

Polk County Observer

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BY LEW CATES

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ROOSEVELT'S PROPOSED RIDE.

Consternation reigns at Washington. The leaders of the majority government party appear to be on the verge of nervous breakdown or stampede. Down from the north at break of day, bringing to Washington fresh dismay, has come the horrible rumble that Roosevelt is coming.

And what is it all about? Simple enough. A former president of the United States has been charged with raiding a friendly country and taking away a considerable portion of that country's territory. That the disputed strip is now being used for the commercial benefit of all the people of the whole world is of course exparte. Said former president so accused requests that he may appear in his own defense before the body having the matter in charge, to-wit, a committee of the United States senate.

The trepidation displayed by Secretary Bryan and his colleagues regarding the suggested appearance of Colonel Roosevelt with regard to the secession of Panama argues a weakness in Mr. Bryan's pending Colombian treaty.

And, as a matter of fact, it is submitted that the real objection to the convention is not financial. It is not the matter of the payment of the twenty-five millions. The objection is based on moral, patriotic and sentimental grounds. The treaty in effect tends to make the American people inermittate and stultify themselves. And easy-going and good-humored as they are, the American people do not as a class relish the role that Mr. Bryan, in his excess of courtesy and super righteousness, has assigned them. We are willing to eat crow on occasion, but we would like to have something to say as to the matter in which the dish, unsavory at best, is prepared.

The main difficulty with Mr. Bryan's Colombian treaty is not its financial rider. It is that the treaty is a formal confession that we did wrong to Colombia and a formal statement of repentance. Now, the better belief is that the American people do not feel that way and that they resent being put in false position. Mr. Bryan would put us on our knees to Colombia, but the nation he represents is not sorry for what happened to and in Colombia and will not accept Mr. Bryan's promptings of self-humiliation, even for the sake of "prestige throughout South America."

If Colombia has any claim against the United States, we are solvent and the claim is collectable. But let us cut out all Uriah Heep business.

GETTING TOGETHER.

It is planned to bring the people of the United States and Great Britain into still closer and more friendly relations, through the adoption of a new treaty to take the place of the present treaty when the latter expires. Negotiations to bring this about are now progressing between Ambassador Page and the British foreign office, and the ambassador has given out something of the outlines of the new pact, which is expected to be a real improvement over the old treaty. For one thing, it will provide for the creation of a commission, which might be termed an arbitration commission, and to which any diplomatic differences between the United States and Great Britain shall be at once submitted. Pending the report of this commission each of the signatory powers pledges itself to refrain from all hostile actions against the other.

Under the existing treaty there is an exception to the list of subjects or disputes to be submitted to arbitration which the United States demanded at the time it was made. In it most matters of dispute which

could not be settled between the two powers were referred to the court of arbitration at The Hague save only those which affected national honor. That was the only exception. In this new treaty there is said to be no such exception or saving clause, which therefore provides that even questions of national honor are to be referred to this new arbitration commission. Thus the United States concedes that those matters in which a nation's honor and dignity are involved and which are the most fruitful cause of wars and threatened wars, may be subjects of peaceful meditation and arbitration.

This attitude of the two greatest of the world powers toward international complications will have a wider effect than merely the arbitration of differences between the United States and Great Britain. It should, and probably will have a general influence for the suppression of war.

BAND CONCERTS.

The example of Dallas business men in hiring a band to give weekly open air concerts is wholesome, in excellent conception and taste and one well worthy of emulation by other cities of the valley. Those contributors to the fund who attend these Saturday evening concerts and witness the assembled throng and hear the expressions of appreciation must feel that they have developed one pointed instance wherein virtue has its own and abundant reward. The pretty square, the crowds and the lights, the moving cars, the merged and diverging evidences of life and interest, all fuse into a scene that is metropolitan in its aspects and which does not soon vanish from the memory of those who attend.

The charm of music is admitted. The hackneyed statement, that it will on occasion operate to soothe even the savage breast, is merely feeling testimony of its power. It is educational and elevating, and with reasonable solicitude in the arrangement of the program there is no possibility of error or misdirection. The suggestion has been made, and evidently in good faith, that the business people of Dallas henceforth and forever eliminate Independence day celebrations and dedicate its fund to these summer concerts. Apart from the element of occasional celebrations for patriotic education, which is worthy of consideration, it verily seems well advised and sensible to expend money for open air concerts rather than to burn it up in cheap fireworks, though Dallas cannot be charged with this since The Observer has been under its present management.

The providing of a musical program by an organization possessing the merits of the Dallas band illustrates one of the characteristic features of modern municipal life. It is a growing demand of municipal communities upon municipal administrations, and we predict that ere long the councilmen of this city will realize the popular demand for elevating public entertainments of this kind and make an annual appropriation for the purpose.

INTERROGATION POINTS.

In his recent address to the Virginia editors, President Wilson said to those shoulders of public opinion, "when our trust program is finished, it is finished; the interrogation points are rubbed off the slate, business is given its constitution of freedom and is bidden go forward under that constitution."

Here are some interrogation points that can be rubbed off right now: The balance sheet of the Department of Commerce shows that for April and May the balance of trade against the United States was \$127,453,750. The total imports for May were \$163,637,386. For May, 1913, they were \$133,723,713, an increase under the Underwood bill of \$29,913,673. The total domestic exports in May, 1914, were \$157,406,572, a decrease of \$33,649,228 compared with the month of May, 1913. Taking exports and imports together the loss to our commerce for the month of May, this year, amount to \$63,526,901, as compared with 1913. These figures take whole bunches of interrogation points off the slate.

Our gold has left us to the extent of \$53,000,000 in less than sixty days, and for the first time since the Cleveland administrations, our foreign creditors have been dumping our securities back upon us.

REFORM IN THE NAVY.

While Naval Secretary Daniels has admitted in heart to heart talks that the sum total of his maritime know-

ledge and experience was absorbed while acting as pilot of a newspaper upon the stormy sea of journalism, it is very evident that the basic structure of his education was well laid and the curriculum may be commended to the officers of the navy generally. Secretary Daniels appears to be possessed of the simple, yet revolutionary, belief that an enlisted man in the navy is a human being, much the same as other members of the genus homo outside the navy, and should be treated as a human being.

With that belief and basis of rationale in mind, Secretary Daniels has decreed that hereafter deserters from the navy shall not be imprisoned, they shall be dismissed. Not only that, but any enlisted man who has become dissatisfied with the service will be permitted to resign and obtain an honorable discharge, a privilege which heretofore has been enjoyed only by the officers of the navy.

The American soldier is a different type—and we are bound to believe from the instruction of history, a better type of fighting man than the soldier of any other country. Bred to a higher and more refined state of civilization, it is natural and inevitable that the American soldier shall be more sensitive and more independent than the present products of old world civilization. Therefore the old world barbarism will not do in this country, not even in the navy. And Secretary Daniels is simply meeting condition with condition. The desertion scandal has not been so bad, it is believed, in the navy as in the army. Will not our national military establishment and our national fabric generally be improved and strengthened if the army shall follow the navy's suit?

THE HAYTER LOT.

The proposition presented to the aldermanic body, that the city of Dallas purchase a lot on Ash street to be used as an entrance to the county fair grounds, does not meet with the approval of the owner of the property, Dr. Mark Hayter, who is also a member of the council. That gentleman believes that if the lot in question is needed for fair purposes it should have been included in the measure placed before the people for acceptance or rejection when the Rowell tract was bought, making the bond issue \$5225 instead of \$5,000, the price paid for the fair site. The alderman suggests that the Commercial club or the Polk County Fair association become the possessor of the property required for the street extension, either holding title thereto or paying the price and gratuitously deeding it to the city for the exclusive purpose indicated.

While the necessary disbursement is comparatively small, there are those besides the owner of the property desired who are opposed to the city making the purchase, either at this or any future time, but there is another phase to the situation that may throw an altogether different light upon the proposition. The city has a perfect right to make the purchase for street extension, and street extension in this instance is quite as important as in any other case, for the reason that a thoroughfare is absolutely necessary to gain access to the sixteen-acre fair site, otherwise hemmed in on all sides with but right of way privileges over a trail. Without the land in question there can be no convenient or suitable highway leading directly to the fair grounds, and such a highway being a necessity some means must be provided to secure it.

FAIR PLAY FOR CRIMINALS.

The "machinery" of the courts is coming to be a more apt term every day. In fact, the machinery of the courts and the organization and the operation thereof is getting to be so large and complex that it has been accorded so little attention in consideration of the high cost of living problem. It surely is a factor in the predatory onslaught on the community pocketbook.

Just now in California and Oklahoma they are experimenting with a new feature of court equipment, a sort of litigatory self-starter. It is known as the public defender. This is a new government official, a competent lawyer whose duty it is to defend persons accused of crime, when such persons are unable, through lack of funds, to hire legal counsel for themselves. It is argued by the exponents of the idea that against the man accused of crime is a public prosecutor, representing the state, with, back of him, the power, the officers and the wealth of the state to help in convicting the accused. It is admitted that

at present the judge has the right to appoint legal counsel for any prisoner who demands it, but it is pointed out that such counsel when appointed has no means adequately to defend his client, at least none that can be compared to the resources of the state.

It might seem to the lay and more or less callous mind, that the mantle of protection now thrown about accused persons was ample enough, and that instead of needing officials paid by the public funds to help accused persons we needed more precautions against allowing the guilty to escape. In fact, what American communities need more than anything else in the court line of furniture is some specific which will stiffen the vertebrae of appeal courts and enable them to stand by verdicts and judgments in which it appears that no substantial injustice has been done. In most of the courts of the country, the occupants of the bench have been badly fitted with spectacles. The lenses they use enable them to see grammatical and technical errors in the record sent up to them, but fail to reflect the substantial and community aspects of the case. So long as cases are returned for trial because the nisi-pris judge used a fountain pen instead of a steel pen, or because he had his legs crossed instead of his fingers, just so long will American courts lack the respect and fear and confidence that attach to those of—for instance—Great Britain. Substantial justice is the best we can look for. That done, the appeal court keep hands off.

CONGRESS TOO LAGGARD.

Congress has been in continuous session since April 7, 1913, and still the appropriation bills are not yet passed, necessitating the continuance of the appropriations of the previous session to keep the government going, and business is still waiting to see what the anti-trust legislation will be, and other legislation vitally affecting the industrial life and prosperity of the country.

Good business, honestly conducted, is suffering from this uncertainty and efforts to correct the ills of bad business. We are a great industrial nation. The life of the country and the welfare of the people depend upon the success of its industries. We are a big country and big business is necessary to its prosperity. There should be great care that legislation should do nothing to cripple industrial activities, large or small, in any efforts that may be made to correct the abuses of the past in some corporate enterprises. There are too many politicians who mistakenly think it is popular to cry out against everyone who has got anything, however honestly it may have been gained.

ENFORCE THE LAW.

A short time ago the city council adopted an ordinance intended to reduce the possibility of destructive fires in the down town district to the minimum, but thus far little heed has been given the new order of things by Mayor Van Orsdel's subjects. This is probably due to the fact, however, that they are not aware that a law has been passed making it an offense to leave rubbish of an inflammable character within a certain distance of any building, for official publicity is not given these matters, and one to keep posted must either be a regular attendant upon meetings of the aldermanic body or frequently scrutinize the records. But the ordinance is there, just the same, and its provisions are being violated daily. The result of these violations affords opportunity for a costly conflagration, and consequently should not be permitted.

The board of fire insurance underwriters has notified several cities of Oregon that unless greater care is exercised in keeping rubbish and debris from the rear end of business houses within the fire limits that insurance rates will be increased, and Dallas may be the next to receive like information. The ordinance referred to provides for inspection of all property and buildings within prescribed limits, and such inspections should be made without unnecessary delay. The protection of the city against a conflagration demand it. Laws are enacted for a purpose, and unless enforced time employed in their preparation, consideration and adoption is worse than wasted.

Wilson assures the business men of the country that his administration is not "running amuck" with its trust legislation, but is merely endeavoring to put into law what the moral judgment of the community has said should be law. Whatever may be said of the administration as a whole, the

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house of representatives can surely prove an alibi. It isn't running amuck. It isn't running anything. It is about the best sample of a rubber stamp that has been turned out to the trade for some time.

THE TILLAMOOK CASE.

Notwithstanding the fact that two Tillamook attorneys, Messrs. T. B. Handley and S. S. Johnson, take issue with the statement that Judge Webster Holmes was prejudiced in the Tillamook hotel case, the Supreme court reversed this jurist's decision in the case, ousted the receiver appointed by him and returned the property in question to the custody of the majority shareholder, P. J. Worrall. The Observer is quite familiar with the circumstances surrounding the case under discussion, and with the feeling that exists between factions in the Tillamook metropolis, and it would be surprising to it were there no prejudice, yet there are laws for the guidance of the bench in such cases, and these should be sufficiently clear that there could be no mistaking their meaning. The honesty of purpose of Judge Holmes is not questioned by The Observer, although in this respect it differs from some others, but it is undoubtedly true that he erred in pronouncing judgment in the case at hand, for the highest tribunal in the commonwealth has taken an altogether different view of the matter.

The minority stockholders, dissatisfied with the management of the hotel and claiming that Worrall was his own best customer at the bar in connection, undertook to wrest the property from his personal conduct, but several attempts to force severance with him proved dismal failures. Finally, however, a decision was made for a receiver, and the application was granted by Judge Holmes. The receiver assumed management of the hotel, which, it must be admitted, needed a manager, and the decision of Judge Holmes was appealed to the Supreme court, Ralph Duniway acting as counsel for the Worralls. It was in this hearing that Mr. Duniway is reported to have made the statement that Judge Holmes was not qualified to sit in the case because of prejudice; that he sold his stock in the hotel only a day or two before the receivership hearing, and that he was "back of all this." The republishing of these statements brought forth the denial, published elsewhere, from the Tillamook attorneys.

And in the meantime, what has become of Chautauqua Lecturer Green and his theories?

The political campaign will get hotter as the weather gets cooler.

The Krupps are endeavoring to hide a mental attitude of ghoulish glee beneath a pose of sanctimonious concern.

Probably the only case on record of an alderman objecting to the city buying, at his price, property owned by him is that of Dr. Hayter.

Is U'Ren attempting to bribe the voters by the announcement that if elected governor of Oregon he will drop single tax for four years? If certainly looks that way.

Correspondents Wanted.

The Observer wants a correspondent in every community in Polk county not now represented, and is desirous of getting in touch with some person in each locality who will send in the news of that locality. Write this office for particulars. Do it now.

NOTICE TO ICE CONSUMERS

Those persons desiring ice in the residence districts are requested to display their "Ice Wanted" card the first thing in the morning, as only forenoon delivery is made in this territory.

Those customers not having cards are requested to call at the plant and get one, leaving their street and number.

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