

Polk County Observer

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BY LEW CATES

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SAYINGS OF SAGES.

Every madman thinks all other men mad.—Syrus.

Instruction enlarges the natural powers of the mind.—Horace.

It is often better not to see an insult than to avenge it.—Seneca.

A sensual and intemperate youth hands over a wornout body to old age.—Cicero.

One ungrateful man does an injury to all who are in suffering.—Syrus.

Thou see'st how sloth wastes the sluggish body, as water is corrupted unless it moves.

It is consummate ignorance to kick against the spur.—Terence.

ROOSEVELT'S RIVER.

To discover and explore a river a thousand miles long, and thereby gain the distinction of "putting it on the map," is an accomplishment worth while, in the opinion of ex-President Roosevelt. And so it is, for in this modern age nearly every section of the earth has yielded up its geographical secrets, and certainly there are not many thousand-mile rivers lying around loose to be picked up, named and mapped, not even by the most intrepid explorer.

However, Colonel Roosevelt appears to have done no less than he claims, and as he himself suggests, a river "stays put" and "his" river is right there in central South America, so that anyone can go any time and investigate, if they doubt his story. He and his party actually navigated this river for an estimated distance of a thousand miles, and although the trip necessitated hardships of a severe character, others who would duplicate the feat will have an easier time, having advantage of the idea and other information gathered by Roosevelt.

Under the circumstances, moreover, one can scarcely blame Explorer Roosevelt for mildly criticizing and poking fun at the world's geographers, who appear to have settled down to the conviction that present day maps are complete and accurate, and that the field for new exploration has been about exhausted. It has remained for Mr. Roosevelt, the adventure loving American, to convince them of their error, and at the same time to add something of genuine value to the world's information.

Incidentally, one can see another Nobel prize going to our ex-president, and certainly he appears fairly to have earned it. And as a Nobel prize amounts to something like \$50,000, it is something worth striving for. But the intrinsic value will be nothing compared to the satisfaction of Colonel Roosevelt in accomplishing a thing of world-wide importance, and literally snatching this distinction from under the very noses of others who would have been only too glad to win the honor that now goes to Explorer Roosevelt.

WAS SHE DAMAGED?

An eastern girl has been awarded a judgment for five thousand dollars against a man who had promised to marry her and failed to keep faith. His father offered as a defense that the son, a man of thirty-one, had never tried to earn a living and that the girl was better off without him than she could be with him, and that instead of being mulcted he should be rewarded for his conduct.

This raises the question as to whether a girl is really damaged when a man does not marry her. Suppose he married her, abused her and forced her to get a divorce—a contingency not unlikely when one considers that he is admittedly fickle. Would she not wish then that she had retained her freedom instead of getting it at trouble and expense to then be a "grass widow?"

And what should a man do who

really finds that what he had thought was love was only a spasm; that the conflagration he imagined was consuming him died out without blistering; that he did not love the girl even as a brother, and that he did love someone else? Should he marry his former flame under false pretense? Would not that course be a greater injury to her than frankly to say that his mind has changed? Of course, where the girl has gone to any expense in preparing for a wedding, that expense should be borne by the fickle swain, but there is much to say for the man who argues that jilting does no serious damage.

PEOPLE AND THE LAND.

The so-called land problem is yearly becoming one of wider extent, and is engaging the attention of the people in various parts of the world. Nor is it only in the older settled countries that this problem presses for solution. In Australia, for instance, we are told that the process of taxing the big landlords off the land, in order to give the common people a better chance, is steadily going ahead. One magnificent estate of 55,000 acres in New South Wales, owned by a corporation, is to be broken up and sold in small tracts. It has been used for grazing purposes, and the laws of the province provide for a heavier tax upon favorably located lands thus used than would be imposed if they were under cultivation. The owners find that they cannot afford to pay the tax and get the small returns that grazing permits.

That same thing is going on in old Wales, as well as in new. It has made great progress in Ireland, and it is handsomely under way in England, and to a less extent only in Scotland, as a result of the workings of the land taxation laws which Lloyd George has written into his budgets. He is now proposing further to increase these duties on uncultivated lands, and thus to add to the incentive for great holders to give the people a chance.

The doctrine of the two Georges, that the land must belong to the people, because the people must live by it, gains ground steadily all over the world. The realization, now at last breaking on the public, that the Mexican peons are really fighting for this same thing, just as the Liberals in Britain are, is compelling a more gracious attitude toward the irreconcilables in the southern republic.

PURELY PSYCHOLOGICAL.

There appears to be considerable basis for the assertion made last Thursday by President Wilson, to the effect that the so-called business depression in this country at the present time is "purely psychological" and has no real foundation in any economic conditions existing today. This was the keynote of the president's response to a delegation of influential manufacturers who called on the chief executive and urged him not to push any more legislation at the present time which might embarrass or disturb business interests. Particularly these manufacturers were interested in securing, if possible, an abandonment of the administration plan to secure the enactment by congress of a better law to regulate trusts and combines. But the president gave no encouragement to those who urged this change of program, telling them plainly that so far as he could see natural and general conditions are favorable to a broad expansion of national prosperity, and suggesting it was the duty of business interests to take advantage of these favorable conditions, rather than to let their fears and apprehensions guide them into concerted effort to hold back trade and business, and thereby check and retard prosperity.

Some of the president's callers are inclined to regard this as "another lecture by the professor," but at the same time it would seem that the "lecture" was fairly deserved. There is, in truth, practically nothing in the business or financial horizon to warrant a pessimistic outlook on the part of business, while on the other hand the prospects are so rosy that only the wilfully blind are unable to see them. Nor can business interests long ignore these favorable conditions, and when the awakening comes business quickly will revive. To some extent this revival of business already is in evidence, but it will be hastened and accelerated if business will let confidence take the place of needless fears and groundless apprehension.

Dallas is in the midst of the greatest prune producing section of the world.

THE CASE OF BELT.

There having been some discussion concerning the legality of Mr. Harry H. Belt's nomination for the circuit judgeship of this district, it is only fair and just to that gentleman to say that the contention is unwarranted. Even were the contention that Mr. Belt failed to register for the primaries sustained, the grounds for questioning the legality of his nomination would be merely technical, for the electorate declared for him over his opponent's claim to the office by a majority of 1500 votes, and majority rule is the fundamental principle of American government.

Had Mr. Belt been defeated in the primaries, take it from The Observer, he would have abided by the decision of the people and, as a loyal republican, put a shoulder to the political wheel, cheerfully supporting the nominee of his party. Mr. Belt's name will appear on the official ballot in November, and there is every reason to believe that he will be elected. His campaign is one characteristic of the man—clean.

MAKING GOOD PROGRESS.

That the Mexican mediation conference at Niagara Falls is making good and entirely satisfactory progress seems to be generally accepted as a fact. Reports purporting to give in detail what actually has been accomplished should not be accepted without allowance, for, of course, the proceedings before the board of mediation are being held in strict confidence. Surmise and conjecture will naturally be indulged in by some of the correspondents, but until the veil of secrecy is lifted there will be little chance of knowing exactly what is going on, or what will be the final basis of settlement, if one is arranged.

Semi-officially, however, those qualified to speak with authority admit that good progress has been made in the effort to overcome the main obstacles to an agreement. It practically is admitted that the object sought is to arrange for a provisional government for Mexico, to be placed in the hands of an independent commission, probably of five men, who will be selected with the idea of having all factions in Mexico represented. It is further suggested that Huerta will probably be allowed to retain his present office until this commission is completely installed, and the United States will doubtless maintain its forces at Vera Cruz until the new system is in operation; after which American troops will be withdrawn.

The reports seem to indicate that one possible obstacle to this plan may be the reluctance or refusal of Carranza and the constitutionalists to agree to abide by it. The United States, however, is in a position to bring strong pressure to bear on the constitutionalists, if they demur, and in the end it is likely they will be compelled to yield. On the whole, in fact, the prospect of a satisfactory settlement of the so-called Mexican problem is better than at any time since the start of the trouble. And the American people will indeed be glad if the outcome verifies the optimistic predictions which are being made along this line.

DON'T WORRY GIRLS.

Another problem of general interest and no little importance apparently has been solved. Announcement is made of the discovery of a chemical substitute of chicle, which as everyone knows is the vegetable product that forms the basis and supplies the resiliency of modern chewing gum. The supply of chicle, so it is claimed, has recently fallen far below the needs of the trade, largely as a result of the unsettled conditions in Mexico, from whence most of this product is secured. And as there is no telling when peace and order will be restored in Mexico, thus to enable the peons of that country to resume the occupation of chicle gathering, the situation in the gum trade was becoming really serious, with a prospect that American gum chewers might either have to go without their customary quid, or at least pay much higher prices for the privilege of exercising their jaws.

The menace, however, promises to speedily evaporate and disappear. The chemical substitute, so it is announced, is just as good as, if not better than the genuine article, and it can be sold for about half the price of the Mexican chicle, to which we have become accustomed to pin our faith and attach our jaws. The chewing gum magnates, moreover, declare they will double their output within a few years, and some of them even go

so far as to say they do not care whether the chicle supply and trade ever revive. And so we again say that a real problem has been solved—one that in public interest and estimation is only a little behind the Mexican problem itself, or such other pressing questions as the control of trusts, the physical valuation of the railroads, or the next succession to the presidency.

THE BOND ISSUE.

It is nothing short of a misfortune that the arguments heretofore presented by the promoters of the fair site proposition miscalculated in their financial conclusions as regards the cost to the taxpayer, because a wrong impression of conditions goes forth almost to the eve of the election. There erroneous statements, however, are now corrected, and the news columns of The Observer today may be relied upon as presenting authenticated facts and figures. There has been no little opposition to the proposed bond issue because of the heretofore announced amount deemed necessary to be raised by taxation each year for a period of ten years to liquidate the indebtedness incurred in the purchase of land for county fair purposes, but upon careful revision of the whole matter the additional tax is shown to be so relatively small that this opposition will doubtless be entirely eliminated.

Instead of calling for eighty cents upon every \$100 of taxes paid, as announced in the argument favoring the measure, property valued at \$100 would pay but a fraction over six cents each year for the whole period, which would liquidate interest and principal, and give to Dallas one of the best appointed fair grounds in the state. The Observer on Tuesday next will publish a detailed argument, compiled by representative men of the community who are impressed with the necessity of voting the bonds in order to keep the fair at the county seat, the logical place for the home of such a meritorious institution.

One thing should be borne in mind by all interested in the proposition, that the title to the property is vested in the city of Dallas, and, with the rapid advancement of the city and the consequent enhancement in realty values, is certain to prove a valuable investment for the future, county fair or no county fair.

The commencement exercises of the Dallas High schools begin tonight and continues throughout the week with short intermissions. The several events should be well attended by the people of Dallas as an expression of the appreciation of the excellent work being done in the public schools. The school system of Oregon has been pronounced by eminent authorities to be excelled by none on the Pacific coast, and Dallas schools rank high with others in the state. Do we fully appreciate what a wonderful asset is a good school system?

Recent fashions have played such queer pranks with the feminine waistline that it is claimed some of the girls now have to get help to locate it.

And there still is quite a number of papers that insist on calling it "Decoration" day.

Many a man who fills his lungs with air and announces that he is as good as the next man, isn't. There is nothing to this beautiful equality theory.

Dallas picks ripe strawberries until after the holidays.

* LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE *

And now our state responds to the mournful plaint of the newly organized Hopgrowers' and Dealers' Union. If the prohibition passes, so they say, all the hopgrowers will be ruined and invested capital be an entire loss. The presumption is that all the rich land now planted to hops will sink out of sight or go up in smoke. Other agriculturists when they find one crop does not pay, still having the land left, set about finding out what will pay, and if they are intelligent men will succeed too. But this union seems to belong to a different class, and instead of putting their money and effort to this purpose, will fight this moral and economic reform instead.

Though we have no history of the account, no doubt when Ab. the cave man first invented the rude bow and arrow which supplanted the club of his ancestors, his neighbors were fearful lest the game would soon all be killed off by this deadly long distance weapon. But history does record the dreadful

apprehension that greeted the first sewing machine, lest the hand sewers would be thrown out of employment. Today, with an improved machine in every home, dressmakers are swamped with work.

It was the same with the grain harvester that supplanted the old cradle. But now with one improved harvester doing the work of 20 men at least, each year in the great wheat fields a great wall goes up for more men to harvest the grain.

The same was true of numerous other inventions, until at last the people have learned their lesson and know that all labor saving devices are a benefit.

But what but comparatively few people have yet learned is that anything that makes for the moral and physical betterment of mankind is also a benefit.

It is true that slavery, that once its defenders once proclaimed as sanctioned by God, has not a champion. White slavery, until recently, was considered a necessary evil. And still efforts to lessen the working hours and increase to a living wage the pay of women and young girls meets with strong opposition, while preventing the dwarfing of the minds and bodies of young children by underpaid employment in factories and coal mines progresses slowly in most places and not at all in others.

But the most general and bitter opposition comes from attempts to curtail our national evil, strong drink. Although one by one all large employers of labor are eliminating the man who drinks, though its use is absolutely forbidden to any man in the navy and though Colonel Maus, division surgeon of the U. S. army at eastern headquarters is one of the strongest crusaders against liquor drinking and though only to the most wilfully blind can fail to see it is an enormous economic loss from any standpoint, still every class that has its own selfish interests in any way touched, like the Hopgrowers' union raise a great clamor.

They have great concern for those who depend on the wages but although the price of hops in the past few years has doubled, and even trebled, with the cost of production nearly the same, we have yet to hear wages. Their pity does not reach that far.

The time has come when the plaint of individual pecuniary loss, though

it may retard for a time, yet cannot stop the progress of moral reform, and the Hopgrowers' and Dealers' Union would better spend their money in agricultural experiments to determine what can be most profitably grown on their land and thus benefit not only themselves but others with similar land not planted to hops.

W. C. T. U. MEMBER.

THE MARKETS

The following is corrected to date of going to press, and are Portland quotations.

Grain, Feed, Etc.

WHEAT—Track prices:—Club, 85c. and 86c.
BARLEY—FEED, \$20 and \$21.
OATS—No. 1 white, milling, \$22 and \$22.50 per ton.
CORN—Whole, \$35; cracked, \$36 per ton.

HAY—Mixed timothy, \$13 and \$14; valley grain hay, \$12.50 and \$14; alfalfa, \$12 and \$13.

MILLFEED—Bran \$23.50 and \$24 per ton; shorts, \$26.50; middlings, \$32 and \$33.

Dairy and Country Produce.

Local jobbing quotations:
EGGS—Fresh Oregon ranch, 20½¢. and 21¢. per dozen.

POULTRY—Hens, 16½¢; broilers, 22¢; ducks, 12¢; geese, 10¢. and 11¢. 25c. and 26c; turkeys, live, 20c. and CHEESE—Oregon triplets, 15c.

BUTTER—Creamery prints, extra, 27½¢; per pound; cubes, 22½¢. and 24c.

PORK—Fancy, 10½¢. per pound. VEAL—Fancy 11c. per pound.

Hops, Wool, Etc.

HOPS—1913 crop prime and choice, 14c. and 15c; 1914 contracts, 14c. and 14½¢.

PELTS—Dry, 11c; dry short wool, 8c; dry shearings, 10c; green shearings, 15c; salted calf 19c; spring lambs, 25c. and 35c.

WOOL—Valley, 18c. and 20c; Eastern Oregon, 16c. and 19 5-8c.

MOHAIR—1914 clip, 27½¢. and 28 3-8c. per pound.

CASCARA BARK—Old and new, 5c. per pound.

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