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Beautiful there at the gates they sing,
Lips of morning and throats of spring,
Creeping and creeping from day to day,
The violet virgins have dreamt of May,
And fair and warmer the blue skies blend
O'er the silver hills where the fairies wend,
Fair and warmer, the bluebirds cry,
Fair and warmer, the clouds roll by,
Secret messengers, to and fro,
The little bees come and go,
From woods and waters that waking feel
The wings of the mystic o'er them steal,
Down in the adamant hearts of men,
Fair and warmer, it leaps again,
The blood far tingling at touch of sun
In the dream of another dream begun,
With love by the beautiful gates of rose
To kiss back spring from her tomb of snows.
—Baltimore Sun.

LOOK TO COMPETENCY.
A move is on to place the state printer on a flat salary. It is a proper move but the legislature should go farther and abolish that office as an elective office. Let the printer be employed by the state board just as the state house janitor is employed. Or else let the printing work out by contract. It is a silly plan to have the state printer an elective official. Let the board employ a man for his technical fitness and get the best man possible, no matter whether he is a resident of Oregon, Indiana or Berlin. The rule of the survival of the fittest prevails in private business. It should also prevail in the public service.

By this same argument the state food and dairy commissioner should be changed from an elective to an appointive official. He should be selected by the state board or by the state board of health. He should be an expert and if when seeking a proper man for the place the board could not find a good man in Oregon then they should go beyond the borders of this state.

By this same argument county school superintendents should be employed, not elected. It is silly for a big county like Umatilla that has something like 100 school districts and spends hundreds of thousands of dollars maintaining schools, to have to elect a superintendent from the people of this county. There may be no competent man within the county who wishes the position. Then whoever comes forth has to be chosen. The right way would be to elect county superintendents upon the same basis city superintendents are chosen. Employ men upon their qualifications as educators. It should not matter whether a man is from Umatilla county, from Portland or from Ohio. It is competency that should count.

With these sentiments in view the East Oregonian has criticized the Huntington bill which looks to providing more supervision for rural schools. Supervision for rural schools there should be. But this paper submits that the first step towards providing such supervision should consist in getting the most capable county superintendents possible. Plainly the best men cannot be obtained under the present method of election. Of course in opposition to the claim that school superintendents, the state printer and the food commissioner should be appointed and not elected the argument will be made that such a change would take power away from the people. Still there are some powers which the people should delegate to others rather than exercise them directly. Only a demagogue will maintain the contrary. However, the best argument for the changes proposed above is not so much that the selecting power would be im-

proved but that the field from which possible applicants might come would be enlarged.

TARIFF COMMISSION BEST.

In the issue that has been raised over the Canadian reciprocity treaty the need of a tariff commission is shown once more. Whether or not the treaty will be a good thing and will be just to the American farmer is more than anything else a question of facts. Of the real merits of the treaty the average citizen cannot well judge for the reason that he has not sufficient information at hand. It is safe to say that not one man in 1000 knows the full nature of the reciprocity treaty.

The cry has gone forth that the treaty if adopted will work an injustice upon the farmer—that the government will be providing free trade in farm products while protecting trust made goods. This argument, against the treaty may be well founded, or it may be a piece of chicanery. The opposition of the grange may have been cunningly aroused by other interests that will suffer by the treaty. For instance by the timber trust or the paper trust. It would be very natural for such interests as those to use the grange as a catspaw to pull their own chestnuts from the fire. Those who are defending the administration in its move to put through the reciprocity treaty hold that the farmer has more to fear from the American trusts that control the agricultural products of this country than from the reciprocity treaty. This may be true.

With the tariff commission plan in operation there would be less opportunity than now for mistakes and for jobbery. The commission would gather complete and reliable data regarding the different industries. Tariff schedules could then be fixed according to the merits of the case and not in accordance with the political exigencies of the moment.

MR. TAYLOR'S LETTER.

In a communication to this paper yesterday H. J. Taylor, president of the county good roads association, had some pointed things to say about the good roads legislation and about the grange and farmers' union lobbyists who worked against the measures. Being a prominent farmer himself Mr. Taylor's views are of particular interest. They show that all the farmers of this county are not opposed to the good roads bills.

It is the firm belief of the East Oregonian that nine-tenths the farmers of the county would favor the good roads bills as Mr. Taylor favors them if they fully understood the situation. The only way to get good roads is by constructing them. The good roads association had a systematic, business like and very equitable plan for carrying on road work. Had the legislation asked for been granted we would have gotten results.

Within the next two years the lobbyists who worked against the good roads bills will have an opportunity to explain their actions to their people. That some legislators who opposed the good roads bill have already heard from their constituents is already known from the fact that a move is on in the house to resurrect the state aid bill.

With Russia about to engage in some sort of a war with China, with the Mexican revolution on in full blast and with a Haytian insurrection just being concluded it would seem that there is some need for the \$10,000,000 peace fund recently offered by Carnegie.

That new high school should be a first class structure that will be a credit to the city for many years. High school work is advancing all the time and the percentage of high school graduates increases each year. Pendleton wants no building that will soon be out of date.

Champ Clark's little joke was evidently not understood by the English. Maybe they will see the point later.

We will have an angler's commission and the job of fish warden will cease to be a political snap. Hooray.

One more day of lawmaking. How many jokers will slip through during the closing hours?

Evidently it is hard for the weather bureau to keep track of our climate.

THEY BELIEVED HER.

Husband (to wife, who has returned from party in tears)—My Dear Ethel, what on earth is the matter? Are you ill? Have they been rude to you?

Musical Wife (sobbing)—I never was so unhappy in my life. They asked me to sing, and of course I said I couldn't at first, and—

Husband—Well, dead, well? Musical Wife—And they b-b-blived me!

The pessimist always has the hardest luck.

WHAT ARE THEY?

(Baltimore News.) It is characteristic of the curious and illogical development of institutions that this country is just coming to face a final decision as to what is "republicanism" and what is democracy. For more than half a century the two great parties have been called democratic and republican. What do the two names mean? What is the essential difference in governmental ideals that the two words connote? And do the people of the two parties really know to what differences they subscribe when they avow themselves members of one party or the other?

The supreme court is going to decide in the next few months, what is a republican and what a democratic form of government. It will pass on the appeal of a case from Oregon in which the democratic governmental system of that state, based on the initiative, referendum and recall, is involved. The initiative and referendum provide democracy, of that there can be no doubt. The people may propose and pass their own laws. But is that more than can be done under a republican form of government? The constitution guarantees a "republican form of government to all the states. Oregon is going to find out from the supreme court whether, in adopting the initiative and referendum, it has overstepped the definition of "republican." The dictionary meaning of the two words, commonly accepted as practically synonymous, makes them decidedly different. If the dictionary be accepted, Oregon's plan, just now so popular in all radical sections, has no chance at all. The dictionary makes a republican government a government through elected representatives of the people, not by the people at all. If the dictionary gets literally vindicated, Oregon's plan will be in the way of demolition. For Oregon has specifically provided machinery to eliminate the representatives elected by the people.

No more interesting case has come to the supreme court in many years than this one, and certainly few more important. The initiative and referendum movement is making progress whose like is difficult to recall in our history. If the supreme court should declare that the whole plan is unconstitutional, it would certainly precipitate a crisis whose ultimate significance few would dare to conjecture.

FEBRUARY 17 IN HISTORY.


- 1829—James Wallace, the English tragedian, made his first American appearance at Washington.
- 1830—Fourteen hundred troops embarked from Spain for Manila and 3000 for Havana.
- 1835—Five volcanoes burst forth simultaneously in Central America, attended with tremendous earthquakes, which sunk three large towns besides many villages.
- 1854—Two Russian squadrons, mistaking each other for Turks, fought a battle near Klatat, with great loss of life before the error was discovered.
- 1864—Twenty-seven of the hundred federal officers who had tunneled out of Libby prison at Richmond, Va., succeeded in reaching Washington.
- 1865—Louisiana ratified the constitutional amendment.
- 1865—General Sherman entered Columbia, S. C., and burned the city.
- 1874—Gladstone tendered his resignation as premier to Queen Victoria at Windsor and Disraeli summoned to form a new cabinet.
- 1880—Unsuccessful attempt made to kill Russian royal family at St. Petersburg.
- 1886—British house of commons defeated a bill to make franchise in Ireland equal to that in England and Scotland.
- 1884—General "Chinese" Gordon arrived at Khartoum and proclaimed E. Mahdi sultan.
- 1895—Field Marshal Oyama in command of the Japanese at Weihaiwei announced the surrender of the Chinese on sea and land.
- 1909—A tariff commission at Indianapolis demanded a permanent commission to adjust schedules.
- 1910—More than 2,000,000 acres of land were withdrawn by Secretary Ballinger for conservation purposes.

FOLLOWED DIRECTIONS.

They are telling a story of the favored suitor of a Cleveland society girl who called at the house of his innamorata recently and found a new parlor maid at the door, says the Cleveland "Plain Dealer."
"Is Miss Blank in?" This is Mr. Dash," he explained.
The maid smiled brightly. "Oh, yes, sir," she replied and led him into the drawing room. Here he wasted the better part of an hour, when he finally summoned the maid again. "Did you forget to tell Miss Blank that I was here?" he asked impatiently.
"No, sir," answered the new maid. "Miss Blank hasn't got back from shopping yet."
"But you told me positively that she was in?"
"Yes, sir. She told me positively that she was always home to you, sir."
County option seems to be one of the spirit of the times.

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