



EDITORIAL PAGE OF THE JOURNAL



THE JOURNAL

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Little minds are too much hurt by little things; great minds are quite conscious of them, and despise them.—La-Rouchefoucauld.

SIX MONTHS OF SCHOOL.

SIX MONTHS of school for every district in Oregon is a worthy endeavor. A shorter period of instruction for the year is of small value. Even with six months per year, the progress toward an education is tedious and slow. The pupil can easily forget the half that has been acquired in one four months' term in waiting for another.

With four months of attendance at school and eight of idleness and thought processes of the child by the long inaction lose discipline and strength. These are drawbacks to greatly weaken the efficiency of the school system from the standpoint of universality and effectiveness.

By the equities of the social relation, the child in the remote district is entitled to at least an approximate opportunity with the child in the center of population. Any other arrangement is unjust to the remote rural district. It offers a reward to families to fly to cities for the better educational facilities. Even six months of school per year is scarcely the desired approximate, but is perhaps the best possible at this time. Four months of school is not even a reasonable attempt to do justice between the child in the rich city or town district and the child in the poverty-ridden rural district. There ought not to be any penalization of poverty—the penalty is enough already without punishing the child of poverty with lack of school privilege.

State Superintendent Ackerman and others are offering a bill to the legislature providing for six months school in every district. It is a measure of equality between the poor child and the rich. It is a plan to diffuse education and make it universal. Upon the universality of education more than upon a highly educated few and an ignorant many depends the perpetuity and strength of our institutions.

The proposed law continues a present provision giving \$50 out of the county levy to each district in that county. Then it requires each school district to tax itself five mills for school purposes, and if it fails the law gives the county court power to make the levy for the district. Finally, if this levy and the \$50 falls below the \$300 required for a six months' annual school, the court from the county school fund makes up the remainder. It is a plan modeled after the law in the state of Washington, but is less drastic. It is a fair and square plan and is likely to meet with the approval of the legislature. Ought not the children of Oregon to have as good school privileges as children in the state of Washington?

BUT ONE DISCORDANT NOTE.

THE POLICY of underestimating Portland's population has been rebuked. It is a policy that is resented by the business and other interests of Portland as unjustifiable and detrimental. It belittles Portland in the eyes of the investing world. It tends to take this city off the map as one of the chief cities of the coast. It invalidates Portland's claim to the attention and visitation of tourists, travelers, sightseers and capital looking for profitable outlay. It decries the city's importance and denies its position as a great commercial mart. It is refusal to give to it credit for that remarkable growth that has been the delight and glory of all Portlanders and all Oregonians. It makes of it a city of the second class instead of a city of the first class among the municipalities in the far west. It is the first instance on record in which an agency in a great city has been devoted to tearing down instead of building up. Population is a measure of property values, a test of attractiveness and an exhibit of commercial and industrial opportunity and achievement.

All this is so recognized by the people of Portland and with remarkable unanimity they have voiced their view. Every line of interest has been consulted, and through the columns of The Journal each has testified. Property owners, real estate men, merchants, professional men and all other interests have spoken and each has insisted that Portland should have her true place as a city of the first rather than second class among the cities of the

coast. In truth and in fact, there is in all Portland but one discordant note. The instrumentality from which that pessimistic view issues, should atone itself to the harmony of our greater Portland's progress.

PRESIDENT AND SENATOR.

NEXT MONDAY the four presidential electors of Oregon will meet in Salem, and will cast their votes, that will help elect the next president. It is presumed that they will cast their votes unanimously for a man named William Howard Taft. They are under no legal obligation whatever to do this. They can vote for Bryan, or Foraker, or Cannon, or Rockefeller, or Harvey Scott, if they choose. But everybody supposes and is sure that all of them will vote for Taft. Why? Because the people of Oregon at the November election gave Mr. Taft a majority over Mr. Bryan, thus being the nominees of the two principal parties, the only ones that cut any figure. The national convention settled the matter of candidates; the choice of the people was restricted to these two; Taft won; these agents of the people, not only in Oregon but in all the States, will carry out the people's mandate. This is true Republican government. Through this method the people do rule.

A few days later, certain other delegates of the people of Oregon, formally assembled as required by law, will elect a senator. The two leading parties put forward, through popular primaries, two candidates—Coke and Chamberlain. Fulton was eliminated by the Republican voters in the primary, which in this state has superseded the party convention. The people were restricted to a choice between two men for senator, as they were in the matter of president. They all—or all who chose and were eligible—went to the polls and made a choice between these two. Chamberlain won, as Taft did. One deserves the office to which he was chosen just as much as the other does. The people have chosen, selected, decided. Just as the electors next Monday, obeying the mandate of the people of Oregon, will vote for and help elect Taft president, so should those other agents and servants of the people, the members of the legislature, on the set time, elect Chamberlain senator. The cases, eliminating partisan claptrap and legal sophistry, are exactly parallel. For the basis, the source, of all authority, all power, is the People. A servant who does not obey his master, his employer, and serve him fairly and honestly is an ingrate and a traitor. No one of the four Republican electors who would refuse to vote for Taft could live in Oregon or the United States another day, except as an outcast, a dyed villain, a modern Benedict Arnold, one shunned and despised of all men. And why should not the same rule apply in the election of United States senator? It does apply, in all its force, to every legislator who subscribed to Statement No. 1.

THE NORMAL SCHOOLS.

THE DRAIN NONPAREIL says that ex-President Briggs of the Drain normal school and Professor O. C. Brown of Roseburg "are completing arrangements for presenting bills to the coming session of the legislature to reimburse those who contributed to the support of state normal at Drain prior to July, 1908. These gentlemen are also preparing plans for districting the state for the various normal schools, with a view of continuing the school at Drain. This scheme has the support of the state board of education, and State Superintendent Ackerman has signified his willingness to assist in drafting the necessary bill to submit to the legislature."

So it is certain that the normal school question will be a live and busy one again this winter at Salem. It may be reasonable and fair to reimburse the gentlemen who kept up the Drain school, but it is to be doubted if it should be reestablished, or even if the other three should be maintained. Not that normal schools are not a good thing, but the records prove that they turn out but a few of the state's teachers, and there is little evidence that these few teachers are much if any better than others.

AN ADVERSE REPORT.

THE SENATE Interstate commerce committee will report adversely Senator Fulton's bill amending the Interstate Commerce law. As readers of The Journal know, this amendment prohibits railroads from arbitrarily raising rates, without first submitting the increased rates to the Interstate Commerce commission for approval. It is a just, reasonable and necessary provision, and entirely in the interest of the people of the country, and especially of shippers of the Pacific northwest. But the railroads oppose it, and a majority of this senate committee, of which Elkins is chairman, serves, in this matter as always, the railroads and not the people. Elkins, all through the last session of congress refused to report this bill. He promised to report it, before the holidays, but did not do so. Now, being driven to make a report, he secures a bare majority of the committee to make an adverse report.

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A CONTINENTAL MOVEMENT.

THE PRESIDENT has invited Canada and Mexico to join the United States in the movement recently inaugurated for the conservation of national resources, and it is probable that they will accept the invitation, and that it will therefore become an international North American endeavor. In his letter to the governor-general of Canada the president said: "It is evident that natural resources are not limited by the boundary lines which separate nations, and the need for conserving them upon this continent is as wide as the area upon which they exist." This is especially true in regard to forest wealth, and Canada has so far pursued a far wiser policy than the United States has in this respect. Besides, the political line dividing the countries has been made too much of. There is no good reason for a tariff barrier along the same line. Geographically the whole region is one country. Various rivers rise in Canada and flow into the United States, and vice versa, and the two countries should unite to get the most benefit out of these streams and to maintain reasonable forest reserves. The same is true in a less degree of Mexico, in which country Americans have hundreds of millions of dollars invested. There is needed an international code of laws for these countries, covering the development of waterways and the industries of lumbering and mining, and such a code may be an outgrowth of this new conservation movement.

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Fulton and others have forced a report, but the report will be adverse. The senate might pass the bill in spite of this, except that no such bill can be passed if any small clique or coterie of senators conspire to keep it back or talk it to death. So the railroads will win, and the people lose, again, as usual. They are used to it.

A CONTINENTAL MOVEMENT.

THE PRESIDENT has invited Canada and Mexico to join the United States in the movement recently inaugurated for the conservation of national resources, and it is probable that they will accept the invitation, and that it will therefore become an international North American endeavor. In his letter to the governor-general of Canada the president said: "It is evident that natural resources are not limited by the boundary lines which separate nations, and the need for conserving them upon this continent is as wide as the area upon which they exist." This is especially true in regard to forest wealth, and Canada has so far pursued a far wiser policy than the United States has in this respect. Besides, the political line dividing the countries has been made too much of. There is no good reason for a tariff barrier along the same line. Geographically the whole region is one country. Various rivers rise in Canada and flow into the United States, and vice versa, and the two countries should unite to get the most benefit out of these streams and to maintain reasonable forest reserves. The same is true in a less degree of Mexico, in which country Americans have hundreds of millions of dollars invested. There is needed an international code of laws for these countries, covering the development of waterways and the industries of lumbering and mining, and such a code may be an outgrowth of this new conservation movement.

CITY PRINTING.

THE CHARTER commission has adopted a provision that the city printing shall be awarded only to some newspaper having a circulation of not less than 15,000. This is to cut out little special publications that exist only to publish such matter, and are not real newspapers at all, and have no circulation except such as this patronage gives them. They are mere parasites, of course. A better proposition might be to award the city printing to newspapers at a maximum rate of say two cents per inch per thousand of circulation, any paper being privileged to bid under that sum. This would secure the printing of city advertising in a genuine newspaper, for this price would be sufficient to justify them in seeking the business, yet none of them could afford to do it for much less. The maximum rate would protect the city; competition would do the rest; and the people, or a considerable portion of them, could see these advertisements, as they cannot when published in papers of very small circulation.

According to the Railway Age, 3214 miles of new railroad were built in the United States in 1908, against 5212 miles in 1907. The 1908 record is the lowest for many years, the nearest approach to it for over a decade being 3332 miles in 1904. East of the Mississippi river only 761 miles were laid in 1908, as compared with 1884 miles in 1907. In Canada 1248 miles were laid in 1908, as against 976 miles in 1907. The following table gives the figures for mileage built in the United States during the last 16 years: 1893, 3024; 1894, 1760; 1895, 1428; 1896, 1692; 1897, 2109; 1898, 3265; 1899, 4569; 1900, 4894; 1901, 5382; 1902, 6026; 190