

Polk County Observer

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STEEL OR CONCRETE.

Regardless of the merits of a concrete bridge, the people of West Salem last Saturday went on record as favoring a steel bridge "at once" across the main channel of the river, with a concrete approach on the west end. Little consideration was given a concrete bridge by the meeting because the belief seemed to prevail there that the erection of a steel bridge could be begun immediately, whereas a concrete bridge could not be gotten under way for some time. It was also the belief that engineering costs of a steel bridge, such as they say they want and engineering details of which are now on file in Marion county, would be dispensed with and that a saving in engineering expenses of from \$15,000 to \$20,000 could be made. This is an erroneous impression, however, for the state highway department makes charges up to 10 per cent for their work, according to admissions to members of the Polk county court. Private engineers who have been making estimates for the Polk county court make a charge of from 3 1/2 to 6 per cent for their work, which includes all drawing, all supervising and all engineering. The meeting apparently was not aware of the fact that the Polk county court had plans of a concrete structure on file that work could go ahead on at once and that would cost complete (high level) under \$250,000 and that such a bridge capitalized (with amount added for repairs of all kinds, etc.) will total \$260,000 in fifty years. The bridge the West Salem meeting urges costs \$217,000 to build and will have cost at the end of 50 years \$298,000, according to figures of engineers. And this does not include an annual maintenance fee of \$3000 for operation of the draw, or another \$150,000 in 50 years. The bridge which the Polk county court wants to build, too, will stand forever. An additional \$250,000 will not have to be raised by our taxpayers in anywhere from 30 to 50 years to put up a new structure.

The meeting at West Salem forgot that the resolution to the Polk court was in direct conflict with instructions from over Polk county. At a budget meeting held here, taxpayers from all parts of Polk graciously submitted to the transferring of the bridge fund and the road fund to the inter-county bridge fund, so that an amount large enough could be created to meet Polk's one-third of a high level concrete bridge. 95 per cent of Polk county people, in other words gave up their road and bridge funds for a year, that the five per cent of the people living near Salem could have a bridge. Following the instructions of that meeting the Polk court has stood ready and willing to go ahead with the wishes of Polk taxpayers—for a high level concrete bridge. This the Observer is certain of and we believe also that whenever the people of the south end, the north end, the west end and all other parts of the county instruct the court to go ahead with a steel bridge they will abide by such instruction and go ahead with that kind of structure.

The meeting also failed to give consideration to the financial end of the proposition. "We want a bridge immediately" was the sentiment and this was borne out by the statement of many that they did not think the question of cost of maintenance or repairs should be looked into at all. Some even went so far as to say we would want another bridge in from 30 to 50 years anyway. Many stated that a concrete bridge could not be built across the river three (none telling just why) and no one explained the logic of building the bridge approach of concrete and the bridge itself of steel.

The Observer cannot understand why the people of West Salem will urge our court to build an inferior bridge for more money than it will cost to put up a substantial structure of concrete in the same length of time. At home we have cement; right at the bridge edge we have gravel and sand for its mixing; we can employ home labor in its construction. If we build of steel we will have to send to Pittsburg for the raw material and its fabrication into spans, we will have to import skilled workmen to put it up, and when we get it up we have to keep continually digging into our jeans for maintaining it. West Salem people know that practically all Polk county people who are paying for the

bridge want a concrete structure, and that the county court cannot accept the recommendations for the bridge they suggest unless the court is instructed by the taxpayers of the county to do so. We cannot see why they should urge this temporary affair when the Polk court stands ready this day to give them a permanent structure of concrete, with a tensile strength of 150 pounds to the square foot, or in other words so strong that two trucks, each carrying 20 tons, could pass with perfect safety on any part of the structure. And such a bridge costing \$200,000 less money in 50 years' time than the steel one they clamor for.

It will do well to remember that no particular section is bearing the expense. Falls City is helping to pay for the bridge, so are Dallas, Independence and Monmouth. The small section of the people in the east end of the county are the only ones who will receive benefit from a bridge and they are attempting to coerce the court into putting up a type of bridge adverse to instructions from the great majority of the people of the county. The court is acting in perfectly good faith in its stand for concrete—for that is the kind of bridge Polk county people want.

BREAK WAS INEVITABLE.

The break with Germany has come. On Saturday President Wilson handed Count von Bernstorff his passports and recalled Ambassador Gerard from Germany. While this severance of diplomatic relations may not necessarily lead to war, history shows that war has followed almost every diplomatic break in the course of the world's events.

Germany's declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare against neutrals as well as belligerents, coming at a critical time of tension in the relations of the two countries, was the last straw for this government and the break followed. The safety of neutrals on the high seas is practically denied by Germany, in its last move; American and other neutral ships are to be sunk indiscriminately in certain zones around France, England, etc., and the solemn assurance given America by that government in May, 1916, that "it would confine the operations of the remainder of the war to the fighting forces of the belligerents," has been revoked.

A break following such a course was inevitable. America is not for war. But America as a neutral nation has certain rights on the high seas which is demands be considered. And the American people stand solidly behind their president in telling Germany that our rights must be respected.

The ultimate outcome of the break may and may not be war. But whatever it is this nation is America, first, last and always, and Americans stand ready to uphold the hand of their president, as they ever have, should a crisis come.

WHERE YOUR DOLLAR GOES FARTHEST.

Did you ever stop to think when you were handling your dollar over to the Portland or Salem merchant, to an itinerant book or periodical agent, or to some peddler that you were committing an unpardonable sin against your home town. No doubt you realized that you were helping the big city merchant pay his high rental cost for his prominent location, but had you considered what that dollar would have done at home for you. When you handed that dollar to the city man, you said goodbye to it forever, for by no known means and in no shape or form could that 100 cents ever come back to you or your community again.

True, the dollar was only a small amount, and the idea of shopping in the city, or receiving a nicely wrapped package by express made some sort of appeal to you that was hard to resist—the agent represented his ware in such glowing terms that you fell for his smooth talk—and you lost sight of how much value that dollar held for you. It should have helped you build roads in your community (in its small way of course, but lots of dollars would build lots of miles) it should have helped you pave your city streets, it should have helped increase the value of your farm by giving you better access to your commercial center, it should have helped in civic betterment, did its part in educating your children, paying your taxes, and scores of other things. But did it? Not on your life.

The value of a dollar to a community is the number of times it can go the rounds in that community. You pay your butcher, he buys from the grocer. The grocer gives it to the farmer's wife for her two dozen eggs and a pound of butter, who in turn buys several yards of calico. The merchant passes it along to the mill man for a bunch of lumber, and the mill man turns it over on Saturday night to his workman for wages. And so on it makes its rounds, coming back to you every once in a while with just a little increased val-

ue over what it had when you last saw it. It is helping you because it is helping that which you are a vital part of—your community. But the dollar you sent to Portland or spent in Salem—well it simply can't get back to you.

You can't get away from the fact, Mr. Citizen, that your dollar goes just a little bit further, does just a little bit more for you in your home town than any place else, regardless of what angle you view the proposition from. A community is healthy (prosperous) or in the dumps just as its component parts make it. Like a smooth working baseball team that town in which the citizens so see their duty toward society that each endeavors to place his interest in tune with that of his fellow-man can always be found in the "first column." And that town is invariably the one in which the dollar is going the rounds.

BRITISH BOAST IS SPOILED.

England no longer is the only nation that can boast the sun never sets on its territorial possessions, for the United States can also make a similar assertion since it came into possession of the Danish West Indies. Some writers have advanced this claim ever since this government assumed control over the Philippines but it was not strictly accurate. The most westerly point of the Philippines is the small island of Balabac, while our most easterly possession is a little island known as Culebra, which virtually is part of Porto Rico. Between these two points the distance is a trifle more than 180 degrees, or more than half the circumference of the earth, so that there actually was an interval between the time the sun set and arose on lands under the dominion of this government.

With the acquisition of the Danish islands, however, the small gap is bridged and it now may be said in truth that "the sun never sets on Uncle Sam's possessions." This may be a small thing to boast about, it is true, but at least it robs England of a distinction that long has been a source of great pride to the people of that nation. And now that the United States is fairly in the same class, perhaps the British will not be so prone to advance this old claim.

WHEN THE DROUTH CAME.

News Item in Portland paper: "When Portland citizens began to realize last Friday morning that bonedryness was immediately impending they began a grand rush to the telegraph office and before noon a long line had been formed in front of the company's main office. Officials found it necessary to supply ten extra clerks to handle the urgent business to California and count the cash."

The government notes a heavy demand for one and two dollar bills. The average man notes the same kind of demand, only it is for bills of larger denomination.

Many people are hoping the old rule, "what goes up must come down," eventually will apply to the high cost of living.

After the pork barrel bills are out of the way, congress may find more time to pay attention to other business.

Speaking of the snowdrifts, why not refer to them at skirt-high, rather than knee-deep?

The weatherman seems to be quite safe in predicting "more snow" these days.

OTHERS' OPINIONS

North Dakota's Farmers Run Their State.

Another political power has arisen in the interior. Cousin to the Grangers, to the Farmers' Alliance and to the Populists, it is the Farmers' Non-partisan Political league. This organization advocates state ownership of flour mills, grain elevators, insurance against hail, rural credits and packing houses.

North Dakota's farmers last November gained every elective official of the state government except one, elected three justices of the supreme court who stand by the policy of a state owning public utilities, and also control the legislature, except that there the conservatives outnumber them by three, while 85 per cent of the members of the lower house have committed themselves to the farmers' program.

The league originated from economic conditions. Primarily it was a farmers' protest against alleged juggling of prices of cereals and speculation on board of trade. Its object was to put the speculative markets out of business through the state and the farmers co-operating in the distribution of products. North Dakota was considered to have been the victim of alien "interests" and these, the farmers think, belong to Minne-

sota and consequently are not amenable to control or regulation by the Dakotans.

The league was organized about two years ago by two farmers without previous political experience, and as early as last February they had recruited 30,000 members and organized three-fourths of the state. A membership of 60,000 in North Dakota is now claimed. Last spring and summer it stood the republican and democratic parties on their heads. Its fatal weakness is that, like the populists and their predecessors, it is a class party and that these never last. But while they exist they play the mischief with old parties. Populism in its day formed a consequential factor in the politics of the interior. The Grangers advocated governmental control of railways; and this has come. The Farmers' Alliance demanded sub-treasury warehouses for the storage of agricultural products upon which money should be loaned, and in 1916 congress regulated dealings in cotton futures, provided for the standardization of grain and established a national system of warehouses. Populists urged taxation of incomes and popular election of national senators; and both of these policies have become federal or state law.

Old-line parties will do well to recall these facts and to remember that American farmers have mastered the art of political organization—Spokesman Review.

The Bridge Row.

Marion county has become fighting mad because the Polk county court refuses to consent to the building of a steel bridge. One Salem paper now wants Marion county to build the bridge alone and another Salem paper is agitating the annexation of a portion of Polk county to Marion county. Either one of these propositions ought to be acceptable to Polk county. A "mass" meeting will be held in West Salem tomorrow afternoon which may draw up the articles of secession. It was first suggested that a new county be formed, which would take in Independence, but when it was learned that Independence, the only town of consequence except Monmouth in the proposed new county, would expect to be the capital, the idea was put in cold storage and secession advocated.

Independence stands by the Polk county court in favor of a concrete bridge. It is not controlled by the steel trust and is willing to hold out until the end of time for a concrete bridge. The Capital Journal holds up the Independence bridge as a horrible example of concrete. The trouble over the Independence bridge was not caused because it was built of concrete, but because the county court failed to bond the builders. When a board was "accidentally" dropped into one of the pillars of the unfinished structure which caused it to crumble, it did not show the superiority of steel over concrete for if the bridge had been steel instead of concrete, could not some one very much interested in the cement industry, have sawed a few steel rods?

Independence is thinking of having a "mass" meeting. Not in the interest of any particular kind of bridge, but to insist that the Marion county court "open up" about fifteen miles of territory in Marion county adjacent to Independence so that the people living there can come to Independence, their nearest trading point.—Independence Monitor.

Weeding Out The Culls.

The weeding out of unproductive dairy cows by the dairymen of the county is an act that is proving profitable to every milk producer. The old theory that a cow is a cow wherever found has lost its force, and many are fast finding out from loss of revenue from cream shipments that while a cow is a cow she is not always a wealth producer. Testing for butter fat determines the quality of the dairy cow, and the result has been the improvement of the dairy herd from the largest to the smallest number of cows.—Sheridan Sun.

County Agent Retained.

The Graphic is pleased to be able to announce that M. S. Shrock is to be retained as county agricultural agent for another year. Now let those who said at the budget meeting that Mr. Shrock had not benefited them during the past year put themselves in a way to receive assistance from his office and give him a fair trial.—Newberg Graphic.

POLK COUNTY PIONEER DIES.

William Fudge Passed Away at Walla Walla Last Tuesday.

William Fudge, prominent pioneer of the Walla Walla valley of 1859 and an Oregon pioneer of the early '40s, died on Tuesday, January 30 at Walla Walla, Washington in his 80th year. He was born near Chicago in 1839.

His father and the family started across the plains by ox team with an immigrant train of 3000 teams. The trip proved a horrible one, as some of

the party became separated from the main train and were set upon by Indians and massacred.

The family settled near Dallas, in Polk county. During the gold excitement in California his father went there, where he afterwards died. When Mr. Fudge was 27, or in 1859, he moved to South-eastern Washington with Whitaker and McGhee, pioneers, and settled near the Tucannon river. The winter of 1861 took all his money but left him valuable experience, and he later became a successful farmer. He was married in 1863 to Miss Elizabeth Billups, who survives him. There are no children. A sister, Mrs. Susan Jones, lives at Independence.

Mrs. Gilbert P. MacGregor will open a class in music for piano students. She may be consulted on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Phone 1431. 96-101

BULLETIN

FOR SALE—Team, harness, wagon, three heifers, cream separator. A. H. Benton, Falls City. 97-100

WANTED—To trade modern home situated on corner of Jefferson and Maple streets for orchard or small farm near Dallas. Carl Gerlinger, phone 1393. 97-105

FOR SALE—Second-hand Hardie giant spray outfit. Ewing Bros. 97-98

FOR SALE—First class, improved apple orchard; from 10 to 30 acres. Inquire at Observer office. 98-103c

FOR SALE—An Oriole baby buggy. Inquire of Mrs. Ethel Barham, 719 Main street. 98c

"ALADDIN" LAMPS (kerosene) make a perfect light. They are safe, economical and easy to operate. Write me and I will be pleased to call and demonstrate it for you. A. V. Oliver, Rickreall, Oregon, Polk county agent.

FOR SALE—Dry peeled 16-inch fir wood. I. L. Smith, phone 1404. 97-98c

FOR SALE—Cheat and other hay. White and gray oats. U. S. Grant.

FOR SALE—New, modern five-room bungalow on Washington street, terms. McBee Land Co. 77-1f

FOR SALE—Clean vetch seed at three cents a pound, baled cheat hay at \$13.50 a ton and oats, at going price. A. R. Brown South Red 35, Dallas. 86-104c

6 Per Cent Farm Loans on first-class farms. H. E. Morton, 605 Court street, Dallas.

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