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Athena, Oregon, July 28th, 1893.

A SUGGESTION.

THE one thing which seems to trouble the farmers most at present, is where they can get money to pay their harvesting expenses. The banks refuse to loan money; and the few individuals who have it ask such ruinous rates of interests that the farmers cannot afford to borrow from them. Some farmers are talking of giving their men time checks payable November the 1st. This will be very unsatisfactory, and is almost sure to cause much trouble. In the first place, many of the men who work in harvest here are what we call transcient, they come from other parts of the country, work through harvest, and then return home. Should one of them get sick, or find he cannot do the work, he must take a time check and quit. He cannot travel on a time check, and, if he tries to sell it, he in all probability cannot get more than 50 cts. on the dollar for it. Again, harvest does not last until the 1st of November. From twenty to forty days is as long as men can expect to get work. Should they be able to "hold their job" until harvest is over, their money will not be due, and they will be in the same condition as those who had to quit.

Should the plan of time checks be generally adopted by the farmers, it would, by the time harvest is over, be almost impossible to sell these checks for cash at any price. It would be unjust to pay men for honest labor with something that would be almost worthless to them.

Then again, should the farmer discharge one or more of his men for any reason, the man so discharge might attach his machinery or teams and cause him a great deal of trouble and expense.

We would make this suggestion as being the best way out of the difficulty especially with those who head and thresh at one time; When you have run one or two days, haul off the wheat and sell it. If the local dealers will not buy it, consign it to Allen & Lewis at Portland or San Francisco with instructions to sell it on arrival. Then you will have the money to meet your expenses and be independent of the usurer. While you might not get as much by a few cents on the bushel as you would later on, yet advantage of having the ready money would, we believe, really be the cheaper in the end. Let us say, for illustration, that you cut and thresh in a day 25 acres of wheat that will yield 30 bushels per acre; that would give you 750 bushels, which at 40 cents per bushel would bring you $300. This amount would go far toward paying the expenses. Should every one who runs a header and a thresher together, do this, money would become more plentiful, and we would not hear so much talk about hard times. We believe this plan would be better for the farmer, and also for the wage-earner. The farmer could hire men cheaper, and the men could afford to work cheaper for cash than for time checks, and there are various other advantages which we need not mention. We hope the farmers will consider this question; and if any one has any better suggestion to offer, we will gladly publish it for him.

THE grand jury has found true bills against Col. Fredrick Ainsworth, chief of records and pensions, in the division of the war department; Geo. W. Dante, contractor; W. E. Covert, superintendent, and Francis Sasse, engineer, holding them responsible for the old Ford Theater disaster, last June, in which twenty-three persons lost their lives and a large number were injured.

THE REFERNDUM.

W. D. McCrackan, in the Cosmopolitan for July.

The referendum and initiative virtually enable large bodies of voters to govern themselves, directly, without actually meeting together. In a political sense, they annihilate space. In substance, the referendum is an institution by virtue of which laws, framed by representatives, are referred to the people for final acceptance or rejection. The initiative is the right of a voter, or a body of voters, to initiate proposals for legislation. The writer, however, will be obliged to confine himself to the referendum in this article. This institution may be optional or compulsory, i. e., either all laws must be submitted, or only certain kinds; but in any case it enables voters to stamp the acts of their legislators with approval or disapproval. * * There may still be some intelligent men who are satisfied with the working of representative government in the United States. But they cannot realize its inconsistencies and abuses. In State and Federal legislatures, representatives are elected by a fraction only of the people, the unsuccessful voters being as completely disfranchised as though they were actually deprived of their ballots. Practically, therefore, our representative system belies its very name—it does not represent. Some plan or proportional presentation is urgently needed to correct this primary fault. But even with this improvement made, the people have no guarantee that obnoxious legislation will not be forced upon them. Once elected, representatives have a free hand; there is no way of calling them to account until their terms are over and the harm is done. In truth there must be a return to first principle, to purer forms and straightforward methods.

Given a small body of freeman, how will they naturally proceed to govern themselves? They will unconsciously imitate the Swiss Landsgemeinde or the New England town-meeting. Briefly stated, they will meet at a fixed time to settle matters of common interest, to elect officers from their number, commissioned to carry out the laws they may pass, and to draw up a set of rules, or a constitution. In some races the instinct for self-government is more strongly developed than in others. In the United States men invaribly organize on this principle, whether they propose to found a settlement, a farmer's alliance, or a boat club. The chances are that a body of freemen will continue to govern themselves in this manner, until population and territory have increased so much that it becomes a physical impossibility for them to meet personally. Then direct democracy gives place to a representative system of government. The people cease to exercise their soverign rights in person, they are gradually weaned from self-government, and the professional politician makes his appearance. This is the critical moment in the history of every democracy. The people, having once surrendered direct government, almost always become the prey of party bosses. The referendum alone is capable of restoring to them that personal exercise of political rights which is the heritage of freemen. If there is any one whom the practical politician professes to despise, and invariably dreads, it is the man who treats legislation seriously—as a science. He calls him a theorist, a college professor and other bad names. And yet, when all is said and done, even our happy-go-lucky methods of making laws must rest upon some scientific basis. As it was reserved for modern students to discover that political economy had definite laws of its own, so it is the duty of the present generation to determine the rules which govern the science of legislation.

The principle of the referendum is by no means a novelty in the United States. Constitutional amendments are referred to popular vote in every state of the Union except Deleware. "Local option" is in itself a form of referendum. Throughout the country there are many examples in counties, cities, townships and school districts. The other day the voters of Somerville, a suburb of Boston, met in a general assembly to consider the question of annexation to that city. It was a perfectly legal, city town-meeting, and an application of pure democracy to municipal methods. What is needed now is to harmonize these various forms, to increase their efficiency and widen their applicability. It would be wise to select some one state perhaps, in order to develop the referendum within its jurisdiction in a systematic manner, according to the best tenets of legislative science. Several state Supreme Courts have already asserted the competence of legislatures to refer laws to the electors.

PRICE OF WHEAT.

The Philadelphia Record in speaking of the business situation has the following with regard to wheat: "An advance of ¾ to 1 cent per bushel in the price of wheat has been the feeble response of the market to the most unfavorable July Government crop report that has been published for many years. Crop conditions, accor ding to Federal data, do not indicate a total production of over 395,000,000 bushels; and, according to the Cincinnati Price Current, the situation abroad points to a reduction of 80,000,000 to 100,000,000 bushels in the European wheat crop. These decreases will be partly offset by larger yields in India and South America and by the big surplus from previous crops which yet remains in this country; but there is nothing in the supply prospect to warrant the continuance of the present extreme depression in prices. The difficulty of carrying the big stocks concentrated at commercial centers during the peroid of money stringency is the chief source of weakness in the markets."

"THE affable young gentleman who presides over the destinies of the Athena Press."—Milton Eagle.

What Does It Mean?

It is a well known fact that the big Burlington route has surveyors working out as far as Idaho, and that their agents have been all over Oregon looking around; that they are now extending their line this way in Montana, and that they will get an outlet to the deep water of the Pacific ocean in the next few years. It is also known that the Chicago & Northwestern is already away out in Wyoming, and that it, too, will soon extend on out to a Pacific port. The big Rock Island route has not yet pushed out so far, but they run magnificent trains into Denver. In a letter to a Salem party received yesterday, John Sebastian, general passenger agent of the Rock Island, Chicago, said. "I hope another year we will have more mileage in that district." Wonder what Mr. Sebastian means? Does he mean that his road is going to join in the chase to the Pacific with the Burlington and Northwestern? If so, the writer hopes to see the race commence soon, and he believes the time will be called not later than next season, if, it has not already been called.—Salem Statesman.

A Valley Town Jumped.

Much excitement exists at Brownsville, Linn county, Oregon, over the fact that a man named Monk has filed upon 162 acres of land comprising about half the town. The land was originally sold as school land to J. H. McHargue. It was afterward claimed by the O. & C. railroad, and was purchased as railroad land. Monks claims now that the title of the railroad company was not valid, and files upon it as vacant land. The improvements upon it are worth $50,000. Attorney J. K. Weatherford, of Albany and O. P. Coshow, of Brownsville, who now own part of the land, entered a contest Saturday at the Oregon City land office against the filings of Monk.

Services at the Christain Church.

Services in Christain church July 30th, preaching at 11 a. m. The subject for discussion. Divine authority for observing the "Lord's day," the first day of the week, and not on the 7th, day Sabbath. Subject for the evening, "The old and the new Covenants." We will investigate these covenants in the light of scripture and reason and ascertain, when and where they began? To whom given? For what purpose? And then, determine under which covenant we are now living. We extend a cordial invitation to all interested to attend these services.

Relics of an Indian Fight.

East Oregonian: George Adams came in Sunday from Lehman springs, and brought with him two interesting relics, consisting of the jawbone of an Indian—the owner being dead, presumably—and an old muzzleloading rifle, covered with rust and minus the stock, which had rotted off. The "find" was made at Battle creek, near the head of Camas creek, so named from a fight which occured there during the Indian war of 1878. Friendly Umatillas, led by Homily, surprised and stampeded a band of hostile Bannocks and Snakes. Seventeen of the latter were made good Indians forevermore, while every Umatilla brave escaped without a scratch.

The Preacher Caught It.

Last Thursday a large crowd at the Dalles witnessed a preacher by the name of Taylor receive a cowhiding at the hands of a young lady named Equa. Taylor had swindled a lady friend of Miss Fqua out of $100. There were frequent cheers from the throng of persons, and it is stated that on more than one occasion the reverend gentlemen was held while Miss Equa belabored him with a rawhide.

A Lucky Find.

Another gold discovery was made at Baker City Tuesday. D. H, Crouter and family, who occupy the residence of Judge D. B. Schofield, found a number of tin cans on a joist in the cellar under the house, and among them was one containing fifty twenty dollar gold pieces. The money belongs to Judge Schofield, who now resides at Grant's Pass, Ore. Before leaving this city, about one year since, he made cash, and claimed he was four thousand dollars short. This discovery accounts for one thousand of the shortage. Of late years the old gentleman has been quite feeble and his memory poor. He has been apprised of the find.

Amy C. Tull, who lives near Weston, has filed in the circuit court to secure a divorce from R. D. Tull. He deserted her, and his whereabouts are unknown. She asks for the custody of their four minor children. They were married ten years ago.

BORN.

Russell—In this city July 22nd to the wife of David Russell, a boy weight 8½ pounds.

Fee—In Pendleton, 29th, 1893, to the wife of Judge Jas. A. Fee, a boy.

Chandler—At Vanscycle, July 29th, 1893 to the wife of John Chandler, a girl.

Booher—In this city July 25th to the wife of A. R. Booher, a girl.

Van Hook—To the wife of R. H. Van Hook, of Alba, July 23, twins—girls.

DIED

Day—In Pendleton, July 21th, 1893, the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Day, aged 6 months.

Cargill—On Cold Spring July 21th 1893 Mrs. W. H. Cargill, aged 23 years.

Rippy—At his home in Alba, James Rippy, July 19, 1893.

On the Side.

Trout in the Umatilla are becoming small and few.

Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Maloney's little son has been quite sick for the past few days,

Chas. Cleve came in on yesterday morning's passenger and made his arm ache shaking with old time friends.

Many citizens are signing their names to a petition to the government, circulated throughout the country, asking that settlers who paid $2.50 an acre for preemptions and commuted homesteads in the same region, where, under the 1890 forfeiture act, Northern Pacific railroad lands were sold for $1.25 an acre, be allowed a rebate of $1.25 an acre.