

AM INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

Published Daily, Weekly and Semi-Weekly at Pendleton, Oregon, by the EAST OREGONIAN PUBLISHING CO. SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Daily, one year, by mail \$5.00
 Daily, six months, by mail 2.50
 Daily, three months, by mail 1.25
 Daily, one month, by mail50
 Daily, one year, by carrier 7.50
 Daily, six months, by carrier 3.75
 Daily, three months, by carrier 1.95
 Daily, one month, by carrier95
 Semi-Weekly, one year, by mail 1.50
 Semi-Weekly, six months, by mail75
 Semi-Weekly, four months, by mail50

The Daily East Oregonian is kept on file at the Oregon News Co., 229 Morrison street, Portland, Oregon.
 Northwest News Co., Portland, Oregon.
 Chicago Bureau, 909 Security Building, Washington, D. C. Bureau, 501 Fourteenth street, N. W.

Member United Press Association.

Entered at the postoffice at Pendleton, Oregon, as second class mail matter.

Telephone Main 1
 Official City and County Paper.

THE BRIGHT ROAD.

I.
 Don't you take a glimpse of life
 an' say there's nothin' in it;
 The hoss that you're a-bettin'
 on may make a mile a minute;
 There's not a race in any place
 but that brave hearts can win it!

II.
 Swift the time is passin' by for
 sowin' and for reapin',
 Lightnin's ever on the fly; thunder
 comes a-creeppin';
 There'll be rest-time by an' by,
 —time enough for sleepin'.
 —Frank L. Stanton.

ISN'T IT BEING IMPROVED?

In order to elevate the stage and make the drama of the future occupy a higher plane than the drama of the present Professor George P. Baker of Harvard, would educate the children of the country to a better appreciation of true dramatic art. He believes that by such a course the future playwright can be brought to work for something really good and not merely to swell bank accounts.

As to bank accounts common sense indicates that they will always be very highly considered by those who write plays and by those who present them. The stage is a business like anything else and the supply of theatrical productions will tend to conform to the demand.

Yet this fact need not interfere with the elevation of the stage. With the advance of civilization and with such instruction as Professor Baker would give, will not the public taste become more and more discriminating and will not the people naturally call for a better order of things theatrical?

That such will be the course of affairs is shown by the conditions at this time. People don't like vicious or dirty plays now. That is because vice is not pretty or pleasing to the eye. People of taste prefer a clean opera to a vulgar one for the same reason they would rather look at a sparkling brook than a muddy ditch. The same is true in literature. One of the most popular short story writers of this decade, O. Henry, declared a few weeks before his death, that he had never written a filthy line and was proud of the fact. His popularity was due to the fact that he was clean, vivid and humorous.

Many people think that the stage has degenerated because comic and musical operas have superseded the heavy dramas in popular favor. But isn't an opera as high in tone as a Shakespearean tragedy? It should be. Because a play is light and airy and pretty it need not and should not be wicked or vulgar. Gayety need not mean vice and does not mean that except in the minds of some people.

No doubt Professor Baker is right in his scheme to elevate the stage by educating the children to higher ideas. But in his course of instruction he might also include a few lessons for theatrical managers. There are some theatrical men who don't know how many people there are in the world and don't know as much as they should about their tastes.

EFFICIENCY DEMANDS IT.

Discussing the subject of the proposed state examiner of accounts yesterday the Journal voiced the following sentiment:

"The senate wisely rejected the proposals to make the state examiner of accounts elective. It is foolishness to further lengthen the ballot with petty offices. It is already so long with peanut politicians that, intelligent though they be, voters do not discriminate."

"Nor is it possible for voters to ascertain what are a candidate's qualifications for such a position as examiner of public accounts. It is a position that requires technical knowledge and undoubted integrity. To properly measure a candidate's

fitness requires personal contact, investigation of antecedents and close scrutiny of his qualifications, a process impossible to the mass of voters."

It might also be added that with the examiner of accounts an appointive official the field of applicants for that position will be greatly enlarged. Were the office elective comparatively few would seek the place and they would all have to be residents of Oregon. When an office is appointive the place seeks the man and it does not have to confine the search to any particular locality. Many a capable man will gladly take an appointive office though he would refuse to seek an elective position.

If we are to have efficiency in the public service then minor positions calling for technical fitness should be filled under the merit system—not by election. If the people elect the governor and other general officials that is enough. Let those men select people for such positions as examiner of accounts, state printer, food and dairy commissioner and kindred offices. The general officials may be trusted with making these appointments because being elected under the direct primary and being subject to recall they are directly responsible to the people and must serve the public welfare.

THE PEOPLE SUPERIOR.

It is entirely true that this paper has given its approval to the Rusk second choice bill. But it does not follow from this that the East Oregonian favors the general practice of allowing the legislature to change initiative measures. The second choice provision looks to making the direct primary more effective. So does the bill for rotating names on ballots. No one can deny this. The legislature may properly do such work as this while it would have no right at all to enact changes that would annul or weaken the law.

Under this paper's conception of things the initiative and the referendum serve as a check upon the legislature, yet a check that should be used sparingly. The legislature at times may also revise work done by the people under the initiative. But since the people are the higher authority the legislature should move with decided caution. While the legislature may properly make changes that are in line with public sentiment it plainly has no right to interfere with an initiative measure to the extent of making changes that are contrary to a sentiment that has been clearly expressed. Any man who thinks that the legislature is above the people and that a few legislators have a right to override the will of the people has the cart before the horse. No creature can be greater than its creator.

The state aid bill came within two votes of being adopted. In other words Oregon almost entered upon a campaign for good roads. By the next session of the legislature public sentiment will demand the passage of some good roads legislation.

All told there will be \$510,000 for the branch asylum. With that amount of money to start with the state board should be able to erect a very good institution.

Why should the powers stop Russia from fighting China. If Russia whips China she may save some other white power the job later on.

WHERE THE TROUBLE IS.

Cleveland Moffett in the March number of Hampton's Magazine gives an effective specific instance of the blighting effect of Wall street on practical railroad affairs. The article tells about wonderful economies for railroads through scientific management. "About two years ago," says Mr. Moffett, "a distinguished industrial engineer, H. F. J. Porter, was traveling over the country introducing high speed steel into machine shops of one of our largest southwestern railroads. And here, to his great surprise, he found everything far behind the times. They were doing their drilling of iron, for instance, their riveting, their clipping by the old hand methods instead of using compressed air. Their antiquated wheel lathes would have gone to pieces if driven under the strain required for high speed steel. In short, all their machines and processes belonged back in the stage-coach period."

"Porter could scarcely believe his eyes, for this was an important railroad with hundreds of locomotives and thousands of cars in constant need of repairs. The welfare of the road required that these repairs be made under good conditions with high efficiency, yet here were hopeless conditions with scarcely any efficiency."

"You might save an immense amount of money by changing all this," said Porter.
 "Yes," agreed the official, "we might."
 "A modern plant with up to date methods would double your efficiency."
 "No doubt."
 "Then why don't you have it?"
 "I can't get the appropriation," the official confessed and went on to tell how, in despair of ever obtaining from headquarters an authorization for a compressed air plant that was absolutely necessary, they had finally built one without authorization.

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charging the cost to miscellaneous repairs. They had built this compressed air plant themselves instead of buying it (this for secrecy) and it had cost them ten times as much as the price of a ready-made plant, with out counting a year's delay.

"But why is this? What does it all mean?" persisted Porter.
 "It means—Wall street," said the other.

"Then he whispered three great names, multi-millionaires, railroad kings, financial magnates, three men who sat in New York offices and ran this road. They knew all about raising loans and watering stock, about 'cutting melons' and juggling securities in the market, but they knew very little about repairing cars and locomotives. Repair shops, in their eyes, were a necessary evil, always calling for appropriations. The only thing for a magnate to do with repair shop appropriations was to cut them ruthlessly. What if a hundred costly locomotives went to the scrap heap for want of proper care! It was always easy to borrow money for more locomotives. And make the commissions in doing it!"

FEBRUARY 19 IN HISTORY.

1401—William Sautre, an English clergyman burned for heresy by the clergy with permission of Henry IV.
 1894—The French army concentrated at Bardeaux for an invasion of England.
 1829—United States mail route to Key West established through the newly acquired Florida territory.
 1830—Bread riots occurred at Liverpool.
 1855—President Pierce vetoed the French spoliation bill, and it failed in the house of the requisite vote to pass over the veto.
 1884—Gladstone's Egyptian policy upheld in the British commons.
 1894—President Cleveland surrendered to the senate opposition on the appointment of a supreme court justice, and named Senator Edward D. White, of Louisiana, who was immediately confirmed.
 1904—Kuropatkin and Makaroff appointed to command the land and navy forces of Russia, respectively.
 1910—Strike of street car men began in Philadelphia; 300 cars were wrecked by rioters and many persons injured.

FEBRUARY 18 IN HISTORY.

1478—George, Duke of Clarence, executed by drowning in a but of Naimsey wine, for taking up arms against his brother, Edward IV.
 1546—Martin Luther died at Wittenberg, Saxony.
 1777—Colonel Nielson of New Jersey, with a party of American militia, defeated the British Major Stockton, killing four and took him and fifty-nine of his men prisoners.
 1791—Vermont admitted into the Union.
 1820—Missouri compromise bill passed the senate.
 1856—Heinrich Heine, the celebrated German poet, died at Paris.
 1890—New extradition treaty between the United States and Great Britain.
 1907—British steamer Kelvinside sunk in Para river, Brazil; captain and eight drowned.
 1900—National conference for conservation of natural resources met at Washington.
 1910—Fatal race rioting at Cairo, Ill.
 1910—Nicaraguan army defeated by insurgents.

SUCH A REBUKE! WOT.

Young Lady—You are a wonderful master of the piano, I hear.
 Professor von Spieler (chired for the occasion)—I blay aggompaniments sometimes.
 Young Lady—Accompaniments to singing?
 Professor von Spieler—No; aggompaniments to conversations.

The eminent friends of Alma-Tadema have from time to time painted beautiful pictures to be placed in a great room in his house in London called "The Hall of Panels." Many of these pictures will be reproduced for the first time in an article in the March Scribner.

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