

The Sentinel

A GOOD PAPER IN A GOOD TOWN
 H. A. YOUNG and M. D. GRIMES
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DEATH FOR THE SMALL TOWN PRESS?

"The small-town press is fortunately on its way down the chute; it will succumb to the radio in a few short years, and no rational man will mourn it, for it has always been cowardly and knavish."

Thus runs a bit of comment in one of H. L. Mencken's recent editorials in the American Mercury. With, and by such, he sticks his finger into a very hot pie, as he is wont to do, and lays a bit of smart philosophy at the feet of those men who today fill the shoes of the very founders of American civilization—the publishers of the country newspapers.

Just whether Mr. Mencken is pointing his finger at the country weekly or the small-town daily in cities of from 10,000 to 100,000 we cannot be sure. But if he means the weekly, one immediately wonders where the radio enters the picture. And, unless we turn completely away from community life and unless the small town citizenry loses all interest in the doings of their city council, the activities of their churches and public schools, and the local marriages and births there is a priceless value that can never be found in something as unneighborly and impersonal as the radio or even the metropolitan daily.

Any newspaperman who is posted on the trend of population back to the country and the steady and certain come-back of the man on the farm cannot for one moment predict the immediate disappearance of the weekly newspaper. Instead there is apt to appear a new and revived interest in community life and community business. The small-town merchant is likely to find a greater need for the newspaper than ever before.

Under present radio broadcasting practices the community merchant finds little or no opportunity on the air. He still needs the newspaper to reach those with whom he does business. It is true that radio has interfered with the newspapers' national advertising revenues, but slow adjustments will keep that from becoming disastrous.

It is probable that revisions in the small town press are ahead. Many newspapers are turning toward the tabloid size. They may find it necessary to remain more and more aloof from the practices of the daily papers and wear a deeper groove for themselves. They will probably abandon their imitative tactics and become a group more distinct, more distinctive, than they are today.

If, Mr. Mencken, you find cowardice and knavishness in the small-town press it is only because you find a little wherever you look. Many a wise man has turned his efforts on the small-town field with utmost faith in its future. Many a great man has done his share to insure rural life against subordination and obscurity. And the country press, if intelligent men continue to find interest there, will live for generations to come.—Oregon Publisher.

TABLOIDS

By W. S. Sickels

I have just seen a photographic reproduction of the front page of the Herald of Freedom, a weekly newspaper that was published in Lawrence, Kansas, before the civil war, and bearing the date of January 6, 1855. The leading article in the paper begins with this section: "We live in an age of utility and progress." Sounds like it was written but yesterday, and indicates that the people of that day were as bonafide of advancement as we of the present age. The building of a railroad as far west as Kansas was being only talked about. Nevertheless, every age is one of utility and progress. Utilities undreamed of in that day are matter-of-fact things now, and the undreamed things of today will be the commonplace of fifty

years hence. Of course the Herald of Freedom has long since passed out. It was a militant advocate of the abolition of slavery, which was one of the troublesome questions of that period, and portions of Kansas and Missouri formed one of the great battle grounds. The town of Lawrence, Kansas, was burned during guerrilla warfare and the printing plant of the Herald of Freedom was destroyed. It never arose from the ashes, but it had served its purpose. Kansas remained in the union, and the motto of that state, "ad astra per aspera"—to the stars through difficulties—is highly significant.

Will Rogers said a mouthful when he remarked recently that it wasn't necessary to have a war to rouse patriotism.

Molecules are quite numerous. An English scientist states that it would require 100,000,000 years to fill with molecules an absolute vacuum the size of an ordinary electric light bulb, said light bulb having in it a puncture small enough to admit only 1,000,000 molecules a second. Page Cartoonist Webster. Another boy has made good.

Dame Rumor, thy guilt is great. Thou makest the vile assertion that certain upright citizens have severed timber from their lands without having paid any taxes on same! Beating taxes always has been regarded as a sort of religious rite, the practice of which is due to the existing nefarious systems of taxation.

Oregon Voter, issue of August 26th, contains the most understandable analysis of Home-Owners' Loan Corporation that has yet been published, so far as this writer is able to judge.

The same little magazine, in a former issue, is three-thirds right on another matter. Listen to this:

"John Hamrick's suggestive advertising of his nude pictures is a disgrace to the Portland dailies that accepted it. So far we have met no one who attended the show, but we have read Lucile McArthur's witty review of it in the Spectator, indicating that those who did attend were disappointed. John Hamrick is the kind of a man who commercializes indecency, and such a man in the public theatre business in Portland is a menace. The newspapers who accept his dirty pay for his dirty advertising dirty their souls with ever cent they take for such a dirty purpose."

The best thing I have read this month is Will Durant's article in the current American magazine, entitled, "Should We Educate Our Children to Hold Public Office." The writer points out that the government maintains military and naval schools to train our youth in the gentle art of war, but does nothing in the matter of training our boys and girls for the more important work of administering government. "Democracy follows aristocracy and dictatorship follows democracy," says Durant, quoting Plato. These changes are due to maladministration of government and could be avoided by having in office persons who have been trained for the job.

It is said there were 15,000 new laws passed in this country during the past year. This provides ample allowance for breakage.

In view of the many government projects for the development of hydroelectric power through high undertakings, it seems wise for cities not to grant 20-year franchises. However, franchises have no control over rates, which are always the bone of contention between the public and the utilities, whether the rates are just or unjust; and the average consumer would rather pay one or two cents more per k. w. h. than to be compelled to pay for something he doesn't get. It is the irritating charges that get the utilities in bad; and why the higher-ups haven't sense enough to see it is one of the mysteries of big (?) business; but perhaps it is better to suffer the arrogance (?) of the "power trust" than to endure the incompetency of municipal ownership.

Some building and loan associations have notified borrowers that they will not accept the Home-Owners' Loan Corporation bonds. Will the government whip them into line—as is being done by NRA drives on even small businesses—or will capital be allowed to do as it pleases? Or, was the provision by the government that it would not guarantee the principal of these bonds, an act of insincerity to begin with?

Cost of a ten-day special session of the legislature, it is estimated, would be approximately \$8500. Mileage of the lawmakers alone would cost the taxpayers nearly \$4000. Per diem at \$3 per day per member amounts to \$270 a day or \$2700 for the session and other expenses, including supplies and clerk hire would account for another \$2000.



Tuesday, September 5, will be a red-letter day in the annals of the Oregon capitol. The date will mark the resumption of the monthly meeting of the board of control with prospects now that the entire membership of the board will be in attendance for the first time in several months, Secretary of State Hoss having notified his office that he would return to Salem in time for the meeting.

Since Hoss left the capital for eastern Oregon three months ago, Governor Meier and State Treasurer Holman made a feeble effort to continue the board meetings. They got together once but once was enough. After 30 minutes of useless bickering they gave it up as a bad job. After that Bill Einzig, secretary to the board, waited on the members individually in their respective offices and secured their reaction to any business, that might require the board's attention. In fact Governor Meier signed the minutes of one board meeting while attending the American Legion convention at Klamath Falls.

Newspapermen around the capitol are looking forward to the meeting with a lot of pleasurable anticipation. News has—or have—been pretty scarce in state house circles this summer, what with the capitol temporarily transferred to Portland where the governor has been making his headquarters, and most anything can be expected to happen when Rufus and Julius get together again with only a narrow table separating them and a number of controversial matters coming up for consideration. Among these controversial matters is included the penitentiary boiler, contract for which was let to the next to the low bidder on the strength of his ability to rush the work through to an early completion. That was at least 60 days ago and the boiler is not yet installed, so the subject is still a live one and full of possibilities.

As a burned child avoids a fire so the members of the state tax commission now shy away from any discussion of the sales tax or any other form of taxation for that matter. Last fall the commission openly supported the proposed amendments to the income tax which were defeated by the people. Then they got back of the sales tax idea which went down to defeat by a vote of nearly four to one. Now when asked for an opinion on tax reforms or a solution of the state's tax problems the commissioners merely raise their hands, palms up, and shrug their shoulders in a most impressive gesture of hopelessness and make it clear that while they may harbor private opinions about such matters they do not intend to offer any further advice until they have to.

A lot of political prognosticators would give a great deal to know what forms the topic of conversation between a governor and a prospective candidate for that office when the two get together around the dinner table. Incidentally Chas. M. Thomas, public utilities commissioner and frequently mentioned in connection with the approaching gubernatorial primary, was the guest of Governor Meier at his country home near Corbett over Sunday. Thomas stopped over on his way back from Redmond where he addressed a large gathering of Grangers Saturday on "Oregon's Power Problems."

The past week has seen the capitol almost entirely deserted by state officials and department heads. Governor Meier spent the entire week in Portland and at his country home at Corbett. Secretary of State Hoss is still recuperating "somewhere east of the Cascades," although rumor has it that he will return to Salem soon. State Treasurer Holman spent the entire week in Portland. C. A. Howard, state superintendent of public instruction, was vacationing at an Oregon beach resort. Adjutant General White spent the week inspecting guard units in eastern Oregon and doing a little fishing between inspections. A. H. Averill, state insurance commissioner, was in St. Louis, Mo., on business connected with the affairs of the Missouri State Life Insurance company. A. A. Schramm, superintendent of banks, spent the week visiting a number of state banks in eastern Oregon which are in process of liquidation. Lynn Cronemiller, state forester, spent most of the week directing the forest fire fighters over in Washington and Tillamook counties.

Roy A. Klein, former Oregon state highway engineer, has just landed a good job under the NRA as regional engineer for federal roads with headquarters at Ogden, Utah.

Delay on the part of Governor Meier in appointing a circuit judge

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NEW DEAL MEAT MARKET

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for the second judicial district is believed here to be fatal to the prospects of B. L. Eddy, Roseburg attorney and former Douglas county legislator, who was thought at one time to have a cinch on the honor. Eddy's strongest opposition comes from his own county where most of the lawyers and many prominent business men at first supported Carl Wimberly for the appointment and are now backing Dexter Rice since the governor let it be known that Wimberly would not do. Benton county, however, has another idea about the appointment and is putting forth a favorite son in the person of Fred McHenry, district attorney. Since Benton has had no representative on the bench for 35 years they figure that it is high time some of the plums were dropping into their lap. Reports that John Goss of Marshfield was being considered for the appointment are not taken seriously here. Coos county already has a circuit judge in the person of James T. Brand, in addition to which factor Goss has never been very close to the administration and is not in any position to expect favors at the hands of Governor Meier.

Dr. P. O. Riley, of Hubbard, Woodburn, Portland and way points, who

has been editing the House and Senate Journals since the legislative session adjourned last March completed his task Saturday and sent the last "take" of copy over to the state printer. The journals should be ready for distribution in a couple of weeks.

Another vacancy has developed in the ranks of the Oregon lawmakers. Edwin Allen, state senator from Washington county, has been rewarded for his loyalty to the Democratic party through all the long, lean years by appointment to the postmastership at Forest Grove. That makes three vacant seats in event of a special session. The others were held by Senator Lynn Jones who is now secretary to the state board of pharmacy and Earl B. Day, representative from Jackson county who was recently appointed to the county judgeship.

Reports received here indicate that the Allied Truck owners, composed of big operators, may bring another suit in an effort to upset the entire truck and bus law. The big truck owners, it is understood, are not at all satisfied with the Lewelling decree which relieves the contract haulers from many of the regulations imposed by the legislative act, particularly from

the necessity for filing tariffs or contracts setting up minimum fees.

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