shall be forced upon us? The spectacle of influential newspapers striving to bolster up a law which is plainly at variance with the constitution is indeed a ridiculous one.

It is also worth the while to consider the Oregonian's declaration that Senator Fulton has opposed the law because it would operate to his disadvantage. Perhaps only about one voter in 50 knows anything about the law, so we will explain that it provides for the nomination of United States senators by direct vote of the people. Now, it is conceded that Senator Fulton is by far the most popular man in Oregon, and in view of this circumstance it is difficult to understand by what process of reasoning the Oregonian arrives at the conclusion that the law would operate to the political detriment of Oregon's junior representative in the upper branch of the congress. This bit of argument on the part of our respectable Portland contemporary is quite in line with the argument which has been put forth generally in defense of the new law.

The Oregonian suggests for the benefit of the supreme court that the law must not be declared unconstitutional unless it is "absolutely clear" that its provisions render it void, adding that its constitutionality is not doubted outside of Clatsop county. We believe the supreme court would not unnecessarily declare void any law, and the intimation that our highest tribunal might render a decision based on sentiment rather than on constitutional principles is, to state the situation very mildly, rather poor defense of the measure. The registration law was quite as important to voters as the direct primary law, yet the measure was declared void because it failed in identical the same manner that the primary law fails. And when the supreme court put its stamp of disapproval upon the registration law our Portland friend did not intimate that the decision was questionable.

So it will be seen that the Oregonian's idea of fairness differs very materially from the idea which is generally entertained by men who appreciate the meaning of the term.

TRADE AND THE FLAG.

That "trade follows the flag," provided that trade is properly encouraged, is pretty clearly indicated by the recent growth of our commerce with our non-contiguous territories and dependencies—Porto Rico, Hawaii, the Philippines, Alaska, Guam, Tutuila and the Midway islands.

In the decade ended with the fiscal year 1904, our exports to these territories increased in value

from \$14,800,000 to \$38,100,000. Those to Hawaii and Porto Rico alone increased from \$6,000,000 to \$23,000,000—a highly gratifying fact, when it is remembered that the combined population of these two territories is less than 1,000,000 and that a large portion of it consists of working people whose wages are meager. The principal part of our shipments to Porto Rico and Hawaii was made up of cotton manufactures, breadstuffs and provisions and manufactures of iron and steel, which indicates the nature of the market for American products that these territories afford.

If the United States has profited by exports to these non-contiguous territories, however, the latter have profited still more by the enlarged market for their products which this country has offered. In the decade ended with the fiscal year 1904, our purchases from these territorial wards increased in value from \$23,200,000 to \$59,150,000. More than half of these imports in value last year consisted of sugar—\$25,100,000 worth coming from Hawaii alone, and \$9,000,000 worth coming from Porto Rico. Of the \$10,200,000 of imports from Alaska in 1904 over \$8,000,000 consisted of canned salmon—figures that furnish some idea of the extent of this industry. The value of the canned salmon that Alaska sold to the United States last year was over \$2,200,000 more than the value of the gold produced from her own mines which she shipped to this country.

This growth in our trade with our non-contiguous territories shows the wisdom of maintaining liberal trade relations with them. As they expand in wealth they become better customers for our products; while, on the other hand, their own chief products have become necessities to us; and the easier the terms are under which they can be procured the more the material welfare of the masses of the republic will be promoted.

PANAMA "SOONERS."

The rumors of trouble in Panama between the Panama government on the one side and the canal builders and the American representatives on the other need cause no grave concern, says the Post-Intelligencer. There is nothing to it. It is a manufactured incident designed to do duty in the campaign.

The Panaman people desired the presence of the Americans. In fact, they invited all that has occurred. Panama would have gone further and would undoubtedly have accepted annexation outright had that idea found favor with this country. Panama has 10 millions of dollars so invested as to practically assure the necessary revenues of the canal zone.

When a government reservation is to be opened the border lines are thronged for weeks in advance with men who are looking for a chance to get something good. A few of the more restless ones sometimes get over the border before the appointed day. These fellows are "the sooners." All westerners are familiar with them. "The sooners" are in Panama now. They are on the isthmus in advance of the new era. There isn't much doing and the sooners are restless. They get into mischief. The chances of incidental profit are not what they soon will be. The Panama authorities are holding the sooners in check, and to relieve their feelings the latter do more or less talking. This talk is magnified by the democratic press and used for partisan purposes.

The Panama people are not going to resent American government of the canal zone in harmony with American ideas of government and American purposes. The treaty provides for that, no more, no less. When the campaign is over there will be a dearth of news and of editorial comment concerning rumors of disquieting conditions on the isthmus.

The Oregonian still clings to the fallacy that democrats have no "right" to vote at republican primaries. What man of common sense will undertake to say that democrats have not the same right to vote for republican candidates for nomination as for republican candidates for office? If anything, they have less right to vote for candidates for office. The democrat who is anxious to interfere at a republican primary will register as a republican and interfere under the primary law with more success than under the old method of procedure. In this respect, perhaps, the law is even more gigantically a frost than in any other.

The Portland Telegram's exposition number is another triumph for that most enterprising journal. The edition consists of 52 pages, and from cover to back it is interesting to everyone—residents of the east, north and south as well as the people of the west. It is full of carefully prepared articles written by the most prominent men of Oregon, and it is bound to be invaluable as an advertisement for the fair, for Portland, and for all of the state. It is a credit to Mr. Clifford J. Owen, the managing editor, Mr. Paul R. Kelly, city editor, and to the efficient writers who contributed the special articles.

William Waldorf Astor is regaining some of his old friends by refusing to take any part in or make any predictions on the political campaign.

In one respect the direct primary law would be a good thing. It would do away with the necessity for "Now-is-the-time" telegrams.

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MEN'S OUTFITTERS

THE MARKETS.

Liverpool, Sept. 28.—December wheat, 7s. 7½d.

New York, Sept. 28.—Silver, 56c; Union Pacific, 101½; preferred, 93½.

Chicago, Sept. 28.—Wheat—December opened \$1.11½; closed, \$1.12½@1.12¾; barley, 41@49c; flax, \$1.07@1.15; North-western, \$1.15@1.18.

San Francisco, Sept. 28.—Cash wheat, \$1.47½.

Portland, Sept. 28.—Wheat for export—Walla Walla, 80@81½c; bluestem, 85c; valley, 86c; for eastern markets—Walla Walla, 84c; bluestem, 87c.

Tacoma, Sept. 28.—Wheat—Bluestem 86c; club, 82c.

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