independent...NOT neutral...news-By Wm. H. WHEELER

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SLUSH FUNDS

It was not in any spirit of captious obstinacy that the state grange continued its legal fight to compel the opponents of the income tax to produce their books for inspection, even after the filing of their report with the secretary of state.

In the campaign the defendant was able to flout the law, which his absence from the list. Perhaps, was passed with the object of compelling the financial backers of a political fight to reveal to the voters, during the progress of that entribute. The law will probably be fight, their identity and the use kept in the courts for a long time by t ley make of money in that fight. attacks on its constitutionality. that the people, when yoting, may act in the light of such publicity.

legal quibbles, were able to stave debts, was \$35.31 per capita last off the revelation of their identity year, against \$5.82 in 1917, when we until the issue at the polls had were not paying interest on a big been decided.

It was to brush away these decision on the constitutionality of the law, which had been made the ground of an appeal, that the grange continueed its fight.

in-the-corner " politics. It was a politics, to the end that govern- law. Perhaps, in order to win this ment shall be by the consent of the time, his backers will raise the fund governed, and not by the chican-tran even \$15,000-and serhaps they'll dark.

CO-OPERATION.

tinue to declare that co-operative the evidence, any other outcome selling by farmers is not practical would have been a miracle. It's a and will result in failure.

when in session in Portland recently "fired," but the fifth. when in session in Portland recently, declared: "it costs more to sell cur ducts than it does to produce them."

There are 19,000,000 people engaged in getting the products from 33,-000,000 producers in this country to the consumers, and according to the federation the nineteen get more for their share in the enterprise than the thirty-three get for theirs.

This undue proportion of the proceeds is not evenly distributed among the nineteen. The speculators get more of it than the freight handlers, per person. Can you see why the speculator wants the present arrangement continued and tries to convince the rest of the people that it cannot be improved upon?

The organization of co-operation is a slow process, but it is under way. The wheat pool of 1922 is just elosing up that phase of co-operative selling. Its final settlement nets 2 cents a bushel more than had been hoped for The 1923 deliveries are 25 per cent more already than the total deliveries in 1922. Three million dollars has been advanced by the co-operative organization, thus far, for initial payments on the 1923 crop. The claim of the speculator is sufficiently replied to by the statements above.

State Market Agent Spence states that there is agitation for co-operative organizations to handle many different products in many different localities of the state and that he expects the movement to go ahead far more rapidly next year.

John Bilsonger of Chicago is not a vulgar pot hunter. He is e noble sportsman. But pcetic justice overtook him the other day. He shot and wounded a brant. in response to its cries other brant, together with a few redhead ducks. attacked him with their bills with

such good effect that he went to a hospital. It was fine sport to maim a bird, but when the birds attacked him, why, that was cruelty to animals.

The league to defeat the income tax took in subscriptions of \$14,335 52 and spent \$14,519.73, or \$184,21 on deficit account. The Oregon Voter pot \$1.092 of the money, which did not got \$1092 of the money which did not essen its enthusiasm in the campaign to defeat the tax. In proportion to service the Oregonian was scandalousy underpaid, receiving only \$264.60. The list of controbutors is lengthy Most of them were Portland business firms. The wheat farmer, whose woes in case the law passed were prolaimed by representatives of Portland's interests, is conspicuous for in view of the loss he must sustain through the tax on his enormous income, he thought he couldn't afford to

The expense of running the govern-In this case the skulkers, by ment of Oregon, including interest on bond output. In the latter year the state owed 66c per head and last legal quibbles, and to get a \$48.12. A family of five, of average wealth, thus owes \$240.60 of the state debt, besides its share of the national debt. "Blessed are the poor."

The law was passed to compel It cost \$14,519.73 to fight the inpoliticians to do their fighting in come tax in the referendum and meet the open. It was a blow at " hole- defeat. C. C. Chapman of the Oregon Voter is going to try to show blow at "invisib's government,,' that he is worth the thousand or so it was a blow at Newberryism. It f that amount that went to him. was a stroke for a square deal in He'll try an initiative to repeal the

Governor Walton was found guilty by the Oklahoma senate Board of trade speculators con- an I removed. No matter what habit with the Oklahomans. He The American Federation of Labor, is not the first governor they have

catch the farmers napping.

We have all heard of the Price healings, but here's another one. Berlin dispatch appears in the Oregonian under the caption Price Cures German Thirst for Beer." That almost amounts to curing the incurable.

"Coroner F. J. Stewart said that the former soldier had died from alohol poisoning following an autopsy," says a Portland paper. Can't they lefer the autopsy until the subject 13 dead in that city?

It is reported that when Magnus Johnson raises his voice he uses a derrick.

Another barred rock hen has made a 300-egg record at O. A. C. Of twelve with this record four are barred rocks and eight Leghorns and Oregons.

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(Continued)

Colonel Woodruff's gray percherons seemed to feel the unrest of their driver, for they fretted and actually executed a clumsy prance as Jim Irwin pulled them up at the end of the turnpike across Bronson's Slew-a peat-marsh which annually offered the men of the Woodruff district the opportunity to hold the male equivalent of a sewing circle while working out their road taxes. Columbus Brown, the pathmaster, prided himself on the Bronson Slew turnpike as his greatest triumph in road engineering. The work consisted in hauling, dragging and carrying gravel out on the low fill which carried the road across the marsh, and then watching it slowly settle until the next summer.

"Haul gravel from the east grave! bed, Jim," called Columbus Brown from the lowest spot in the middle of the turnpike. "Take Newt here to help load."

Jim smiled his habitual slow, gentle smile at Newton Bronson, seventeen, undersized, tobacco-stained, profane and proud of the fact that he had once beaten his way from Des Moines to Faribault on freight trains. A source of anxiety to his father, and the subject of many predictions that he would come to no good end, Newton was out on the road work because he was likely to be of little use on the farm. Clearly, Newton was on the downward road in a double sense-

and yet, Jim Irwin rather liked him. "The fellers have put up a job on you, Jim," volunteered Newton, as they began filling the wagon with

gravel. "What sort of job?" asked Jim. "They're nominating you for teacher," replied Newton.

"Since when has the position of teacher been an elective office?" asked

"Sure, it ain't elective," answered Newton. "But they say that with as many brains as you've got sloshing around loose in the neighborhood, you're a candidate that can break the deadlock in the school board." Jim shoveled on silently ~



"Fellers Have Jim."

and by example urged Newton to earn the money credited to his father's assessment for the day's work.

A slide of earth just then brought down a sweet-clover plant growing rankly beside the top of the pit. Jim Irwin pulled it loose from its anchorage, and after looking attentively at the roots, laid the whole plant on the bank for safety.

"What do you want of that weed?" asked Newton. Jim picked it up and showed him the nodules on its roots-little white

knobs, smaller than pinheads. "Ever hear of the use of nitrates to enrich the soil?"

"Ain't that the stuff the old man used on the lawn last spring?" "Yes," said Jim, "your father used

some on his lawn. We don't put it on our fields in Iown-not yet; but if it weren't for those white specks on the clover-roots, we should be obliged to do so-as they do back east." "How do them white specks keep

us from needin' nitrates?" "It', a long story," said Jim. "You see, before there were any plants big

enough to be visible—if there had been any one to see them-the world was full of little plants so small that

there may be billions of them In east of these little white spacks. They knew how to take the nitrates from

"Air!" ejaculated Newton. "Nitrates in the air! You're crazy?"

"No," said Jim. "There are tons of nitrogen in the air that press down on your head—but the big plants can't get it through their leaves or their roots. They never had to learn, because the little plants pacteris located on those roots and tapped them for the sap they needed began to get their board and lodgings of the big plants. And in payment for their hetel bills, the little plants took pitrogen out of the air for both themselves and their hosts."

"What d'ye mean by bosts'?" "Their hotel-keepers the big plants.
And now the plants that have the hotel roots for the bacteria furnish nitrogen not only for themselves, but for the crops that follow. Corn can't get nitrogen out of the air; but clover can-and that's why we ought to plow down clover before a crop of

"Gee!" said Newt "If you could get to teach our school, I'd go again." "It would interfere with your pool

playing." "What business is that o' yours?"

interrogated Newt deficiely.
"Well, get busy with that shovel," suggested Jim, who had been working steadily, driving out upon the fill ococcasionally to unload. On his return from dumping the next load, Newton seemed, in a superior way, quite amiably disposed toward his workfellow-rather the habitual thing in the neighborhood.

"I'll work my old man to vote for you for teacher," said he.

"Those school directors," replied Jim, "have become so builbeaded that they'll never vote for any one except the applicants they've been voting for."

"The old man says he will have Prue Foster again, or he'll give the school a darned long vacation, unless Peterson and Bonner join on some one else. That would beat Prue, of Course."

"And Con Bonner won't vote for any one but Maggle Gilmartin," added Jim.

"And," supplied Newton, "Haakon Peterson says he'll stick to Herman Paulson until the Hot Springs freeze over." "And there you are," said Jim. "You

tell your father for me that I think he's a mere mule—and that the whole district thinks the same." "All right," said Newt. "Til tell him

that while I'm working him to vote for you." Jim smiled grimly. He had re nained a peasant because the Amercan rural teacher is placed economlower than the peasant. He gave Newton's chatter no consideraion. But when, in the afternoon, he

hitched his team with others to the big road grader, and the gang became concentrated within talking distance, he found that the project of heckling and chaffing him about his eminent fitness for a scholastic position was to be the real entertainment of the oc-

"Jim's the candidate to bust the leadlock," said Columbus Brown, with wink. "Just like Garfield in that tepublican convention he was nomnated in-eh, Con?"

"Con" was Cornellus Bonner, an Erishman, one of the deadlocked school board, and the captain of the road grader. He winked back at the path-

"Jim's the gray-eyed men e' destiny," he replied, "if he gets two votes in that board." "You'd vote for me, wouldn't you,

Con?" asked Jim. "I'll try annything wance," replied Bonner. "Try voting with Exra Bronson once.

for Prue Foster," suggested Jim. She's done good work here." "Opinions differ," said Bonner, "an' when you try annything just for wance, it shouldn't be an irrevocable

shtip, me bye." "You're a reasonable board of public servants," said Jim ironically. "I'd like to tell the whole board what I

think of them.", "Come down tonight," said Bonner jeeringly. "We're going to have a board meeting at the schoolhouse and ballot a few more times. Come down, and be the Garfield of the convintion. We've lacked brains on the board, that's clear. They ain't a man on the board that iver studied algebra, r that knows more about farmin' than their impliyers. Come down to the schoolhouse, and we'll have a field-

hand addriss the school board-and begosh, I'll move yer illiction mesilf! ome, now, Jimmy, me bye, be game. It'll vary the program, annyhow." The entire gang grinned. flushed, and then reconquered his

calmness of spirit. "All right, Con," said he: "Til come and tell you a few things and you can do as you like about making the motion."

CHAPTER II

Reversed Unanimity. The great blade of the grading me-

chine, running diagonally across the road and pulling the earth toward its median line, had made several trips, and much persifiage about Jim Irwin's forthcoming appearance before the board had been addressed to Jim and exchanged by others for his bene-

To Newton Bronson was given the task of leveling and distributing the earth rolled into the road by the

grader-a labor which in the interests of fitting a muzzle on his big mongrel dog he deserted whenever the machine moved away from him. That there was some mystery about the muzzle was evident from Newton's pains to make a secret of it. Its wires were curled into a ring directly over the dog's nose, and into this ring Newton had fitted a cork, through which he had thrust a large needle which protruded, an inch-long bayonet, in front of Ponto's nose.

As the grader moved along one side of the highway, a high-powered automobile approached on the other, making rather bad weather of the newly repaired road. A pile of loose soil that Newton had allowed to lie just across the path made a certain maintenance of speed desirable. Newton planted himself in the path of the laboring car, and waved its driver a command to halt. The car came to a standstill with its front wheels in the edge of the loose earth, and the chauffeur fuming at the possibility of stalling-a contingency upon which Newton had

confidently reckoned. "What d'ye want?" he demanded. "What d'ye mean by stopping me in

this kind of place?" "I want to ask you," said Newton with mock politeness, "if you have the

correct time,"

The chauffeur sought words appropriate to his feelings. Ponto and his muzzle saved him the trouble. A pretty pointer leaped from the car, and attracted by the evident friendliness of Ponto's greeting, pricked up its ears, and sought, in a spirit of canine brotherhood, to touch noses with him. The needle in Ponto's muzle did its work to the agony and horror of the pointer, which leaped back with a yelp, and turned tail. Ponto, in an effort to apologize, followed, and finding itself bayonetted at every contact with this demon dog, the pointer definitely took flight, howling, leaving Ponto in a state of wonder and humiliation at the sudden end of what had promised to be a very friendly acquaintance. The pointer's master watched its strange flight, and swore. His eye turned to the boy who had caused all this, and he alighted pale with anger.

"Twe got time," said he, remembering Newton's impudent question, "to give you what you deserve."

Newton grinned and dodged, but the bank of loose earth was his undoing, and while he stumbled, the chauffeur caught and held him by the collar. Again Ponto intervened, for as the chauffeur stood holding Newton, the dog, evidently regarding the stranger as his master's friend, thrust his nose into the chauffeur's palm. The chauffeur behaved much as his pointer had done, except that the pointer did not

The grading gang laughed. Newton finned even while in the fell clutch of circumstance. Ponto tried to smell the chauffeur's trousers, and what had been a laugh became a roar. Caution and mercy departed from the chauffeur's mood; he drew back his fist to strike the boy-and found it caught by the hard hand Irwin

"You're too angry to punish this boy," said Jim gently, "even if you had the right to punish him at all!"

The chauffeur, however, unhesitatingly released Newton, and furiously delivered a blow meant for Jim's jaw, which miscarried by a foot. In reply,



Jim Countered With an Awkward Upper Cut.

swinging uppercut. It landed fairly on the point of the jaw. The chauffeur staggered and slowly toppled over into the soft earth which had caused so much of the rumpus.

"Oh, cut it out," said a fat man in the rear of the car, who had hitherto manifested small interest in anything save Ponto. "Get in, and let's be on our way!"

Colonel Woodruff, waiving toward him in his runabout, held up by the traffic blockade, asked what was going on here, and the chauffeur, rising groggily, climbed into the car; and the meeting dissolved.

"Good work, Jim," said Cornelius Bonner. "I didn't think 'twas in ye!" "It's beastly," said Jim, reddening. "I didn't know, either."

Colonel Woodruff looked at his hired man sharply, gave him some instructions for the next day and drove on. The road gang dispersed for the afternoon. Newton Bronson carefully secreted the magic muzzle, and chuckled at what had been perhaps the most picturesquely successful bil of deviltry in his varied record. Jim Irwin put out his team, got his supper and went to the meeting of the scho