

THE JOURNAL

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If the Hughes bill does not pass this year, it will next year, in all probability, for the people will leave those who vote against it at home and elect men who will vote for it. And other states will pass similar laws. The people are going to deny the "vested rights" of a few Napoleons of finance and transportation to rob them perpetually, and even the courts are going ere long to agree with the people—for the people can unmake and make judges as well as legislators.

AN ABSURD LAW

THE LABEL law in Oregon, as construed by the courts, is an unjust absurdity. A Tillamook editor inadvertently, and not only without malice but without intent or knowledge, and entirely through a slight mistake that might happen in any well regulated newspaper office, used one man's name where another man's name, the surname being the same, should have been used.

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THINK ON THESE THINGS IF YOU WANT BETTER STREETS

THERE is one thing in connection with the district improvement charter amendment which every voter should consider before he goes to the polls. It is this question: "Am I sure of the men I am voting into the city council?"

Every property owner particularly should dig into the records of the candidates and learn what manner of men are those he is helping to elevate. Ante-election pledges are all very well, but they do not speak so plainly as records. A man cannot change his mental makeup in a few days of campaign work. And once in the council it's no easy job to get him out of it.

It is because the proposed charter amendment puts so much more power in the hands of the council that the voter who thinks should think twice before voting for any aldermanic candidate.

By the proposed amendment the council is given the authority to lay off those districts whose streets are to be improved under one proceeding. The property owner will have the right to protest against the creation of such a district, but the council will have the sayso about its boundaries.

A separate amendment has been proposed which will require 80 per cent of the property instead of two thirds to be represented on any remonstrance before an improvement can be killed.

While this is not included in the district improvement amendment, it will act as a powerful corollary. There are so many absentee property owners on every street that it is difficult to get a large majority of them to sign anything for the simple reason that they cannot be found when wanted. It will, therefore, become a far harder matter to get enough signatures to defeat an improvement.

If the legislative and executive power is in the hands of the right men, this amendment will redound to the benefit of the city. It will mean a lessening of the unusual power of a few property owners who defeat the proposal for a pavement, a bridge or a sewer just because they do not want to pay the assessment, utterly regardless of whether or not public policy demands that the improvement be made.

There is plenty of chance for chicanery in the council. A square man will have some temptations, but the man whose record is not so clean will have many "propositions" tentatively put to him.

One of the men elected to the council at the last election bore a fair reputation. Yet his colleagues have whispered that it was he who drew up the franchise for a street railway, the franchise for another public service corporation and still one or two others.

In other words, this councilman was given a fee to prepare a franchise ordinance which he as a member of the council—representing you and the other citizens of Portland, mind you—should later vote upon.

No charge was made that the amount of his fee for this service was enough to gain his influence toward passing the franchise. Yet that man was in no position to act in a fair and judicial manner upon those franchises. No matter how disinterested he might try to be and

at all beyond a reasonable time, have no right to complain of the railroads for not furnishing more cars. The new demurrage law ought to be enforced as much against the slow importers as against the railroads. The transportation companies are making some efforts to relieve the car shortage, and it is the duty of shippers to do all they can to help.

Letters From the People

Would Make Radical Reforms. Portland, April 25.—To the Editor of The Journal: Several editorials in your columns have referred to the present absurd jury system, and here in Oregon, where we have the means of remedying its evils in the hands of the people, and where mistakes can be quickly rectified when found to be such, an example could be set that would again place Oregon in the lead and herald it throughout the world as a progressive commonwealth solving the practical problems of civilization.

A notable and able attorney now engaged in lashing as precious a lot of scoundrels as ever went unhung in any community recently severely scolded the citizens who dodged jury duty. The attorney, who receives a hundred dollars a day for carrying on a trial, is always unable to understand the unapologetic attitude of the citizen who desires to avoid losing a tenth of that sum each day he is compelled to listen to the interminable wrangling and oratory of lawyers more intent upon rolling up enormous fees than upon securing justice.

There is no case that need occupy more than two or three days in all

how much he might think he could keep separate his duties as a representative of the people and of the clients who had paid him a fee, he could never be really disinterested. To put the most charitable construction on it, his interest had been enlisted in behalf of that franchise.

The property owners will not get anything like a fair deal if there are many men of that stamp in the council.

If Portland is to get where she belongs in the procession of cities, she must have better streets. Real, respectable paved streets, not roads with a lot of crushed rock dropped aimlessly over their unrelenting surfaces!

It seems that the district improvement plan is the best that can be suggested. It has taken the city five years to take up this scheme. When the present charter was being framed the street committee recommended that the self same plan which is now proposed as an amendment be incorporated into the document. City Auditor Devlin was secretary of this committee and J. N. Teal and others were members. The charter board, however, contained some ultra-conservative men who were afraid of the plan and the committee lost out.

During these five years Seattle has been going ahead under the district improvement plan. Some very unfavorable comparisons are drawn between the best residence sections of the city on Puget sound and those of Portland. It is not palatable, but it is true that our town does not "stack up" when it comes to good streets in the residence district. As long as the charter remains as it is, it is impossible to force an improvement on such places as the foot of Madison street, where two large property owners control the situation, and all the public can do is to choke in the dust or jump through the mud.

If every property owner was a real citizen and not a person striving to get all he can out of the city and put nothing into it, the district improvement plan would not be so necessary. But under present conditions a big stick of some sort appears vital to the best interests of the city as a whole.

Here is the proposed amendment which will be voted on at the June election, changing section 375 to read as follows:

Section 375. Whenever the council shall deem it expedient or necessary to improve any street, street or any part or parts thereof within a district in the city of Portland, it shall require from the city engineer plans and specifications for appropriate improvement and estimates of the cost thereof, and the city engineer shall file such plans, specifications and estimates in the office of the auditor of the city of Portland. If the council shall find such plans, specifications and estimates to be satisfactory, it shall approve the same and shall determine the boundaries of the district benefited and to be assessed for such improvement, and the action of the council in the creation of such assessment district shall be final and conclusive. The council shall by resolution declare its purpose of making said improvement, describing the same and including such engineer's estimate of the probable total cost thereof, and also declaring the boundaries of the assessment district to be benefited and assessed therefor. The action of the council in declaring its intention to improve any street or streets or any part or parts thereof, directing the publication of notice thereof, approving and adopting the plans, specifications and estimates of the city engineer, and determining the district benefited and to be assessed thereby, may all be done in one and the same act.

The people of Oregon should form a jury reform association and submit a constitutional amendment to the electorate providing for (1) juries of less than twelve in minor criminal cases; (2) a two-thirds vote to decide a verdict; (3) providing that common knowledge of the case through reading newspapers should not keep a man from doing jury duty; (4) that trials should be held in the city and county, and not to exceed three days in any case. Our jury system will not be reformed in a thousand years if the lawyers have their own way, but the people of Oregon can shake the dust and antiquarian mould out of it at any time and set up in its stead a jury system that will not be a "truel and unusual punishment" to everybody concerned except the attorneys in the case.

Some have proposed an elective jury composed of a limited number of citizens of a county from whom should be selected a smaller jury from time to time to try all cases coming up within a year. No challenge would lie, or at least a very few, against any man on this elective jury of voters. Anyway, we should have a thorough reformation of the jury system and the method of their selection. Let us stop punishing jurymen so much and feeling lawyers so heavily.

FRED C. DENTON.

"Alice" at Forty—One Reason For Peace

From the New York World. It is an item of current literary note that "Alice in Wonderland" passes this year beyond the action of the English copyright law. Under that statute an author's work is protected either for his lifetime and seven years or for 42 years straight, according to which constitutes the longer period. Lewis Carroll died nine years ago. His "Wonderland" book was first published in 1865.

Long famous and familiar as the "Alice" volume has been, the fact that it is within eight years of its semi-centennial is almost startling. Its non-sense-wisdom and of such constant freshness and pertinence that each new upgrowth of readers receives from it the impression of contemporary origin. The White Rabbit, the Hatter, the Cheshire Cat and the Mad Hatter are creations always of a today. The voice of the Lobster is heard to declare no yesterday. There could be, perhaps, no better test for a certificate of classic Dodgson once Alice in Wonderland is even more than a classic; it is its own "one of a kind."

Lewis Carroll, less known to fame as the Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, surprised the world by the instant success of his "Wonderland" stories. More surprised were hosts of delighted readers to learn that their newest, brightest entertainer was in his professional person an Oxford don and a tutor in mathematics. However, it was to have been expected that a tutor who could turn Euclid into a subject of dramatic and witty discourse, as Mr. Dodgson once did, should do something else quite original on the side.

The little girl who inspired Lewis Carroll's playful-wise pen was Alice Liddell, the small daughter of Dean Liddell of Christ Church, Oxford, who by word of mouth some of the stories that appeared later in the book. When "Alice" came out, Queen Victoria wrote anxiously asking that copy Mr. Carroll's next volume about the "Wonderland" girl be sent to her promptly. And presently it developed, to Mr. Dodgson's further amazement, that the book conceived for little folk had appealed to the intellects of the grown-ups. That appeal "Alice in Wonderland" has never lost.

In a London hospital for children an "Alice in Wonderland" stand is a memorial to Lewis Carroll. The vogue of the book will be probably not less permanent. The removal of the copyright may multiply reproductions and illustrations, but it will not diminish the book's appeal to the intellects of the grown-ups. That appeal "Alice in Wonderland" has never lost.

The Play

One of the most interesting presentations at the Bellini theatre this year was Mr. Walker Whitehead's appearance last night in his play "The Magic Melody." This was a large and thoughtful, before last night's performance, the star was absolutely unknown in this city, his marked abilities won for him instant recognition and earned numerous enthusiastic curtain calls.

Possibly no actor on the stage today is better equipped for the part of the aspiring young musician than is Mr. Whitehead, for his experience has been remarkable during the last few years. In all those years he has never played west of Denver until the present tour. In the east and middle west he has made an enviable reputation for himself by his remarkable and careful, artistic characterizations.

Decidedly original and intensely absorbing is "The Magic Melody." Mr. Whitehead's new vehicle. It is a drama of the most interesting and commercial interest—a romance of business life—but the delicate attractions contained in the story of a young musician struggling against the world to gain a name for himself, and a strong love attachment is the main theme—an old theme, but combined with the single-handed struggle cannot but lead to a noble end.

Early in the story of "The Magic Melody" relates to the struggles of a young and nameless violinist to make his way in New York by playing in the cafes. Accidentally he meets the daughter of a rich and powerful man, who yields to her solicitations and arranges a great concert where the young man may play and tell the world of his genius. The magnate had arranged to marry his daughter to a titled Englishman, and when he learns of her attachment to the musician, he exerts every effort to thwart it. Connected with the child-hood of the violinist there is a romance. Her mother, who is a famous singer, had married an American and had been deserted by him. There is strong dramatic quality in the denunciation of the financier by the musician, who is his son, and it is in this scene that the star makes a powerful impression.

Another important character in the play is that of the king of finance who furnishes the element opposed to art, and who unwittingly makes it possible for the violinist to achieve his life's ambition. The part is taken by Howard Gould, once leading man with the Baker Stock company of this city and one of the most popular that company ever had. He gives a fine and skillful interpretation of the part.

Miss May Buckley is the leading woman with Mr. Whitehead's company. She also is well known on the coast as a singer and pianist in Portland. Possessed of a charming personality and unusual talents as an actress, she is a captivating ward of the financial king and was highly pleasing last night. Liebler & Co. have supplied a remarkably capable cast for Mr. Whitehead's support. There are only seven members of the company, including the star, but each is an artist of recognized ability.

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox. The following lines are from a poem entitled "The Edict of the Sea," by Ella Wheeler Wilcox. The entire poem is printed in this month's Cosmopolitan magazine, and these extracts are reprinted by permission.

Rather than breed strong sons, at war's best, Or bring fair daughters into life, to be the pains of travail, for no end but war, Aye! let the race die out for lack of babes! Better a suicide than endless war! Better a silent world than noise of guns And clash of armies.

Give us, O men, your word that war shall end; Disarm the world, and we will give you sons to construct, and daughters to adorn. A beautiful new earth where there shall be Fewer and finer people, opulence And opportunity and peace for all. Until you promise peace no shrill birth-cry Shall sound again upon the aging earth. We wait your answer.

In one week's travel on the Mediterranean sea I saw warships that had cost over \$100,000,000, manned by carefully selected able-bodied men, whose only occupation was preparation for war, whose only thoughts were for destruction of life and property. These men cost the world hundreds of thousands of dollars, yet they contributed nothing to its advancement. They are creating and producing nothing which benefits humanity.

Meanwhile, wherever I went on the fully selected able-bodied men, whose only occupation was preparation for war, whose only thoughts were for destruction of life and property. These men cost the world hundreds of thousands of dollars, yet they contributed nothing to its advancement. They are creating and producing nothing which benefits humanity.

Oregon Sidelights

Bees are doing well around Eola. Now nearly every Oregon town wants a militia company. A bumper fruit crop is expected around The Dalles. Hermiston expects to have a population of 500 before long.

A woman, Miss Kentner, has been elected principal of the Silverton school. A lot of Eola men and boys staked and relished the hop yard of a neighbor who has been crippled by an accident. A Silverton man sold a team for \$450, another a horse for \$100. A yearling colt brought \$225.

The first boat to reach Fort Klamath propelled by its own power reached the Dallas observatory. Many are locating there and at Black Rock. There are not enough houses to accommodate the daily arrivals. The Weston brickyard management has granted an increase in wages. The minimum wage hereafter will be \$2.50 a day. Brick setters will earn \$5 a day or better and the molders will average about \$3.50 per day.

Dallas is one of the most favorably located towns in Oregon for a first-class creamery, and every drop of milk produced in the surrounding country should be manufactured into butter right here at home, urges the Observer. William Reddick, formerly a section foreman on the Coquille railroad, has fallen heir to \$475,000, part of a fortune that was left to the family by an uncle; the latter was in charge of the oldest brother, who used it well. The pretty little hamlet of Prosper, on the Coquille, promises to possess a largely increased population and business activity before many months time, with another mill to afford employment for added dozens of people.

In walking through a lot a Silverton man noticed a snake, and when he reached down to pick up a stick to annihilate the reptile, another one, which he did not notice lying curled upon the ground at the same time, jumped and bit him in the face. A Silverton man, who always says his bills without a word of complaint, says the Appeal, called for a porter-wagon steak on the train one day last week and the order was served for the nominal sum of \$1.50. The bill was paid as soon as presented.

Both Misplaced. From the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Perhaps the Federal sub-treasurer, as well as the bronze portrait of Washington at prayer, ought to be removed from Wall street.

Small Change

Now a pound of hops will buy only one glass of beer. Shakespeare sized life up: "Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble." But even Roosevelt will scarcely claim that Taft is "just as good."

Each of the four Republican candidates is sure he is the best man for the office. Every time Fairbanks looks at the length of his legs, he feels sure nobody can outrun him. But perhaps Editor Stead would admit that Uncle Joe is a great man. He says damn, too.

Mr. Hermann will scarcely be vindicated to the extent of sending him back to congress. God made the country and the devil seems to have had a good deal to do with making the town. If it keeps cold long enough and then is hot enough long enough, there will be more or less of a war.

Now is the time to throw away those congressman's garden seeds; buy some that will grow and plant them. But what would the president do with people who naturally simply can't amount to much? Outsize them? Maybe that Spanish stork is hesitating about consigning a pretty, innocent little thing to such an unfortunate existence.

Perhaps Miss Roosevelt thinks she is nearly old enough to take a trip to the Philippines with Secretary Taft—and somebody. President-that-was Bonilla is coming to Washington to tell his troubles. But our administration has no use for the licked dog. It will be quite a long wait till Oregon strawberries are ripe this year, but just think how delicious they will taste, and look pleasant.

How many people throughout the country will remember that fuel famine of last winter had enough to make sure in time that it doesn't happen again? Jakey Rills has promulgated what he says are several of the president's maxims, the last of which is "Learn by your mistakes." But he may have eliminated this one. Will the Portland Journal please have the kindness to announce that Salem is to begin paving within 10 days—Salem Stateman. Burs, with great pleasure. And hope it's so.

If you're waking early, get up quietly and don't disturb those who want to sleep away for tomorrow morning will be chilly and the best will feel good, though 'tis the first of May. Out in Hillsboro the Sunday law is being enforced against ice cream dealers. If this is attempted in other towns, including Portland, when the hot weather comes, there will be a variety of trouble. When the sweet summer girl can't get ice cream on Sunday, anarchy will find its opportunity.

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