

The Herald

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Monmouth, Oregon.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 11, 1914.

VOTER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Time is passing and many of the voting population are not yet registered. There are measures coming up for acceptance or rejection which must be passed upon and there are responsibilities which must be shouldered, and there is no way of getting away from the trust.

Some may try to throw off their responsibility by not voting but this does not relieve them. For instance, the question of prohibition is up to the populace to make choice. Prohibition is either right or wrong. It is a good thing for the people or it is a bad thing. The voters of the state must determine whether the state will rid itself of the saloon or not. The saloon keeper and the brewer will go to the polls and register against prohibition because it is their way of making money. The man whose will-power has been broken by the use of alcohol will line up with the saloonkeeper and the brewer because his appetite has mastered him and he does not like to have his supply cut off. There will be a lot of others who will vote the same way because they think that their liberties are at stake, or if they do not think so they will at least make that plea. Now what will you do? If you do not vote against saloon and alcohol influence by your absence or neglect to vote, you countenance all the evils that arise from drunkenness and its accompanying vices. By your act you sanction the murders, the insanity, the distress and expenses that come through the drink habit. Can you afford to do this?

But, some will say, it will ruin the hop industry which brings many millions of dollars to the citizens of Oregon. Which is the most prolific source of Oregon's wealth, the hop industry, or the boys and girls? If the hop industry is worth more than the welfare of the boys and girls of Oregon then save the hop industry and if you think more of drink, carousing, drunkenness and the degradation of your sons and daughters than you do of their welfare, then vote to retain the saloon, but if you value the welfare of the rising and future generations, then help to put this blighting curse out of business.

But we will take another look at the loss side to the state and see if the one will not balance the other. How much does the people of the state pay out for the prosecution of crimes that are the direct result of the alcohol habit? How much is spent to care for the insane the cause of which is attributable to the same source? How much for the care of children made paupers because of drunkenness of one or both parents? Then did

you ever stop to think of the time and money that is worse than wasted at the saloons of the state, and from which not one dollar's worth of good comes? Take one of the most prosperous saloons of Portland and we will venture the assertion that there is more money wasted there during the year, in time which might be made valuable, and in money, than is made on the best hop ranch in the state.

We do not know nor argue that prohibition will kill the hop industry, but if the losses that come through alcoholism were corrected, the gain to the people of the state would be far above what it is, even though the hop industry is entirely destroyed.

We have only considered the money side of this question. The moral side is of incalculable value as it is conducive to right living. Unrighteousness brings its crop and if you wish to see its fruit just cast your mind's eye over the Atlantic and view the scenes of destruction which have, and are taking place in Europe.

National Independence

The press generally throughout the country is taking editorial action on the investigation of the rise in prices resulting from the war. It is contended on one side that there was no justification of the big jump in prices, and, on the other hand, it is stated that increased demand governs prices. The United States government has instituted investigation of the conditions.

The war will demonstrate very forcibly the importance of commercial relationships between different countries. Already it is said that photographic materials will increase 500 per cent in price because much of it comes from Germany. Our sugar beet seed comes largely from Germany and there is already a fear that there will be scarcely enough seed to plant as great an acreage next year as last. Garden seeds come from the older nations in greater quantity than most of us supposed, and dyes of all kind come principally from the old world. If the war is prolonged the United States will get in the habit of depending upon her own resources.

The people are paying the increased prices and are entitled to know exactly why they have to pay. There will unquestionably be politics played in the investigation, but in the main the disclosures will be educational.—Rural Spirit.

Indicted Price Fixers

It may not be a matter of great significance, but it is decidedly agreeable as a bit of news to learn that the Grand Jury in Washington has returned indictments against the price fixers who sought to capitalize the misfortune of the world. It is even more agreeable to learn that the Federal Department of Justice seeks to bring about similar results in other parts of the country where there is evidence of similar offense; and while it probably will be the fact that few if any convictions will result, this activity of the Government will serve as a conscience quickener, and dull the edge of speculation that

otherwise might have been rampant.

It is to be noted in connection with this spasm of price boosting that in many of the big cities the leading retail houses have made a specific declaration not to change their prices and have lived up to it, except upon those items where the advance by the manufacturers and the jobbers has been so pronounced that change was necessary to avoid considerable loss. By other stores this same policy has been adopted without advertisement, and the patriotic forbearance there is in it ought to be appreciated.

There is some prospect from the activity of the Government, the watchfulness of the people, the stimulation of trade in the public markets, and the various schemes of co-operative buying that have been proposed and adopted in some sections of the country, that prices of food commodities will not soar above the level they would naturally reach as a result of the war. In some particulars speculation may work to prices beyond this; but it is very evident that it is not to have its way to exploit the people as it might see fit through the medium of arbitrary price agreement. The chances are that the consumer is to fare much better than at first seemed possible. It may be said that he will fare badly enough as it is; but there is a revival of business in sight that is a factor of hope and of probable relief.—Portland Telegram.

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