

The Herald

D. E. STITT, Editor.

Entered as second-class matter September 8, 1908, at the post office at Monmouth, Oregon, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY

Subscription Rates

One year - - - \$1
Six months - - - 50 cts

Monmouth, Oregon.

FRIDAY, NOV. 3, 1911.

CHINA AWAKENED

China has awakened and shown energy that has not only surprised the Manchurian government, but that has actually made it a cringing object of doing anything to get a measure of favor and assurance from the insurgent forces which are sweeping that nation, according to dispatches sent broadcast by the press.

China has been asleep; for centuries she has lain dormant, her energies were pent in her immobile state, but there has come a change, her forces are set in motion and who can say what the result will be.

Less than a century of active life has made Japan a notable factor among progressive nations, and a power that has to be reckoned with as the world advances, and if China with its 400,000,000 of citizens makes advancement, as Japan has done, she might easily become the strongest fighting force in the world, and as "might" is the first principle in national life, she will in all probability learn to use her military power first.

THE EDMONTON PLAN

Edmonton, Canada, has some novel ideas. As a city it is new—only emerging from villagehood about five years ago. It was a Hudson Bay trading post about one hundred years or more before that but was considered too far beyond civilization to merit attention. The appearance of its second railroad had the effect of waking things up and men of genius and brain and brawn and money began to arrive. Among these was a man named Short who had ideas and dreams of energy. He could not see why this fair, new budding city should follow in the ruts of old ones. Here was a town a thousand miles from anywhere. The old style of city government had proven a failure. His plan could not be any worse so he enlisted other men under his banner. They liked his suggestions. Among the things they settled upon was city ownership of the telephone, electric light, street car and water-works systems.

Then there is the tax system. You are not penalized or taxed for putting up a building. If you have a nice lot worth \$5,000 and put up a good house on it of equal value your taxes are not raised. The speculator who owns a vacant lot beside you pays just as much tax as you. This principal holds good whether the house costs \$500 or \$500,000. The ground is assessed at its cash value by a board of non-partisan assessors appointed by the council. No attention is paid to buildings. This plan tends to encourage builders and discourage the

holding of vacant lots.

Instead of taxing the business man for his stock of goods they assess his floor space and they value that according to the kind of business and its location. For instance—a boarding house is rated at 50 cents a square foot while the banker down in the expensive part of town is hoisted up to seven dollars and fifty cents. The florist who is usually pretty well out from the business center is assessed at twentyfive cents a foot. The druggist pays on four dollars. Ice cream parlors and millinery stores are valued at two dollars. Printing offices and undertakers are put at two-fifty and so on. Each business is rated according to its earning capacity and location. The second floor has a lower rate than the first and third still less. Lawyers, doctors, real estate men and all others have a fairly adjusted rate grading up from a single desk space to a large office with waiting rooms and private offices and various departments. The system works. One item of proof is that last year less than half a dozen persons appealed from the figures of the assessors.

The tax rate is seventeen mills so you can tell at any time just how much you will have to pay. If you have an office ten by ten that is 100 square feet. Multiplied by the official assessment of say two dollars and cast by seventeen and you have three dollars and forty cents. Not so bad is it? Never heard anything like it—did you? But it goes and no one is taxed spasmodically—one rate this year and another next—or out of proportion to his neighbor.

Then they have something new in the franchise line. In voting on the question of issuing bonds for public improvements all persons having property worth \$200 to \$2000 have one vote, \$2000 to \$4000 two votes, \$4000 to \$8000 three votes, \$8000 and upward four votes. All banks and corporations have one vote. All women worth \$2000 can vote on all matters too. If a man hasn't succeeded in gathering any financial moss he can't help saddle any indebtedness on the city—but if he wants to vote real badly and has been wise enough to marry a wife with property he can vote—if he presents her permission in writing. Isn't that some new? It's a safe bet that the man who originated that plank can get the ladies' votes for anything he wants.

Then there is the income tax. Up to \$1000 you can spend it for automobiles or diamonds or trips to Europe and the city will not say you nay—but for each \$1000 above that you will have to walk up to the treasurer's office with a dollar fifty and contribute to the cause of good government. This did not all come like a flash out of a clear sky. It was proposed by Mayor William Short. It was sifted by his brainy friends. It is not ironclad. It may be added to from time to time. Its six years of use have demonstrated its value.

The mayor is elected yearly. The council of eight is elected for two years—four going out each year. In order to expe-

dite matters they have three commissioners who take general charge of all civic matters. The mayor is always chairman. The other two and all other city officials—from treasurer down to all the superintendents of departments—are appointed by the council. There are twenty-two of them—all rivals in trying to make his department come up with the best showing. This city owns fair grounds and appoints the board of managers as well as paying all bills. It is a success too.

It is a pretty city having about 30,000 population, three railroads, a good sized river and thousands of people from the states. One can hardly realize that he is beyond the land of the Stars and Stripes. There are features of government at Edmonton not only interesting but valuable. For instance—when a national dignitary comes they decorate the streets and public buildings and hire bands and go to whatever expense they deem proper and the city pays the bills. What a roar would go up in some American cities at such a procedure! Edmonton also builds the sidewalks and plants the trees and parkings along the streets. The people are proud of their city and its success.—Ashland Record.

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