

# The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe"  
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## Scuttling City Ownership of Water System

NOBODY in this town should be deceived by what a few stalking horses for the water company aided by some sincere opponents of a large water bond issue hatched up the other night. Behind the front of objection to the two and a half million dollar bond issue is a brazen attempt to scuttle the whole effort of the municipality to acquire and operate the water utility here. The Statesman was an active fighter against the issuance of two and a half millions in bonds, because the issue was too large, but we serve notice now that we will fight the measure for repeal, not because we have changed our minds about the unwisdom of such a large investment in a water system, but because we will not endorse the hypocritical attempt to maintain the private operation of such a vital public utility as the supplying of this community with water.

The way out on the water question lies in going ahead, not in going backward. Those who think the people of this city are ready to retreat now and give the field over completely to the private water company are foolish. Salem citizens have expressed themselves twice in unmistakable language that they favor public ownership of the water system. That decision was ratified again in the last municipal election when Douglas McKay was elected on a platform of acquiring the water plant with preference to a mountain source of supply.

If the repeal advocates were sincere in their lip-worship of the city's acquisition of the water system they would have submitted, not a repeal measure, but an amendment to limit the bond issue to \$1,500,000. When that was proposed in the meeting it was cried down. So now the plain issue is private ownership against city ownership. On that issue we take the stand we have consistently held, in favor of city ownership.

What is the urgency now to have the company complete the filter plant? The season of abundant water is now here. Why such sudden haste to let the water company build the filter plant? Senator Spaulding asked that pointed question at the meeting, and received no satisfactory answer. There is no pressing need of the filter plant; there is nothing to be gained by letting the company do the work. And there is much risk therein. In the first place not only did the city engineers condemn the plan and location, but citizens who were on the first water board came to the conclusion that the proposed plant was too small. Eugene is just putting into use a filter plant which will have a capacity of 12,000,000 gallons. Why should Salem which is much larger, encourage the company to go ahead with a plant half that size?

We have a very high regard for August Huckestein who called the repeal meeting to order. Mr. Huckestein is a leading local democrat. Do not his ears still ring with the resounding echoes of the speech of the presidential candidate of his party who denounced in Portland only a few days ago the iniquities of many private utilities? And were not the organizers of the pyramid holding companies controlling the local water utility as reprehensible as any in their exploitation of the public interest? Why now does Mr. Huckestein carry water for the water company?

We recall too that Mr. Huckestein was a leader in the movement to elect Douglas McKay for mayor; and that he was one who solemnly assured the people that the effort was not one to defeat the will of the people as expressed at the polls, but to insure them of conservative handling of the bond funds by a competent business executive. Mr. McKay was elected. Have Mr. Huckestein and his friends lost confidence in their nominee even before he takes office?

Let it be said that Douglas McKay is no party to this repeal movement, that he stands precisely where he declared himself in his election campaign.

With the assurance that we have a careful business man like McKay as mayor who will see to the best of his ability that no money is squandered on the water system, why should not the people of Salem let the matter proceed?

Some people are fretted over the delay and the litigation. Actually not a day has been lost. For as the repealists tell us, the bonds can't be sold anyway. So long as there is no market for the bonds no time is lost over the litigation which history has shown is always protracted. The fact is the litigation is carried on by the water company purely for purposes of delay. We are not surprised at this repeal move. We heard it would come just as it has, away last spring. The water company is behind it. The hand may be that of Esau but Jacob's voice is clear.

We think the maximum the water system here can bear is a bond issue of \$1,500,000. If however a gravity plant could be obtained and the money obtained on approximately a 4 1/2% basis then an investment of \$1,800,000 might be carried.

The constructive program for the city of Salem is not to repeal the bond issue of \$2,500,000, but to continue with litigation to get its validity sustained. Then under a capable and trustworthy leader like Douglas McKay proceed to acquire the plant by negotiation if possible; then if not by condemnation. Then as to future improvements instead of taking the word of the engineers Baar and Cunningham, call in men like the superintendents of the water systems of Eugene and Portland and Seattle, like State Engineer Stricklin and Dean Rogers of the engineering school at Corvallis and have them recommend a program of improvements for the city.

The Statesman proposed some months ago borrowing money from the Reconstruction Finance corporation to buy the plant and improve it. The R. F. C. advises that its funds are not available for purchase but for construction work. However this writer has private advices from responsible sources to the effect that if the city buys the plant then it can effect a loan from the R. F. C. The first objective then is to validate the bonds; the second to acquire the plant. It may take a good while, but that is the proper course to follow.

We would not borrow any money from the R. F. C. or from the general public without further studies as to the most practicable sources of supply.

We are opposed to spending any two and a half million dollars on the plant; but we are not ready to put a ring in Salem's nose for the water company to lead us around with.

To repeal the bond issue, excessive as it is, without substituting a more moderate bond issue in its place means retreat, means indefinite postponement of municipal ownership,

## Help the Helping Hand



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## BITS for BREAKFAST

By R. J. HENDRICKS

John Mix Stanley, Indian painter:

(Continuing from yesterday.) The letter, dated at Fort Walla Walla, December 2, 1847, and addressed, "Messrs. Walker & Eells, My dear Gentlemen," follows:

"Through the interposition of a kind providence I have been permitted to arrive here in safety, and you will with me think that God has been merciful in sparing my life.

"It is my melancholy duty to inform you of one of the most tragical massacres on record in Oregon.

"The following are the persons killed: Mr. and Mrs. Whitman, Mr. Rodgers, Hoffman, Sanders

(schoolmaster), Mr. Marsh, John and Francis Sager, two youths, brothers. Cattlefeed the blacksmith. Two families at the mill supposed to be killed, one of them are known to be. This was committed on the 29th of last month by the Kayuse Indians. Some attribute the cause to the poisoning of the Indians, although there are many rumors and as I have been here only one half hour, and hearing so much, and having so little time and from the excitement of running the gauntlet for two days myself I am perfectly unnerved and bewildered. Solomon has been faithful to the last, may God bless him. I am informed that a party of Indians started to Mr. Spaulding's to complete their horrid butchery, also to the

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## Yesterdays

... Of Old Salem

Town Talks from The Statesman of Earlier Days

September 25, 1907

The formerly much-deprised evergreen blackberry is coming into popular favor here and is being removed from its wild locations to the fertile loam of shrubby patches, as the result of its discovery as a fall berry in Washington state.

But five miles of grading remain to be done before Salem will be connected with Portland by the Oregon Electric railway. The new bridge for the line over the Willamette river at Wilsonville has been completed and the tracks into Portland tested.

LINCOLN, Neb. — The conventions of the republican, democratic, populist, prohibitionist and socialist parties met at the state house here yesterday to organize. The republican committee on resolutions endorsed Taft for presidential nomination in 1908.

September 25, 1923

That the Russian Reds continue to have a corps of well-organized workers in this country and that they are making untiring efforts to gain control of the labor movement was an outstanding fact brought out yesterday at the 20th annual convention of the Oregon State Federation of Labor here. On the heels of resolutions submitted for approval of I. W. W. and Red programs, President Hartwig bitterly denounced their sponsor and urged their ouster as speedily as possible.

King Bing McGilchrist of the Salem Cherrians is informed that the Portland Rosarians will be in Salem in great numbers Thursday of this week, which is Portland day at the state fair.

## New Views

Statesman reporters yesterday asked these questions: "Do you favor the repeal of the \$2,500,000 water bond issue as is now being talked? Why or why not?"

George D. Fraser, photo engraver: "I have always believed the water company should continue. Because I believe there is greater efficiency than there would be through municipal ownership and less patronage."

Judge John Siegmund, county court: "I've only noticed the headlines so I can hardly make any decision on the matter."

W. W. Moore, property owner: "Yes, I think the matter should be submitted, and the water company allowed to go on with its filter construction program. That would be better than the course now followed."

L. L. Thornton, automobile salesman: "I don't think that I do. I think we're entitled to a better flow of water and water such as in other places—in Portland, for instance. It seems we could get a better well system, or the mountain water. It would be an asset to the town."

George N. Ireland, carpenter: "Yes, for the benefit of the people."

H. Brownson, laborer: "I've not followed the water situation a great deal here, but if there is some real agitation for a re-vote, why I think it should be taken. From what I hear, the fact that the original vote carried was a surprise to many, and I think since

# HEART STRINGS

By EDWINA L. MACDONALD

## CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

Patricia sat up sharply bending toward the woman, trying to pry under those lowered lids. "Do you mean your husband divorced you about Jimmie?"

"No, I don't know what charge he made. I'm sure he didn't know anything about Jimmie. I was too careful. He got the divorce in Florida. But the thing that tore me all up was that he got it. Of course he never sent me any more money after he remarried. I could have had the whole thing, marriage and everything, set aside;—he'd claimed a year's residence in Florida and he'd been there only three months."

"Why didn't you? Then sue him."

"I was afraid if I started a fight he might rake up something about Jimmie and make trouble for him."

"Oh," Patricia sank back on the couch, and stared at the ceiling. Presently she said, "Well, to protect Jimmie you lost your income, he should have made it up to you."

"He offered to. Insisted on it; but somehow I couldn't take money from a man—like that, you see I love Jimmie. And it just didn't seem right—sort of degrading." She spoke quite simply, as if unaware of anything strange in her confidence to another who loved him. Of course I had a little money of my own, and I gave that to Jimmie to invest for me. I've lived the last year on that."

"Of course," she went on, "I didn't know anything about you till the question of divorce came up. I wouldn't have started with him if I had. I knew he and his wife were estranged, and so I thought he was mine. I don't know just what I'll do about my life—now." She blinked to keep back the tears, then smiled apologetically. "You must think I'm an awful baby. But it's rather a shock—and I care so much for him—"

A wave of anger, and also of sympathy, swept Patricia. There was something helpless about Mrs. Brownley and rather naive and self-absorbed. She seemed not to think of their strange relation to each other; having the air of a deeply troubled woman reaching out to another woman, and talking out of the excess of her troubles.

It was evident to Patricia that Myra Brownley had always clung to whomever came to hand when confusion and distress assailed her. That Patricia was in this case the source of her trouble clearly mattered less to her than that there was a strong young willow tree in the midst of a too swift current.

"If I could only do something to make some money!" she said. "But there's nothing in the world I can do. Since—this came up I've tried and tried to think of something, anything; but I never learned to do a thing; I have no talent for anything; there's nothing for me to do, but marry again. And I don't want to marry a man I don't love."

"You'll probably marry Jimmie," said Patricia dryly.

"No, I've thought that all out. You are the one he cares for—"

"He told me he cares for you, too. That it was impossible for a man to know you and not care for you. I can see that's true, too."

"Yes, he cares for me in a way. He knows I care so much for him, for one thing. Then he's sorry for me, and feels he owes me something on account of the way my divorce turned out. Aside from the money Nolan sent me, it was so humiliating. But I've told Jimmie I didn't want him to think of that."

"But, of course, he would."

"Yes, I suppose so. Still—you are the one he really cares for."

"I think his wife is the one he really loves," observed Patricia.

"Somehow it's the thing I never thought of before. Maybe she cares for him even. Marriage seems such



"I was afraid if I started a fight he might make trouble for Jimmie," said Myra.

a jumble of unexpected and unsuspected things."

There was a loud rap on the door and a ring. Patricia admitted Raymond Georges who had recently published a book.

He threw a cushion on the floor and began telling them the idea for his next novel.

Mrs. Brownley listened to him—Patricia wondered if she really listened. She sat in what Patricia had at Palm Beach termed her listening attitude, elbows on her chair arms, beautiful fingers resting lightly on the points of her shoulders. Now and again she would lift her hands, palms out, approaching, but not touching her face so that one had an impression of a frame that drew the eyes to loveliness.

She was clearly impressed by Georges whose name she knew, as did everyone—since his last book; and he was charmed with her. He invited them to the Dome.

It was twelve in the morning. Patricia had worked steadily for two hours without interruption. Mrs. Brownley watching, making not even a movement of her hands to catch the eye of the busy girl and distract her.

It was amazing how intimate these two had become in a week's time.

Had Patricia met the woman under ordinary circumstances she would never have selected her as an intimate. First, because there were six years difference in their ages. . . Mrs. Brownley had been married. She was idleness embodied. And Patricia was action. But they had been flung together as it were, out of space; linked by common interest in a man who had left them together in an unspeakable situation.

Once out of the particular situation which had turned them toward each other that first night, they might have parted, but for Mrs. Brownley. . . Finding herself in a threatening current, it appeared that she had no resources with which to keep herself afloat. She would phone of mornings, "Had breakfast yet? I'm lonesome and blue. Won't you give me a cup of coffee if I come over? I just hate myself this morning. I promise not

to bother you."

And she never did. Myra Brownley had, among other gifts, the rare quality of quiet. She could lie on a couch or sit deeply and restfully in a chair reading or staring into space, making not even the sound of turning pages, nor attracting the eye by a movement. She neither jabbered nor spoke at intervals.

"Let's have some lunch," said Patricia, suddenly laying down her pallet and brushes.

They went into the little kitchen with its breakfast compartment. "What can I do?" asked Myra, with the air of helpless dismay she always had in a kitchen.

"Nothing. I'm just going to make tea and fry some eggs. I think I'll have two. How about you?"

"Don't you mind? I always break the yolk. I just must be stupid. I don't seem able to learn the simplest things about cooking."

Sometimes Patricia was dimly annoyed by Mrs. Brownley's inability even to make a cup of coffee or fry eggs. What if she hadn't done it! Neither had Patricia. But one could not be definitely annoyed—the woman was so unobtrusive, so pleasant, so serene her own stupidity with such sweet regret. And she had her uses in Patricia's troubled scheme. She filled those spaces when work was done and Dadums was out or resting. Spaces Jack had been wont to fill for so long. Nobody had seen him in over a week. Georges had called at his place several times; but he was never in. For all Patricia knew he may have returned to America.

And more than she had ever needed action, movement, company, she needed it now. She could not endure rest. Her own society for even ten minutes was an abomination.

Thus she let Mrs. Brownley cling to her, and in a sense she clung to Mrs. Brownley. The woman was always ready to go shopping for groceries, prowling in art shops, drifting along the Louvre, idling through Rue de Rivoli, looking at beaded bags and other gewgaws which neither of them wanted, and her pleasant trivial conversation formed a stopgap against troping thoughts.

(To Be Continued)  
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## What Nation Needs: Better Prize Fights More Baseball Prophets

By D. H. Talmadge, Sage of Salem

All people do not agree perfectly on anything, which may account for the odor of garlic in some quarters and the absence of it in others. I have never been what might be termed even a lukewarm Edward G. Robinson fan. But as the conceited Portuguese fisherman in "Tiger Shark," which picture had a Salem showing early in the week, I thought him excellent. May as well fess up.

Ninety per cent of the Iowa fairs failed to pay out this season. But there have been bad years before in Iowa. Iowa always "comes back."

I met up one day this week with a drunken unit of the floating population who assured me earnestly that what this country needs above everything else is better heavyweight prize fights.

It was, at any rate, a change from the usual forebodings of national revolution and disaster so popular with some of these chaps as a topic of conversation.

A number of fairly good jokes have been made with reference to Director Gehlbach's proposed "bull fight" for the state fair. Only fairly good, it is quite difficult to see anything funny in a bull or even in a simple game of tag played with a bull.

Dr. Copeland's "Daily Health Talks" are always interesting. I read them every morning immediately after I have read Mr. Sprague's editorials. From the health talks I pass directly to the comic strips, which may account for this: A worried reader asks the doctor what to do for burning feet, and the doctor tells then many may have changed their minds on such a large bond issue in these times."



D. H. TALMADGE

him. But why bother the doctor? Why not try mustard? Mustard is recommended by some of our best sufferers for hot dogs.

Baseball prophets are busy. The world series begins Wednesday. Salem day at the fair. Why cannot more prophets confine their impulses to such cheerful matters as baseball?

'Tis the happy season when a man cannot be quite sure whether he is about to burst into a gentle perspiration or is on the verge of an attack of goose pimples. "The sunbeams kiss a-strant the sombre hills. The naked wedding climbs the window-sill."

The breaths that noon expels are faint and chill."

Perhaps you recall that poem on Indian summer in the old reader. It was, I think, written by some New England poet, and was quite a long poem and difficult to read because of its lack of singular quality. It being a poem for which I never cared greatly, it sticks closely to my memory and is constantly bursting out. Why is it that the things one does not try to remember are those he cannot forget?

Doubtless a reason exists for everything. Little satisfaction in that. The old poems of which I think most affectionately should be easy to commit to memory. But they are not. In these latter years I have essayed to tuck Gray's Elegy away in my head as something worth the tucking. I have not been entirely successful in the attempt. Yet that confounded poem about Indian summer will not depart. It is a problem in psychology, I presume, but not worth solution.

Certain poems arouse certain memories. Leigh Hunt's "Abou Ben Adhem" was ever a favorite with me. It was a bit odd, the way it came to know the poem. I had neglected to prepare myself for a grammar school rhetorical day and I was worried. In that school the pupils were called alphabetically. I took a reader from my desk and opened it at random. Dear old Abou showed up. Between "C" and "T" I crammed him into my head, passed the book to the girl in front for prompting, and was ready, swaying from every word, when my

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## Daily Thought

"For though from out our bourne of Time and Place The flood may bear me far, I hope to see my Pilot face to face When I have crossed the bar." —Tennyson.