

EDITORIAL COMMENT AND TIMELY TOPICS

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THE FARMER'S HOPE IN ASIA

James J. Hill believes that the hope of the American farmer lies in an Asiatic market.

"Suppose," he said the other day, "our wheat trade with China alone to amount to 1 cent per capita for each day in the year, that would amount to \$4,000,000 a day—nearly \$1,500,000,000 a year."

Mr. Hill believes that an Asiatic market can be secured for the American farmer's wheat. He bases this belief on the fact that "whenever wheat flour has been introduced to any race, with the single exception of the black race, they are ready to consume it from that time on." He believes this so firmly that he is building the five largest steamers that the world has ever seen to carry the wheat of the Pacific Coast to China, Japan, the Straits Settlements and other Oriental lands.

In short, Hill's scheme is to make wheat scarce by opening new markets, thus advance its price at home and abroad, and thus put more money in the pocket of the man who has been called the nation's backbone—the farmer.

Mr. Hill's views on an Asiatic market for America, in view of the present international concern over the open door in the East, are exceedingly timely. He says: "The question of a market is next in importance to the question of raising the commodities we have to sell. We have extended our fields, extended the areas from which our agricultural products are raised, until we have practically created a supply that is in excess of the demand for a large portion of the time."

"The population of this country doubles about every 30 years. In the year 1930 we shall have a population of from 150,000,000 to 160,000,000."

"All the people must be occupied. If the population continues to increase in the ratio indicated, where are we to put them all and what are they to do?"

"Our country is expanding in population. What has been done to expand our markets? What intelligent work has been done since the civil war—and that is as far back as most of us remember or need to go—to add to our foreign market?"

"I have given the subject some attention and am free to say that I have failed to find a single intelligent sentence, written or spoken by any one, in an endeavor to improve our market for agricultural products."

"With our great growth of population we must consider how the people must be employed so that they may be intelligent, prosperous and happy. We sell 60 or 70 per cent of our entire products to one country—Great Britain. If, for any reason, that country were not able to buy from us, our people would realize very quickly the situation they are in."

"Where can we sell our wheat crop? In France, Italy, Austria or Germany we are met with hostile legislation. We are not welcome. To take our wheat to Russia would be like carrying coal to Newcastle. That country has a surplus to sell."

"If only one third of the people of the world are wheat eaters and the other two thirds live on rice or maize or rye, we must find our markets with people who are not now consumers of our crop. I believe that wherever wheat flour has been introduced to any race, with the single exception of the black race, they are ready to consume it from that time on. The Asiatic rice-eaters are as fond of flour as the white race and as ready to eat it, if they can get it at a fair price."

"The question may arise, How can people who work for wages of from 10 to 15 cents a day, and have lived for centuries on just such wages, buy flour which must be carried across the Pacific Ocean? If they did buy flour, even at the rate of one bushel per capita, we in this country would have to go to eating corn pone. We simply could not eat it."

"If we could sell them one bushel per capita it would take 450,000,000 bushels to supply China and Japan alone, to say nothing of the Straits Settlements and other countries having large populations."

"In the north and west parts of China there is an excellent farming country, where corn and wheat can be raised, but the products are so far from the dense population on the seacoast that they cannot be carried there. We may, perhaps, fear that Russia, with the Siberian railway completed, may enter into competition with us for the Asiatic flour or wheat trade. The transportation question settles that."

"The average rate on the Russian State railroads is 1.5 cents per ton per mile. If the actual cost of operation amounted to but two thirds of this figure—1.2 cents per ton per mile—this rate applied to the distance from that part of Siberia where the wheat is grown, would give a transportation charge of \$4.20 per barrel on flour, while it should be carried from our Pacific ports to Yokohama, Nagasaki, Kobe, Shanghai and Hongkong for 25 cents a hundred, \$5 a ton, 50 cents a barrel."

"Russia is not in a position to compete with us at all, even if the wheat and flour were carried for the naked cost of its transportation to the government. What applies in this respect to our wheat applies to cotton from the South and to every other article we export, even to iron and steel."

"If our home market, which we have nursed so long for iron and steel industries, is of so much value, let us now go on and take some care of our agricultural interests and not leave them where they are today—without an iota of assistance from any point."

"A year ago you could buy nails for \$1.25 a keg; now they are \$3.25. You know how lumber has gone up and all other articles of prime necessity on the prairie farm."

"Fuel has advanced. Everything made of iron has advanced. But the wheat crop has not advanced, because it is sold in open competition with the product of the world."

"And until we get other people to eat wheat it will not advance and we will go on hoping against hope. We will not get a high price for our wheat until wheat is made scarce. If we could increase our export to the Orient by 50,000,000 bushels, I have not the slightest doubt that it would advance the price of what we do send to Europe 15 or 20 cents."

"In the first place, what we would send to the Orient would go from the Pacific Coast. The grain of that coast is handled at present in a manner entirely different from that which prevails east of the Rocky Mountains."

"Having to cross the Equator twice, it must be carried in sacks to prevent heating, and not in bulk in the hull of the ship, as on the Great Lakes or the Atlantic. The grain is practically all bought by three concerns, two of them located in Liverpool and also interested in a line of steamers, so that they can furnish their own shipping."

"The wheat is sent to England and sold for what it will bring. It acts as a damper—a wet blanket—on the entire market."

"The voyage around the Horn is four months long, and by the time the first cargoes are reaching port the last are leaving, so that it is all afloat at the same time. The buyer in Europe knows what is afloat. Thus, the manner in which the crop is handled breaks the market down more than twice the same amount from Atlantic ports. There the buyer must send over and place his order in advance of shipment."

"With the Pacific Coast grain, it must sell for what it will bring. The ship cannot be delayed and the grain cannot be stored in sacks."

"We can never get away from the practical proposition that we are in competition with every wheat-raiser in every country—the peasants on the steppes of Russia, the ryots of India, and the Argentine farmers, most of whom went from Italy."

"We are in competition with them on an even whiffletree. We always will be so long as we have to sell outside of our own country; and that our own country will ever consume our entire product, at least for half a century, no intelligent man will believe."

"Our farmers can do nothing in the way of getting a market. I can do very little. The price of transportation has come down, but the price of wheat has come down with it."

"Compare the cost of carrying a ton of wheat to Liverpool or Antwerp twenty years ago and now, and it will be found that the fall in the price of wheat from year to year is about the difference in this rate. It has made wheat cheaper for the other fellow."

"He is not compelled to take your wheat. He can take wheat from Argentina or anywhere else. We must find new customers by enlarging our commercial relations, by expanding our markets."

"The European nations have the Mediterranean Sea and two oceans to cross in reaching those peoples. We have to cross but one ocean."

"It might do us some good if we had any ships to use it. Of the carrying trade going to China in 1898 we carried three-fourths of one per cent. Yet we call ourselves a commercial nation and are ambitious to be a maritime nation."

"Farmers care nothing about the size of a ship, but they do care about the carrying of their products to some new people who will use them. I am building ships for this purpose, because I see an opportunity to get a reasonable return on my investment."

"The reason we can compete with other nations is because we have greater facilities in using human intelligence, while the other nations supply human energy. Fifty or sixty years ago we had more than our share of the world's carrying trade."

"Today the cheapest transportation in the world is on the Great Lakes. It now astonishes Europe, but the end is not yet."

"If we can carry grain at these rates from the Pacific Coast to China and Japan we wouldn't ship one bushel of wheat from the Pacific Coast to Europe. And with a chance to bring every car back loaded with Pacific Coast lumber, we would carry millions and millions of bushels from Minnesota and the Dakotas. Empty cars one way mean double mileage."

"It would not only help the farmers of the Northwestern States by taking the Pacific Coast wheat out of competition, but it would carry away their own crops at times. Either I know absolutely nothing or I know absolutely that these farmers would be greatly benefited. The entire wheat crop of the Northwest last year, might have gone to the Pacific Coast, if there had been ships to take it when they got there."

SENSE VS. NONSENSE.

To the Editor.—"Reaction after the Fair"—who ever heard of reaction without first having action? Should the city of Portland grow 75 or 100 thousand in population by 1905 then there may be sense in talking of reaction, provided the surrounding country has not grown proportionately, or if the industries of the city, commercial or manufacturing, have not increased. Who is to be benefited by this cry of reaction except that it be the men who now have in hand the trade of the city? Certain it is that the men who want homes cannot be benefited by looking for reaction except that the city actually does outgrow itself by reason of some artificial stimulus. If those who are in earnest in this connection and really expect to take advantage of a reaction, is it not more sensible to encourage growth such as may possibly result in what you are calling for, than to cry "wolf," "wolf," so lustily as to lure all the sheep from the pasture? Many of us are

here because we believe that Portland is finely located to become a great export and manufacturing city and believe she is entitled to as large a growth as any city of the Northwest. In the name of common sense, why be scared at our growth so long as our increase is less than any city of similar size on the Pacific Coast? The man who promoted the Fair did so with the idea that with it we would improve streets and sidewalks and have a general overhauling of the city that otherwise might require many years; these things are in sight, but why may not the city grow in commercial importance and maintain the growth just as well with as without the Fair? When we have actually grown more than our sister cities who have no fair then we might without disgust listen to the cry of "reaction," but to one who wants to see some cause for a reaction before getting scared, may we not use the slang expression, "give us a rest." T. J. F.

LANDLORDISM.

Just about 12 months ago there was a very distinguished party assembled at one of the principal hotels in Dublin to celebrate the coming of age of Lord Herbert, the eldest son of the Earl of Pembroke, who is the ground landlord of the greater portion of the south of Dublin.

The Pembroke estate lies in the wealthiest portion of Dublin, and many of the thoroughfares are called after their popular owner, such as Herbert street, Herbert place, Pembroke road, Pembroke place, or Wilton place. It is in the last-mentioned locality that the Pembroke estate office, a large, imposing red-brick building, is situated.

Though Lord Pembroke derives a very substantial income from his Dublin estate, it is not as large as many people imagine, for Dublin rents do not run into very big figures—compared, at all events, with rents in other big towns.

No house in Dublin, even in the wealthiest and most fashionable quarter, would fetch at the outside figure more than \$1,250 per annum, and plenty of houses in good localities, such as Herbert street, would easily be secured for \$500 per annum.

The Marquis of Bute is probably the most absolute owner of town property in England, for the whole of Cardiff practically belongs to him. The Bute family made Cardiff, and whatever income the present Marquis may derive from the flourishing town is but interest on the millions expended by his ancestors on its development. The grandfather of the present young Marquis expended \$3,000,000 on building the Bute docks, which are said to be the finest in the world.

Few men give away their property, especially when it is of such a valuable nature as the land about Cardiff; but the Bute family presented Cardiff with 121 acres of land now known as Ronth Park, which is a magnificent public recreation ground.

The extent of land covered by the town of Birmingham is just 120 acres—that is, including the parishes of Ashton, Harborne, Edgbaston and Balsall Heath.

Many years ago a family named Hanon possessed a great portion of these now valuable lands, and owned every bit of the estate occupied at present by the wealthy residents of Edgbaston. The land, however, has long since passed out of the Hanon family, and Lord Dudley is probably the wealthiest landowner in Birmingham at present.

Hon. Henry Butler is lord of the manor of a large part of Bradford, and when the existing leases fall in, he, or rather his descendants, will come in for a considerable windfall.

Some idea of the value of the land in Bradford may be gauged from the fact that when Lister Park, Manningham, was purchased by the corporation from S. C. Lister, the price was fixed at \$300,000 for fifty-four acres; the vendor, however, subscribed \$100,000 of this sum himself.

London is owned by comparatively few people. The Duke of Norfolk, Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Bedford, Lord Cadogan, and Lady Bolsover between them own more than half the ground rents of London.

Lord Salisbury's estate lies chiefly in the Strand, East End, and city; while the others mentioned own nearly all the west end. A great deal of property, by the way, in London that belongs to Lady Bolsover is often erroneously supposed to be in the possession of her nephew, the Duke of Portland.

Norwich would feel, perhaps, insulted to have its distinction attributed to mustard, for it is one of the oldest towns in existence; but the fact remains that 50 years ago the population of Norwich was less than 40,000, and since Mr. Colman started the mustard industry it has reached over 100,000.

ANOTHER NEW AIRSHIP.

At the establishment of Mr. Louis Goddard near the Pone de Saint-Ouen, work will soon be begun on a new airship, to be known as the Santa Cruz, designed by Senor Joe de Patrocinio, to whom the Brazilian government has accorded a subsidy for this purpose. The new airship will be 45 meters long, 21 meters wide and 9 meters high. Its capacity will be 3,000 cubic meters, and, all dimensions considered, it will be the largest "dirigible" ever built.—Aeronautical World.

At a recent non-partisan dinner of politicians in New York City Mayor Low was seated between Charles F. Murphy, the Tammany leader, and Senator Thomas C. Platt, so long Republican boss of the state. In the course of his after-dinner speech the Mayor remarked that he found himself "between the devil and the deep T. C."

IRRIGATION MEN MEET.

The time is drawing near when the semi-annual meeting of the State Irrigation Association will be held in Baker City, and the interest consequent among the people of the Columbia River Basin, who are concerned in the deliberations of that body, is on the rise. The meeting was set by the executive committee of the association to meet in June, and though the day has not yet been definitely announced, it is expected soon to be made public.

G. W. Hartman, of Pendleton, the president of the Columbia River Basin Association, comprising Umatilla and Morrow Counties, is very enthusiastic about the cause of irrigation and still holds, in spite of the cold blanket thrown on the proposition from some sources, that it is destined to revolutionize the industry and condition of the Inland Empire, says the East Oregonian.

Mr. Hartman has all confidence in the fairness and ability of the government engineers now engaged on the geological survey, and is certain that their reports will be in accordance with the facts of the case as judged by the conditions of the land and the facilities for procuring water. He thinks the question all hangs upon the favor or disfavor of the engineers' report and has no doubts but what the ultimate decision reached by them will be in accordance with the dream of the people of the country.

The spirit of Umatilla County is all right in regard to irrigation and the people of that county have great hopes for the final success of the project.

One of the outcomes of the investigation will be in all probability, the adoption of winter irrigation. In the summer time all the available water in the Umatilla is used, but in the winter enough is wasted to soak the section if properly controlled. By winter irrigation is meant the flooding of the ground by means of ditches and levees, during the flood season. By this method enough water will soak into the ground so treated to raise two good crops. The summer fallow system is a proof of this contention. Where the land is well pulverized and allowed to lie fallow it accumulates the moisture of two years, and with this stored supply good crops can be raised. If now, water in quantity can be run upon this ground enough will be accumulated to raise good crops with judicious handling.

The artesian well is another factor to be counted upon. One well has been drilled in Morrow County with a flow sufficient to water about 60 acres, and wherever these wells can be found the land is sure to yield. The country here is especially adapted to irrigation as far as climate is concerned. It is in altitude not so high that the cold nights will retard vegetation, and the evenness of the climate, all considered would make it a fruit country par excellence.

But the people must not become impatient and clamor for immediate results. Even as the fabled mills of the gods grind slowly, so does the government do its work leisurely, but with certain and definite result. The engineers in charge of the investigation will make no hasty examination or come to no rash conclusions, but when they have decided, their work will have been performed carefully, consistently and to the best of their knowledge and effort. In the meantime it behooves the people at large, the inhabitants of the semi-arid belt, who are so anxious for the benefits of irrigation to come to them, to watch and prepare for the final outcome, and above all, to await in patience but not in sloth or inaction, for the time to come when the scheme of irrigation will have been proven to be practical, and then be ready to accept the assistance offered by the government and by private enterprise and make the Inland Empire the garden spot of the state and the great center of wealth and culture of the Pacific Northwest.

ONE DRAWBACK.

From the negro's point of view there will be at least one serious drawback to the removal from the South to Boston, as now proposed by certain negroes of that city. Everybody there will call him "mister," but nobody will give him a chance to earn a living.—Memphis Scimitar.

A good many Frenchmen think that Paul Deschanel, ex-president of the Chamber of Deputies, is a coming president of the republic. It is said that he entertains that opinion himself. He is young, rich, clever, the most well-groomed politician of his party, a favorite in society, a member of the academy and high in the favor of the czar.

CAN'T FOOL HANNA.

They cannot fool Mr. Hanna by calling it a Republican State convention. He knows what a political lynching is like.—Detroit Free Press.

STONING A PROPHET.

For saying that Mr. Simon in two years might be "on top," Officer Sloan has been convicted of offensive partisanship and discharged from the police force. That should teach a Republican policeman of a Republican city administration not to show too much partiality for a retired Republican United States Senator. The partisanship in this case was offensive to General Beebe, Whitney Boase, Jack Matthews and Charles Hunt, all Republican office holders. The offense is in not properly discriminating between different kinds of Republicans. It would not have been at all offensive, for instance, if Mr. Sloan had intimated that Jack Matthews would two years hence "be on top." It might be bad prophecy, but for Mr. Sloan it would have been good politics. In olden times it was treason to imagine the death of the king. A great man once was tried for his life for saying that the king was not the head of the church. He proved that he did not say it, but the judges asked him if he did not think so, and when he refused to say anything, they put on their black caps and sentenced him to death for standing mute. General Beebe would not feel warranted in going that far. To bring an officer under the ban the latter must give voice to his sentiments. If Mr. Sloan had kept his mouth shut he would not have been discharged for offensive partisanship. He would have lost his uniform only for smoking on duty, deficient chest measurement, short wind or bad spelling.

Some people imagine that the civil service law was meant to secure good officers, to prevent their removal on political grounds and to insure a fearless force given to police duty and not to shady political work. But that is a mistake. The law, it is true, forbids an officer's discharge except for cause, but the law does not define the cause. The commission does that. Just now a good cause is to express an opinion that Mr. Simon may "be on top." The commission fears a Richard in every bush.

Mr. Sloan's remarks implied a certain disrespect for the commission. For Mr. Simon to be on top meant for General Beebe to be on the bottom. Proper military discipline does not tolerate a question of inferiority of one's superiors, and the police are under military discipline. Mr. Sloan's fault consists in part also of a want of reverence for the Matthews machine, a defect, strange to say, shared by some persons who are not policemen.

This starless officer, however, is a man of childlike simplicity. He exclaims against the idea of a discharge for political opinions. But he was not discharged for that. Mr. Simon and Mr. Boase, the man who got him fired, are of the same political faith. He was expelled because he does not belong to the machine, and was therefore out of place on a force expected to do machine duty. Still his simplicity is not peculiar to himself. Others have been quite simple enough to believe in the Matthews machine. That is why it is "on top."

Chief Hunt was the immediate instrument of Mr. Sloan's degradation from his office. His action was a little premature, as General Beebe favored a further investigation. Military training has taught the General not to shoot a man and court-martial him afterwards. He was in favor of the proper preliminaries. But the chief is more abrupt. The investigation could wait. And so Mr. Sloan got his tongue.

It is fair, however, to Chief Hunt to say that he did not probably, so much as the others, consider the affront to the machine. It was with him a case of "lese majeste," personal to himself. This is indicated by the manner of the discharge. That an officer should consider himself discharged without appearing before his august superior to receive his just humiliation in a formal and ceremonious way, was an insult to dignity. It was not to be endured, and was punished with all the accompaniments of that polished manner and dignified utterance which distinguish those born to high command. Mr. Sloan will know hereafter that he is due to the head of a department that has been personally complimented by the President of the United States. Mr. Sloan was almost as badly worsted in that encounter as he had been a newspaper reporter.

But all this is very small politics. It is also very bad politics. It is worse even than that, for it is a betrayal of public interests. Portland does not want its police force to be a uniformed political squad. It is of no public importance whatever whether the patrolmen belong to this or that faction or party. So long as they do their duty, and behave decently, they ought to be retained. It is useless, however, to expect anything better from the Matthews machine. It perpetuates all the evils that were ever attributed to the Simon dynasty, and invents new ones of its own. It has prostituted the Port of Portland Commission to its factional designs, and every single public interest confided to its care is subverted to its own petty purposes. Unless it shall amend its ways, it may find in its petulant sacrifice of Officer Sloan that it has stoned a prophet.

The Walla Walla Union observes that "the Portland Journal does not seem to fully realize thatlinger Hermann has been elected." This comment seems to be inspired by the fact that The Journal continues to express its opinion of Mr. Hermann just as freely since his election as it did before. The theory of the Union appears to be on the other hand that as soon as an unfit man succeeds in getting into office he thereupon becomes exempt from criticism. There is no divinity that doth hedge about incompetence or dishonesty, whether it be in public or in private life.

The action of District Attorney Manning in commencing an investigation of the reported shortages in the accounts of former County Clerks should be a source of gratification to every citizen who has the welfare of the county at heart. Mr. Manning will be worthy of the highest commendation if he fulfills his promise of going to the bottom of the abuses which have been disclosed and brings to justice every official who has betrayed his trust. The promise is encouraging and vigorous performance will meet with the approval of the community.

The wrangle over the election of president of the new Port of Portland Commission gives strong ground for hope that the Republican machine has slipped a cog and that a majority of the members of the board will not take orders from the bosses. Should this prove to be the case, the recent decision ousting the old board will be but a barren victory for the Mitchell-Matthews rings.

It is gratifying to know that there is at last some definite prospect that the Morrison-street pavement is to be put in decent order. The chuck holes and "thank-yemarms" which have so long impeded travel over the street have been a disgrace to the city.

Bremerton has decided to be good, in order to retain the navy yard, but its newly donned robes of righteousness suggest a misfit clothing house and the halo is distinctly unbecoming to the town's peculiar style of beauty.

President Roosevelt is to visit Mark Hanna in the latter's home in Cleveland. This will give Mark a chance to explain how his friendship for the President led him to oppose his endorsement by the Ohio convention.

BROTHER DICKEY AND SATAN.

It's the opinion of Brother Dickey that "Satan don't bother nobody dat don't commence wid him first; but some folks keep him so busy he can't even take a holiday in summer time."—Atlanta Constitution.

P. A. B. Wilderer, who owns and operates thousands of miles of street railways in a score of American cities, never rides in a trolley car when he can avoid it. For some reason the motion of an electric car nauseates him and produces the same disastrous effect as a sea voyage on the average transatlantic traveler.

Since Hanna capitulated Wall street is winking and blinking at Roosevelt.