

The Herald

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Monmouth Meditations

Civilization is getting so complex that it is no longer possible for a man to live to himself alone. By inventions the world has been brought close together until it may be said with truth that the inhabitants of different hemispheres are neighbors. We are dependent on people living on the opposite sides of the earth for things that have become necessities to us. Every day this is now being proved. There is not a craft or business but what is in some way affected and interfered with by the present war. Each year the tendency is to lay more emphasis on the importance of the welfare of the whole and less on the independence of individuals. One of the hardest things to get around in the course of progress is precedence. We are apt to cling to the thoughts and customs of our fathers long after they have been demonstrated to interfere with our own welfare and happiness.

It takes the idea a long time to gain root that what was good for our fathers might not be good for us. We are interested in our own welfare. New inventions are constantly revolutionizing economic conditions. Fifty years ago it took three days to travel from Cincinnati to New York. A short time ago a man in a flying machine made the trip in less than 12 hours. We are realizing that the intemperate habits of our neighbors are of interest to us. We are also realizing that the morals of the leaders of neighbor nations vitally concern us.

If it is possible for one nation to covet iron mines, or sea ports of neighbor and through mere mathematical calculation in the possession of guns and gun powder to carry into effect a deliberate plan to go out and take such mines or sea ports by force, any one can see that with the improved means of transportation, we ourselves might be made to suffer in a like manner. This is the reason why we are interested in the European war and why a large majority of our representatives have voted that we shall take a hand in it.

Being in, it is to our interest to carry out our ideas with every ounce of force at our command. Having taken up the sword we should wield it that opposing nations might take it as an object lesson and hesitate about arousing us to action again.

Some of our citizens, apparently have absorbed the notion that the proposed charter amendments to be voted on April 30 are for the purpose of raising the city tax limit from 10 mills to 50 mills. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Tax limitation is a charter provision found in Section 11 of that instrument. It defines the powers and duties of the council and reads: "The council shall have power to make tax levies, not to exceed ten mills, upon all taxable property within said corporate limits."

The proposed amendment reads: "Be it enacted that the indebtedness of the city of Monmouth shall not in the aggregate exceed a sum over 5 per centum of the assessed valuation of all the taxable property within the corporate limits of said city as shown by the assessment and tax rolls of Polk county, Oregon, except the municipal water works bonds of said city, and also excepting any bonds hereafter issued by authority of the voters of said city, which shall not be considered or taken as a part of the indebtedness of said city within the meaning of this act; and any debt or liability, incurred by said city, in violation of this section, whether by borrowing money, loaning the credit of the city or otherwise, is null and void and of no effect as regards the city of Monmouth."

Any one who will carefully read through the section of the charter quoted and the new section proposed will see that they do not have any friction, one with the other. The last deals with the power of the city to create debt. The first deals with the ability of the city to raise money to pay debt. Thus, the proposed amendment says to the council: "You shall not place a debt upon the city in excess of five percent of its assessed valuation." The first and charter provision says: "You can not raise money to pay that debt faster than one percent of the assessed valuation of the city each year."

The following are selections written by Ted Holloway to Monmouth friends and by Fred Thomas to his mother, Mrs. M. J. Thomas, and are from the Oregon National Guard headquarters at Vancouver and will be of interest to many readers.

"I went through my physical examination at Dallas, almost immediately upon arrival. I was good in every way, my teeth being perfect. We left Dallas at 8:30 and were transferred to another train. There was a great send off at Dallas and I got a pretty good one at Monmouth high. There were large crowds at Dallas and Woodburn and many G. A. R. men boarded the car to say they were just like us 56 years ago and to wish they might be young again. Portland and Oregon City did not seem to be as enthusiastic. In Dallas any show or hotel was free and on anything we bought we got a reduction. Arriving at Vancouver we were lined up on the parade grounds. There were four companies and over half of them raw material.

"Our quarters are in the barracks and Company L has a building to itself. Each company has. Each soldier has a separate cot and locker. I have not any uniform or equipment yet but have been wearing an overcoat belonging to another fellow. We don't know where we are to go although we may go within three days. Information is locked up at headquarters in Washington. Rumor has it that we may go to San Ysabel, Cal., where the guard was last year. Also that we may go to the Panama canal or to Honolulu. A peculiar thing about rumor is that it always has us go just where we want to go. So I don't take much stock in it. I surely have got in a good

crowd. There are fifteen men from Monmouth here. We have a medicine ball to throw around and can go any where we want to except at drill time and when on duty. Drill is mostly in the morning and picketing is done by the veterans so we have plenty of time to ourselves. We are free to go to Portland or Vancouver when we have the time.

"Coming here I noticed that all the bridges were patrolled by militia and this may be our duty when whipped into shape. I don't know when we may go under examination again and I may not pass. The captain doesn't believe there will be another examination as the government wants men too much. There are men in the company with worse defects than I have. One has joints in his fingers like knots and he passed. I was over to Vancouver last night and had a thunder of a time finding my way back. I found every company but Company L. Streets are not very well lighted and wind considerably.

Theodore Holloway.

"April 1—Our grub is improving and there is a larger variety of eats than I thought we should have. Reveille is at 6:30 a. m. and Retreat at 5:30 p. m. The first call for Reveille is at 6:10 and Taps is at 11:00. Everybody must be in quarters at 10:45. We had three hours drill yesterday morning. I did not mind anything except the cold ground and rain. It has been cold and has rained ever since we arrived, making it very disagreeable outside the barracks. Send me my razor. Shaves are 25 cents each at Vancouver.

"We have been given hat, leggins, shoes, 2 pairs of socks, poncha or rubber blanket and half a dog tent. Got them yesterday noon. There is more to come, underwear especially, and I hope it will come soon. We drilled three hours yesterday but they did not take us out today as it was raining. The manual of arms is the hardest as the gun weighs 11 pounds and we have to swing it as we would a broom stick.

"At mess today we had salmon, mashed potatoes, beans, parsnips, rice and coffee. We have all the milk and sugar we want in our coffee. Company M uses the same mess house as we do but furnish their own grub. Sometimes we eat first and sometimes they do. I have not been assigned any duty but every day four or five have to help.

"We have not yet got our mess kit. The older men have the same kit they used on the border. We have to borrow their tin pans, knives, forks and spoons and are lucky to get any. Today I had a tin pan and a toasting fork. In learning the manual of arms we use the other fellow's guns. Fred Thomas.

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