Oregon Journal

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

C. S. JACKSON.....Publisher
[Be calm, be confident, be cheerful and do unto others as you would have them do unto you.]

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There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.—Job 32:8.

MORE THAN HANDCLAPPING

THERE is in Portland a motion picture theatre whose attendants placed a Christmas tree on either side of the stage. They hung it with crystals that reflected the hues of the rainbow. They scattered over it a profusion of white flakes that suggested the beauty of snow without its chill. They scattered about it cords of shining silver and gold and adornments of fantastic form.

When the footlights and the spotlights were turned upon the trees they were pleased with the results of their efforts, for they had given the work more interest than would be acorded the ordinary task.

But when the curtain went up on the scene in the presence of a large audience they were disappointed. Not a sound of applause came from any person there. "What's the use of fixing things up for people who have only learned to applaud a dog fight" was the complaint of one.

Until they, perchance, read this they will not know what a triumph their work was. Two thirds of the way back in the dim light of the theatre sat a faded woman. She wore a black dress of that stuff which, when it is new, and never again, seems to be silk. She had neglected to remove a bonnet of rusty black straw, surmounted by trimming of equally rusty ribbons and a scant three inches of mangled plume. But she was leaning forward with awe upon her face and happiness in her eyes. Her son had returned to a tiny home in the hills. He had brought her to the city for a Christmas celebration to an experience she had never had before. It was her first motion picture show.

Suddenly she grasped the strapping young fellow with a work roughened hand. "Son," she said. "Do you suppose it'll be half as beautiful in heaven? I used to dream about the mansions of the blest and just think we got into one of them right here on earth. You've certainly been good to your old mother, boy."

VANCOUVER'S SHARE

VANCOUVER has not, it appears, brought her sprightly campaign for a place in commerce and shipping to the status of reductum ad absurdum. A committee composed of some of the representative citizens of Portland's sister community has informed The Journal that instead of asking for a rate preferential over Portland, as was recently announced, Vancouver seeks only those distributive grain export and local coal rates which Portland already enjoys.

Since the recognition of Vancouver's merits in the recent decision of the Columbia basin rate case, they explain Vancouver wishes to follow up the advantage in respect to other conditions which are precedent to the genuine establishment of opportunity for trade.

With this spirit, Vancouver is pressing her campaign for the approval of a 30-foot channel project in the Columbia above the mouth of the Willamette. Her rate experts have obtained not only the approval of Portland in this entirely commendable enterprise but have secured favorable action on the part of the commercial interests in Seattle and Tacoma. With the ship cargo, present and prospective, and with the tangible cooperation with the government which are being demonstrated by both public and private investment in water terminal facilities, it is difficult to understand how a board of army engineers or congress could find any honest reason for not approving the improvement of the mere four miles of channel involved in the Vancouver project.

Vancouver was entitled to the recognition accorded her in the Columbia basin decision, and The Journal foresaw her merit when this newspaper successfully urged Vancouver's intervention in the action before the Interstate Commerce commission. Vancouver is equally entitled to other rate adjustments and channel improvements which will identify her in fact with the general community of trade and commerce at the head of navigation on the Columbia and Willamette.

A little girl in Kansas wrote Santa Claus, asking for a doll for Christmas and a job for her daddy. Santa will provide the doll, and the Elks found a job for daddy the day after her letter was published.

EVEN CLUBS PLAY SANTA

THE desire to make some less favored one's lot happier at the season of good cheer imbues not individuals alone, but whole organizations also.

This year in Portland and in other cities of Oregon unusual generosity has been shown. The Elks had their Christmas tree for the children of need. The Ad club carried its truckload of gifts to the South Portland children's home. Tommy Swivel, whose Christmas dinner for children began as an individual expression of exceptional kindliness, was joined by others unnamed in special organization for contribution to the happiness of youthful life.

There is not an institution nor a child whom full handed generosity did not lovingly endeavor to find.

And while the unfortunate in hospitals, institutions and chilly shelters have been remembered at home, the out-reaching spirit of the season has extended to the little folks in the desolated countries of Europe and those to whom a crust of bread is a gift that brings life with it will receive the share which Herbert Hoover has asked in their behalf.

Oregon's Christmas has furnished a new opportunity for business to make a prosperity statement. According to the merchants, trade everywhere has been better than last year. When they wish a customer "Merry Christmas" it is partly because a greater number of customers have already made their Christmas merry.

THE MILE HIGH HOSTELRY

HAVING by personal visit and sustained inquiry investigated the merits of 26 criticisms directed against the administration of Crater Lake Lodge, chiefly by Stephen T. Mather, director of the national park service, a committee appointed by the governor reaches one general conclusion:

Most of the criticisms directed against Mr. Parkhurst might be attributed to the fact that he has not been properly financed and that were he afforded the necessary financial assistance, Crater Lake lodge would become one of the noted resorts of the country. Mr. Parkhurst has almost impoverished himself to keep Crater Lake lodge going from year to year, making such improvements as his financial capacity would permit. He has invested a large sum of money and should he be retired as lessee, we believe he should be adequately reimbursed for his expenditures of time and money.

This is a finding that states in new words an old conclusion.

Crater lake is one of the wonder spots of the world. Crater National park is the one national park within the boundaries of Oregon. It is such a place that to be heard of renders every listener, no matter what his residence, a potential tourist treking toward Oregon.

The marvelous lake is, however, far from settled communities. Hotel accommodation is essential to all but the intrepid few who find their sustenance in a pack and their couch upon the earth. A. L. Parkhurst put his private fortune, his time and his faith for the future into a tourist hotel project there. He took up the load which Portland, which Medford, which Grants Pass and Ashland should, by reason of their direct interest, have helped him share.

Then came the director of national park service, the vice president of the Southern Pacific, and by their criticisms, without, at least, corresponding contribution, increased the embarrassment of slender finance and depressed the enthusiasm which had inspired the pioneer tourist hotel effort.

One of the criticisms was just. Portland business and hotel interests have failed to give their countenance and their cash to a well organized tourist hotel scheme at Creter lake. Since the governor's committee so emphatically confirms previous statements that financial organization is the first necessity, why doesn't it continue its efforts until the suggestions are acted upon?

There is a way of saying "Merry Christmas" without uttering a word. An Eastern Oregon rancher demonstrated it. Asked for a contribution to the European children's relief drive and lacking the cash, he gave instead three of his sheep. The offering of another was 10 sacks of wheat in lieu of money. Each gave the most valuable of Christmas gifts, a life.

THE YEAR'S BALANCE SHEET

THE material achievements of Portland and Oregon during 1920 are the earned reward of an industrious community whose efforts are dedicated to the advancement of the common welfare through labor and production.

Elsewhere in today's Sunday Journal, notably in The Sunday Journal Magazine, the accomplishments of the passing year are set forth in picture and text.

We read of what has been done in port affairs and are warranted in the large expectations of what the future will bring in the development of maritime commerce.

Twelve million dollars has been invested in Portland in new buildings during 1920. Of this great sum a large proportion has gone into industrial plants that mean more and larger payrolls and greater manufactured output in the years to come.

Oregon continues to hold her lead in highway construction. During the past two years she has invested twenty millions in improved highways, thereby facilitating the movement of crops from farm to market and bringing in closer touch all parts of the state and rendering outstate points easier of access.

Oregon's farm wealth produced during 1920 totals the enormous sum of $428,000,000, her grain yield alone being worth more than $125,000,000.

The state's 284 banks report aggregate resources of more than $350,000,000, of which Portland's 26 banks show resources of more than $184,000,000.

During the year the federal census has been taken which credits Oregon with a population of 783,285, an increase of 16.4 over the figures of 1910.

There are, according to the census, 50,188 farms in Oregon, an increase of 4686, or 10.3 per cent over the number in 1910. This figure is gratifying in view of the contrary condition in other parts of the country.

The census gives Portland a population of 258,288, an increase of 24.6 per cent over 1910. During the decade Portland has advanced from the rank of twenty-eighth city in size in the United States to that of twenty-fourth.

These few paragraphs picked at random from the mass of things accomplished justify Portland and Oregon in anticipating a happy and prosperous New Year.

AN EXPOSITION SUPPLEMENT

PORTLAND has a variety of reasons for holding an exposition in 1925, but none more distinctive or historic than Vancouver's centenary as a Hudson Bay company post. The suggestion which comes from across the Columbia that the two cities make common cause in exposition plans warrants not only acceptance but support by Portland.

Los Angeles might steal the idea of celebrating the completion of the Lincoln and Pacific highways. The centenary of the electro-magnet, basis of power transmission, might be selected by almost any city which had exposition ambitions. The restoration of normal trade, provided by 1925 it has been restored, would be seized upon as a genuine cause of jubilation by any port.

But Vancouver's settlement was not alone as a fur trading post. It became an outpost in the westward course of empire. Around it cluster historic fact, picturesque anecdote, romance and legend. Associated with it are such luminous names as McLoughlin, Grant and Sheridan.

The addition of Vancouver post's centenary to the Portland exposition would provide a gracious and charming supplement to be welcomed and not denied.

JAPANESE IN OREGON

THERE are, according to the report of the Oregon labor bureau, but 4547 Japanese in Oregon. Some 2021 of this number are in Multnomah county, but the remainder are scattered with considerable uniformity among the various counties of the state.

Idleness and pauperism are almost unknown among them if the labor commissioner's figures may be believed, for of 2666 male Japanese in Oregon he credits 2387 with being employed, 202 in commercial undertakings, 1595 in industry and 590 in agriculture. The Japanese women, on the other hand, appear to be home bodies, for of the 833 in the state but 64 are listed as working for wages, 63 in commercial pursuits and one in agriculture.

That the Japanese in this state work for less than the whites is indicated in a table which shows that the highest average daily wage of $5 is paid in but two counties—Columbia and Coos, and the lowest average daily wage of $3.40 in Linn and Malheur counties.

The home making proclivities of the Japanese in Oregon seem to be far below their industry. In but 10 of the 35 counties of the state are they listed as paying rent, the labor commissioner explaining that in other counties the buildings occupied are of nominal value or are used also for business purposes.

The labor commissioner suggests but one possible evasion of the law against Oriental ownership of property in the state. It appears to him that Japanese are stockholders in several corporations owning large tracts of land, and he advises the enactment of a law which will compel all corporations to file statements with the several assessors giving a list of their stockholders and the amount of stock held by each.

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

SENATOR MILES POINDEXTER of Washington state has become a staunch brother among that group of congresmen whom we were wont to call the old guard. As such his name was prominently mentioned as a presidential possibility. When the campaign did get under way, with Warren G. Harding as the Republican standard bearer, Poindexter forged to the front as one of the big advisory chiefs.

Today, with his party safely in power and assured of undisputed reign for two years or more, Poindexter has hopped on the national band wagon as the would-be father of an anti-strike proposal which is declared to be one of the most incisive and deadly weapons ever aimed at organized labor.

These facts are cited merely to picture Poindexter as he has gradually come to be during the later years of his public career. His conservatism—conservatism of the most unadulterated brand—is now unquestioned and unquestionable.

Let our thoughts next turn to 1910 when Poindexter was a senatorial candidate in the primaries of Washington. His opponents were John L. Wilson, a former United States senator and owner of a big daily paper at Seattle, and Judge Thomas Burke, a corporation lawyer and distinguished scholar, who then had, as now, both brains and money. Wilson withdrew from the campaign, and the decision was left with Poindexter and Burke. Judge Burke spent, it is declared, more than a small fortune in his effort to get the nomination, but was unsuccessful. He had behind him an almost perfect organization. Every paper in the state, with very few exceptions, threw its support to him ungrudgingly. Burke was a known conservative, an embryonic member of the old guard, and Poindexter was a radical and avowed Progressive. That wave of Progressive Republicanism, one of the first to hit the Northwest, swept Poindexter into office overwhelmingly. It is to be doubted if Judge Burke carried a single precinct in the state. In that campaign organized labor was one of the factors behind Poindexter to a man.

What is the answer which will clarify the question of Poindexter's change of political front during the last 10 years? Were his earlier views those of an immature mind grasping at gewgaws which blinded his true sense of moral and political values, or were they the outpourings of a calloused and insincere opportunist, who saw a tidal wave of public upheaval coming and at once grasped a lifebelt and plunged on the breaker of Progressivism?

The query is not put in any vituperative or calumniating spirit, but merely in a desire to bring forth some light on an incident of political psychology. Surely a man has a right to change his mind, but just as surely has the public a right to ask and know the cause of such a change, especially when it has been such a marked right-about face as that which characterizes Poindexter's present attitude. What irresistible quality in his later association and environment at the national capital has provided the attrition which has worn and washed away all traces of the Poindexter who emerged from his cocoon a decade ago?

The senator undoubtedly could write an enlightening and interesting symposium on the mental processes which have led to his utter abandonment of the rebel cause and his pledging of allegiance to the powers that be.

Will he?

STILL AT THEIR MOORINGS

ALARMED parents who fear that the trend of modern education is away from religion, should take comfort from a survey recently made by the Baptist denomination in the University of Chicago, the results of which have been announced in the Baptist Observer.

Among more than 2000 students interviewed, there were only two avowed agnostics and one atheist, while 88 per cent of the students claimed membership in some organized religious group. More women than men were without any religious connection. Two thirds of the entire student body recorded itself as Protestant.

The figures showed that during the school year 92 per cent of the students attended some religious service at least once a month, and that 45 per cent go once a Sunday. One eighth of the students engage in some form of religious work, such as teaching Sunday school, etc. An even larger per cent engage in social service work of one kind or another.

This social and religious work is carried on in addition not only to heavy university work, but to household and remunerative work done by the students. Of the men, it was learned that 216 engage in some form of household work, and 319 of the women. Besides these, 409 men and 144 women spend at least 10 hours a week in remunerative work to help defray their expenses.

NATIONALISM AND "WILSONISM"

Mercure de France, a Leading Journal of Opinion, Rebukes Shallow Critics and Yields to President Wilson Credit for Superb Purpose and Achievement in the Cause of Universal Peace.

Foreign Editorial Digest
(Consolidated Press Association)

"France, England, Germany—these proper names are in such common use that one is led to think of them as corresponding to something exact and precise. Yet republican Ireland, chaotic Germany and ambiguous Poland are there to remind us that national entities are abstractions, and that one must take pains to inquire from time to time just what their concrete significance is, before employing them in evanescent syllogisms. But people are generally satisfied with the few vague ideas and sentiments that names of countries connote."

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This significant reflection opens a discussion of the League of Nations in the Mercure de France—a publication that deserves its international reputation in literature, politics, economics and art. The article continues:

"And yet necessity and convenience do not allow us—outside of scientific works—to be as accurate in our choice of expressions as we might like. We have to get along with approximations. There is no grave danger in it provided sentimentality and partisanship do not utterly blind us.

"The fact that makes it most difficult to define a nation is the fact of internationalism. Socialism is only one of its aspects. This word, if it once might have been compared to a note of music, now corresponds to a scale or a whole keyboard. Within national entities, Socialists of every hue frankly overstep the bounds of legality in fighting the existing government.

"In Great Britain and Italy committees of action, which are a sort of soviet, deal as equals with the constituted authority. The syndicalists of Europe declare that the occupation of the Ruhr would be a crime against the working class. What then becomes of national sovereignty?

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"Such sovereignty is threatened from yet another side, the so-called bourgeois side. The Brussels conference, following the conference of Washington and Geneva, showed how far the road to progressive limitation of the right of governments had been traveled. It is not happening without strong resistance, until an equilibrium is reached. The triumph of 'reaction' is the sign of this resistance. * * * Authority is breaking up.

"In this condition of anarchy, now comes the League of Nations. It is a Parthenon of hopes, or a cathedral on which several generations are collaborating. On its Romanic bases may arise heaven knows what choir, what naves and what rococo ornamentation. Though for the moment it is even more difficult to define than a nation, many people talk of the league as if they had created it, as of a thing that can be touched, seen, measured; while really it is only tending, and without haste, towards a form.

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"And now comes the question: What is Wilsonism? The opponents of the league are going about everywhere repeating that America has repudiated Wilsonism, that Wilsonism is dead. Yet the corpse, like so many others, is doing pretty well.

"A large number of cities, towns and villages have given President Wilson's name to streets, squares and avenues. This somewhat silly infatuation has been followed by unreasonable animosity. During the war and up to the signing of the peace, it was forbidden to take the name of Wilson in vain. Those who ventured on criticism or even reservations felt the scissors of the censorship. Now that the first assembly of the league is meeting at Geneva and President Wilson is coldly deserted by so many formerly zealous supporters we must try to give the president his due.

"If Wilsonism is the 14 points, Wilsonism does not belong to Mr. Wilson. To mention only the authors of the treaty and the covenant. Clemenceau had the name of the league constantly on the tip of his tongue and of his pen before he was recalled to the prime ministry. At that time Mr. Wilson was writing notes of infinite good will and patience to the German government. But what belongs to Mr. Wilson, what is entirely his, cannot be taken away from him, is, his stubborn, obstinate and superb perseverance.

"An article in the Semaine Litterarie a year ago, though it contains some inaccuracies, contains also these words, the truth of which has been confirmed day after day: 'There is one thing to President Wilson's credit that cannot be denied him, that he showed profound and statesmanlike foresight in insisting that the League of Nations should be created by the peace treaty itself and not by a separate pact. If the covenant had not been written into the treaty, it is certain that it could not be concluded now and that the idea of which the president had made himself the champion would now be lost forever.'

"This idea, which was the idea of all, or at least of many, he made his own. It was no more his than anyone else's, but he made it his property by making it his obsession. It little matters what psychological reasons of political motives prompted him, the result is there.

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"The partisans of the old systems of alliances, the opportunist politicians, who think it clever to change their speech every week, the malcontents everywhere, and even Mr. Harding himself, cannot change that result. Wilsonism is the repeated affirmation of a principle, toward and against all, against reality itself, if need be, against wind and tide. Concessions and adjustments are subordinate. There is no danger that they will not come. But there must first be an impulse and some guidance.

"Since it is plain that agreement is impossible on a thousand matters, let the pact be revised, even in vague terms, and ratified. That is the first thing to do. President Wilson can now give way to others. His work is done. How many of his opponents will leave behind anything so lasting?"

Letters From the People

[Communications sent to The Journal for publication in this department should be written on only one side of the paper; should not exceed 300 words in length, and must be signed by the writer, whose mail address in full must accompany the contribution.]

LIBERTY BONDS AND FARMERS.

Incoming Administration's Attitude Toward Both is Criticised.

Freewater, Dec. 22.—To the Editor of The Journal—It is easy to read between the lines what our future government means when it tells the people it intends to stabilize the war bonds at par. It's a gentle hint to the wise financier to load up, buy all the bonds available of the poor people who, during the war bought "till it hurt," to save humanity; and now that the country is saved these poor people are forced to sell their bonds at a big discount in order to save themselves. So the government is planning to stabilize the war bonds. There is good money in it for the rich; besides their big discount the poor people will pay the interest and in this way the high financiers of the country will soon get back the $3,500,000 or more that they spent in the last campaign for a change of the administration.

The new administration-to-be is casting the shadows before, for already the farmers are sadly feeling the change. Why this silence in regard to the farm loan? Why has the government always ready money to lend the railroads? Why plenty to loan to foreign countries? And why, in the name of all that is American, are the farmers' requests turned down? Are they of so little importance that the nation can do without them? By all that is right and just, by all that is deserving and helpful, the farmer is entitled to be considered and safeguarded. It is he who feeds the world. Should he refuse to sow and reap the world would starve, bonds or no bonds.

Mary Harris Simmons.

COMMENT AND NEWS IN BRIEF

SMALL CHANGE

It's getting so an employer can't fire even his furnace without permission of a union.—El Paso Herald.

As Uncle Sam would not go to Europe, Europe is preparing to come to the United States.—Seattle Times.

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In spite of her predilection for blizzards, Canada doesn't want to be snowed under at Geneva.—Boston Transcript.

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Don't be oversensitive. President-elect Harding can't confer with every Great Mind.—St. Joseph News-Press.

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In ten years from now there may be no Irish problem because there may be no Irish, the way things are now going.—Richmond (Ind.) Item.

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Compasses are smashed to get alcoholic contents, says a headline. After a man is drunk he doesn't care what direction he goes anyhow.—El Paso Herald.

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Not only is it awfully hard for an ordinary chap to look as well in his union suit as the fellow in the advertisement looks in his, but it also isn't necessary.—Kansas City Star.

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One rather gets the view, from the postmaster general's report, that he is not wholly at one with the public on the standard of service rendered by his department.—Marion Star.

SIDELIGHTS

The peak of high taxes does not appear to have been scaled yet. But who cares for the taxpayer, anyway?—Eugene Guard.

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If the papers keep on printing those stories about the shipping board, everybody will be wanting to work for it.—La Grande Observer.

* * *

Oregon's revised population is 783,389; we could double that during the next ten years and not be a bit crowded.—Pendleton East Oregonian.

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Herbert Hoover should have a place in Harding's cabinet. The only objections we have seen, are in reality his strongest recommendations.—Medford Mail-Tribune.

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Testimony in the shipping board investigation indicates that 10 per cent of all the shipping repair bills was graft. That's a new construction of the cost plus 10 per cent system.—Eugene Register.

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The people of America are being asked for donations to help the poor children of Germany. Just as a little suggestion we submit the fact that the amount of money the people of Germany are handing over to the kaiser would be sufficient to keep all of the needy children of all the central powers.—Benton County Courier.

MORE OR LESS PERSONAL

Random Observations About Town

Twenty years ago Fred Caples, a former student at Oregon Agricultural college and a resident of Columbia City, joined the great stampede from Dawson to Nome, Alaska. He had gone to the Yukon when the news of the first strike was announced. For 20 years this native son of Columbia county mushed all over Alaska, being one of the first to get under way with his dogs and sled whenever a new strike was reported. After 20 years in a vain search for rich diggings in Alaska he came home to his birthplace at Columbia City, where he owns a considerable body of land and recently has discovered on his own place extensive deposits of iron ore which bid fair to make him more money than all the placer gold he ever struck in Alaska. Probably there are more people than Fred Caples that overlook the opportunities at their very door and travel afar in search of wealth or fame when they could find both in their own home town.

* * *

"What am I doing?" said the literary bellhop at the Imperial. "Can't you see I am writing. I am composing a poem about the ever-genial host of this hotel. Read it to you? All right. It is in the rough yet, but here is about how it will go:

Phil was told that he needed a tonic
His illness at once became chronic.
He said: "Doctor dear,
Won't you please make it beer?"
But the Doc said: "No, no. That's Teutonic."

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A. W. Stone of the Apple Growers' association of Hood River is spending the holidays in Portland with his daughter and putting in his spare time on the golf links.

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Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Bond of Pendleton are in Portland and are guests at the Portland.

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Walter Brown, pioneer sheepman from Montana, formerly of Box Elder but now of Butte, is a Portland visitor.

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Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Mathews of Medford are registered at the Benson.

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Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Hudson of Bend are Portland visitors.

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Leland Gott of The Dalles is a guest at the Portland.

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An examination of the registers of our leading hotels will disclose the fact that more and more globe trotters and world wanderers are "making" Portland. Dr. Lum Ling, late of Peking, China, is a guest at the Hotel Benson. A number of distinguished travelers came over on the last trip of the Siberia Maru, of the Toyo Kisen Kaisha line. Among the number were Dr. and Mrs. Charles D. Tenney. Dr. Tenney went to Shansi, China, in 1886 as a missionary. He it was who founded the Anglo-Chinese school at Tientsin. Later he founded Peiyang university. In 1900 he became secretary of the Tientsin provisional government. Eight years later he joined the staff of the United States legation at Peking as Chinese secretary. He acted as charge d'affaires until the confirmation of William R. Crane. Upon his retirement and just before his departure for his home in America he was the guest of Dr. Wu Ting Fang and Dr. C. L. Wing at a farewell dinner.

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H. L. Gage, a student at the school of mines of Oregon Agricultural college, is a guest at the Imperial. "We have about 2000 young men students at the college," said Mr. Gage. "Over a thousand are exempted from drill and military service on account of having been service in the naval or military forces during the world war. Yes, I am exempt. I was in the intelligence department, and my job was running down alien enemies."

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H. J. Vaughn of Coos Bay, with his family, is spending a few days in Portland.

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A. R. Tohl, one of the men who have helped make Nehalem a prosperous community, is visiting in Portland.

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C. J. Pugh of Falls City and C. F. Stone of Klamath Falls are at the Imperial.

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Glenn Dudley, well known wheat raiser of Athena, is a guest at the Benson.

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Ida Tress Benson of Bend is a guest at the Benson.

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C. C. Hunt of Enterprise is at the Oregon.

OBSERVATIONS AND IMPRESSIONS OF THE JOURNAL MAN

By Fred Lockley

[An interpreter of an interpreter of nature is Mr. Lockley's son Lawrence, who writes of John Masefield as a poet of nature, and whose critique Mr. Lockley generously shares with Journal readers.]

My son Lawrence is at Berkeley. He has been writing some most excellent verse and sending it to me for criticism. As a matter of fact, he knows more about versification than I ever expect to learn, but I imagine he thinks it pleases me to seem to defer to my judgment. I asked him recently what he thought of Masefield as a lover of nature. His answer to my query contains some bits of Masefield's verse that have in them so much of beauty that I am going to quote most of his letter. Here it is:

* * *

"Masefield writes of his fellow men with a virility that can betoken naught but a fellow feeling, a knowledge of them, builded on close association, on the hard, rough life that men live. His life has not been one of retirement, or close association with nature. He has lived as a man, among men. And yet his every poem is permeated with a realization of the omnipotence of nature, and her forces, and bubbles over with a deep, silent love for the earth that bore him. With the instinct of an artist, he has made this love the warp upon which his woof has woven the fantastic tales of the sea, or the deep seeing dramas of life. It reinforces his theme, it relieves his tragic passages, and in the most horrible parts of life, one feels that the beauty of nature and of life with nature, makes it all worth living.

"In 'The Everlasting Mercy,' after a night's orgy at the Lion, Saul sees the dawn come—

. . . up on Bradlow Knoll,
The Dawn with glittering on the grasses,
The Dawn which pass and never passes.

"In 'The Widow on the Bye Street,' just after the murder trial, Anna is going to another place to spin a new web. She boards the train.

'Into the vale, and halts, and starts to climb
To where the apple-bearing country ends
And pleasant-pastured hills rise sweet with thyme,
Where clinking sheepbells make a broken chime,
And sunwarm scones rich the air with scent,
And kestrels poise for mice; there Anna went.'

"It is like a breath of pure, fresh air, this glimpse of nature, after a period in a dank, musty cellar. Here it is again, when the Dauber hides his precious painting, and stands on the quarter deck:

. . . silent, leaning on the boat
Watching the constellations rise and burn,
Until the beauty took him by the throat.'

"What a relief to take, with the Dauber, that breath of pure air, after the fetid stuffiness of the fo'c'sle, to drink in the beauty of the sea and sky, after the cruel mirth of his shipmates.

* * *

"Still a more noticeable instance is found in 'Daffodil Fields,' where the action is rushing to the climax in a fight in which both central figures are killed. Yet Masefield pauses long enough to admire the surroundings:

'The ground was level there; the daffodils
Glimmered and danced beneath their cautious feet,
Quartering for openings for the blow that kills.
Beyond the bubbling brook a thrush was sweet.'

"Perhaps there is no better example than the passage of Jim's hanging in 'The Widow in the Bye Street.' The gloom of a hanging, the awe of death is over all. And yet:

'A broken ringing like a beaten pan,
It sent the sparrows wavering to the trees,
The wall-top grasses whickered in the breeze,
The broken ringing clanged, clattered, and clanged,
As though men's bees were swarming, not men hanged.'

* * *

"All through the longer poems are interspersed bits of beauty, like lilies in the mire. But one might expect them there, in works that he had planned out so carefully, and whose balanced qualities he had probably studied over so closely. And yet in his 'Salt Water Ballads' and in his 'Round House Tales' one finds even more often the beauty of the sea, a glory that floods his work spontaneously. Many of his shorter poems are extemporaneous apostrophes to the grandeur, the beauty and the glory of the sea. 'Sea Fever,' whose refrain 'I must down to the seas again' brings an exultant joy in the wonder of the ocean, is typical of these.

'Spanish waters, Spanish waters, you are ringing in my ears,
Like a slow sweet piece of music from the grey forgotten years.'

* * *

"It is not the intellectual or aesthetic enjoyment of a poet, but the joy of a pagan, a physical pleasure. One finds much the same physical enjoyment in his little three stanza poem, 'Cargoes.' We can, with him, go—

'Dipping through the tropics, by the palm green shores.'

* * *

"If for nothing else, Masefield's two stanza bit, 'Beauty,' is worthy of being read for its sensuous enjoyment of beauty. A part will serve for an example:

'I have seen dawn and sunset on moors and windy hill
Coming in solemn beauty like slow old tunes of Spain:
I have seen the lady April bringing the daffodils,
Bringing the springing grass and the soft warm April rain.'

"One finds still another type of nature worship in 'Spanish Waters.' A voluptuous, sensuous enjoyment of the sounds and forms of nature pervades the verse much as the heavy scent of musk pervades the rooms of an old house.

* * *

"To refer to the longer poems, one sees with Masefield, in spite of the bitter scorn, the misunderstanding and drudgery, Dauber's surroundings:

'The Dauber sighed there, looking at the sails,
Wind steadied arches leaning on the night,
The high trucks traced on heaven and left no trails;
The moonlight made the topsails almost white,
The passing side lights seemed to drip green light.
And on the clipper rushed with fire-light bows.'

"It is one of the joys of Masefield that, whatever he may be telling, however climatic may be his movement, or how ultra-realistic be the passage, he always helps his reader to enjoy with him the pleasures of nature."

The Oregon Country

Northwest Happenings in Brief Form for the Busy Reader

OREGON NOTES

The Lower Columbia Oil & Gas company has begun operations at its well in Clatsop county.

John Smith, who crossed the plains to Oregon in 1852, died near Cottage Grove a few days ago at the age of 95 years.

Lewis Weir, a rancher residing near Marshfield, was fined $200 when he pleaded guilty to conducting a still on his farm.

Near a thousand dozen eggs were marketed by the Ashland Cooperative association in November, the price being 75 cents per dozen.

Two hundred dairymen of the Banks district have subscribed $18,000 for the erection of a creamery and cheese factory in that city.

At a recent meeting of the Tillamook County Creamery association a plan was indorsed to ask the legislature for an appropriation of $15,000 for dairy investigation in Oregon.

Sparks generated by friction while cleaning a silk dress in a Bend laundry fired the gasoline, set the building on fire and burned the clothing of G. E. Olsen, proprietor.

Bills will be introduced in both the Oregon and Washington legislatures at their next sessions looking to the construction of an interstate bridge between Wauna and Cathlamet.

All gravel on the Old Oregon Trail between Pendleton and Echo has been laid and the road is completed except for a bridge near Echo, which will have to be built in the spring.

Plans have been announced by the Association of Pacific Fisheries for a nation-wide campaign of education as to the economy and food value of the more plentiful varieties of canned salmon.

For the second time within the past few weeks Gervais is without water. The pumping station is ample to supply the demand, but the wells fill with a fine sand and put the pumps out of commission.

WASHINGTON

Pasco has subscribed $55,000 for the proposed intercounty highway bridge between that city and Kennewick.

The Puyallup public library has reopened after being closed six weeks on account of the diphtheria epidemic.

Warren J. Egerer, prominent lumberman and member of the Aberdeen city council, is dead in that city from ptomaine poisoning.

Despondent over family troubles and his inability to obtain work, John Huff, 29 years old, killed himself with a shotgun at Seattle Tuesday.

For the purpose of getting medical care at the expense of the county, Charles Morris allowed himself to be arrested at Aberdeen for shoplifting.

Word is received at Tacoma of the sudden death aboard a Milwaukee transcontinental train of S. C. Riley, a former prominent lumberman of that city.

Farmers of Adams county met at Ritzville Saturday and formed a wheat pool. The association has over a million bushels to sell.

For the 11 months ending November 30, the net earnings of the Aberdeen water department were $25,466; Chehalis, $11,340, and Puyallup, $3777.

With only one vote opposing, Prosser precinct of the Yakima Benton irrigation district has approved an assessment to complete the survey of the highline extension of the Sunnyside canal.

It is stated that there are now 2700 members in Washington and Idaho affiliated with the Wheat Growers' association, with a total of 9,000,000 bushels of wheat in prospect for the 1921 crop.

Charles D. Hinton, deputy state treasurer, broke his leg and L. E. Swartz of Seattle suffered fractured ribs when the car in which they were riding left the pavement and turned turtle near Olympia.

At a meeting of the Washington Hotel Men's association at Seattle it was decided to abide by the recent supreme court ruling upholding the new $18 minimum wage for women employed in restaurants and hotels.

IDAHO

The Cassia county commissioners have appropriated $6000 for the continuance of farm bureau work in that county.

Approximately $425,000 has been paid out for beets this season by the Lincoln branch of the Utah-Idaho Sugar company.

A proposition to divide Bannock county is creating much discussion at Pocatello and will be carried to the legislature at its coming session.

Fred Taylor died at Weiser a few days ago from a stroke of apoplexy brought on during a fire in the upper story of his house.

Roy Kimmel, a boy student from Boise, has been elected editor-in-chief of the Gem of the Mountains, the year book of the University of Idaho.

Jobs were found for 40 of the 102 persons registered at the Boise employment office from Monday to Saturday inclusive. Of the 102 cases, 10 were destitute.

Articles of incorporation have been filed in the office of the secretary of state by the Abbott Gardner Sheep company of Nampa, with a capital stock of $100,000.

Uncle Jeff Snow Says:

A feller was a-tellin' us at the Corners that the days of gasoline is numbered and what's a-comin' down the pike of time is 'lectric juice stored in a tin can and hitched to the gearin' direct 'thout no engine whatsoever. When that day starts to light up the shk of the U. S. A. poor old Rockefeller'll be dead and won't worry none a-tall. Meanwhile we must have gas even if we got to let the old roof leak another year and Ma turns her Sunday dress fer the fifth time.

KNOW YOUR PORTLAND

Portland streetcar lines are said to cover a wider area in proportion to the population served than in any other city of similar size in the United States.

In response to the request of The Journal, Franklin T. Griffith, president of the Portland Railway, Light & Power company, has prepared some figures that show in a most interesting way the extent of the system.

Five hundred and fourteen cars are operated on city lines and 95 cars on interurban lines, a total of 609.

There are 170,477 miles of track in the city lines and 78,414 miles of track in interurban lines, a total of 248,891 miles. These figures do not include the tracks used in connection with the sidings, car houses and yards.

The 25,000-mile circuit of the earth at its equator does not seem very impressive when one thinks that in and near Portland the trolley tracks of one concern would belt the globe nearly 10 times, or reach from Portland to the moon.

The streetcars may not seem to travel very rapidly under the retardation of frequent stops and a speed limit of 20 miles an hour, but it is found that cars on the city lines, during 1919, traveled an aggregate of 15,668,670 miles, which is a sixth of the distance to the sun. During the month of October the cars on the city lines recorded a mileage of 1,255,841 in distance traversed, and the daily average on the city lines last October was 40,511 miles, the equivalent of five round trips across the American continent.

The interurban lines during 1919 covered 1,587,704 miles; during October, 127,653 miles, and 4118 miles daily average for October.