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ATHENA, SEPTEMBER 1, 1905

According to the government mail contract with mail carriers on what are designated as "star routes," such as the mail from Sumpter to Alamo, they are required to deliver mail to anybody along the route that puts a box at the side of the road. The contract expressly stipulates that the carrier shall make no charges for delivering mail to such points. Notwithstanding the above, says the Granite Gem, a local mining company that has its mail delivered at a box on the stage road has hit on the scheme of holding out fifty cents a month from the wages of each man employed at the mine. The fifty cent charge is made for mail, and the men naturally want to know why they should pay the company fifty cents every month for what mail they receive. The question is asked: Who gets the fifty-cent "take off"? It is against the law for the mail carrier to take payment for other than what is called for in the contract with the government, so the company is not out a cent for having a mail sack left at the mine by the stage.

Miss Sadie Coppinger, a splendid specimen of true womanhood, and a resident of the Echo country, has demonstrated a woman's ability to successfully conduct a farm, says the Echo News. Miss Sadie has a homestead about five miles east of Echo. She has farmed the land for two years, getting a good crop each year, and this year she tells us that she is one of the first to finish up her farm work, deliver her crop to the warehouse and get her receipts for same. Two thousand for a barley crop, clear money and deposited in the bank, is the proud record of this typical Umatilla county girl, a result which should be a shining example to the many young ladies who are above the farm, but who will probably go to Sadie to make a borrow later on when they get acquainted with the man they marry, while Sadie will attend the fair.

It is most gratifying to say that the good people of Portland are not taking advantage of the opportunity to "graft" and "hold up" everybody, as has been too often the case at great expositions. Hotel rates, private rooms, meals at restaurants or with private families are as reasonable as before the exposition opened its doors. In fact, so far as the cost of necessities is concerned, one could hardly

realize a great exposition is in full blast and thousands of strangers are within the gates and the guests of Portland. And Portland people can well be proud of this condition of affairs. The future will show their wisdom and bring a reward far in excess of what would follow had a policy of "get rich quick" been adopted by them.

Speaking of that Taggart scandal, it is not the worst that ever happened. Bad as it is, the worst feature is the publication of the testimony. All such trials should be behind closed doors. The public ought to be quarantined against all like epidemics of immorality.

Geese! the price of meat is high in Germany. Roast beef sells at 42 cents per pound; boiling beef 27 cents; pork 31 cents; veal 31 cents. No wonder the working people eat but little if any meat. Think of the German government keeping American meats out of the country.

Some Italian railroad laborers carried the yellow fever into a little town in Missouri eleven miles from Keokuk and that city is bustling quarantine arrangements that the disease may not get into Iowa.

A New York magistrate has decided that a woman has a perfect right to go through her husband's pockets. He has found no way as yet of guaranteeing that there will be anything in the pockets.

Mr. Paul Morton's assurance that the policy holders have not suffered much under the insurance laws of the state of New York will be balm to the feelings of those whose premiums are still coming due.

Mr. James Hyde will not know just how hard he has been hit by the Equitable scandal until the social season opens and he begins to send out dinner invitations.

By glancing over the present payroll Equitable policy holders may have the satisfaction of knowing that their interests are in the hands of cheap men.

Baron Komura deals in \$40 tips and works all night sometimes. There is no doubt that the Japs are civilized.

FEEDING TEAMS ON THE STREETS

(Spokesman-Review.)

Considerable sympathy must be extended to those citizens of Colfax and other towns who are endeavoring to overcome the objections of farmers to the attempt that is being made to abolish the custom of feeding teams in the streets. The practice is a survival of the days when little attention was given to civic improvement and when there was neither time nor inclination for anything but the business of the hour.

Those times, however, have passed, and in all towns of any size now there is the recognition of the fact that street improvement goes hand in hand with business prosperity, and that it is as essential for a town to present a good appearance as for a man or woman to be well dressed if they would accomplish the best results in business or social circles. A town or village cannot be considered well dressed if its streets are littered with hay and if teams are allowed to stand for hours at a time, covering the pavement with filth.

It seems by a little of that kind of

compromising which Roosevelt is trying to have the Russians and Japs agree to the difficulty between the farmers and the towns people might be satisfactorily adjusted. Neither Colfax nor any other town is so large but that a vacant space or one comparatively unused side street could be utilized for teams without being inconveniently distant from the business portion.

This is the plan adopted in Hutchinson, one of the prettiest and most prosperous of southern Minnesota towns, surrounded by a rich farming country. The principal business street is wide and well paved, and because of the fact that for five or six blocks no teams are allowed to be stable upon it or upon the immediate adjacent side streets the town is always attractively clean. Inquiry among the farmers on a day when many of them were in town developed the fact that they were well satisfied with the arrangement. The Colfax farmers might find that to give way a little on what they consider an inalienable privilege on the town streets would not seriously affect them.

EMINENT DOMAIN AND IRRIGATION

(Oregonian.)

The project of irrigating arid land through the public Reclamation Service, which President Roosevelt recommended and which congress adopted, is retarded by two serious difficulties in addition to those inherent in the work itself. One is the reluctance of holders of large tracts of land affected by the project to meet the government's requirement that ownership by one person under a ditch be limited to 160 acres. The other difficulty comes from vested rights of landowners already in possession of water supplies.

From the president's standpoint, the government's requirement is fundamentally just, since his only object in advocating reclamation was to provide homes for as many families as possible. But the landowners naturally take a different view of the matter. The difficulty is serious because the greater part of all areas which the reclamation service is likely to affect has passed from government ownership into private hands and is held in large tracts. To water these lands at public expense is not proposed; the cost of the irrigation works, it is expected, will ultimately return from the areas benefited. But, nevertheless, there are three objections, all serious, to allowing the tracts to remain undivided.

For one thing, and this is the least weighty, though weighty enough, the large landowner would receive an enormous benefit in the increased value of his land through neighboring settlements for which he would make no return. If he were obliged to sell or contract to sell at a fixed price before settlement of the irrigated tract began he would be deprived of his advantage, which is unjust from every point of view, and particularly so when the method of evasion and chicane are recalled by which these princely domains have been too often acquired.

Again, the very object of the government in undertaking reclamation would be thwarted, since instead of providing many homes for many families, it would merely enrich a few great proprietors. And, finally, these proprietors, as the demand for land increased with time, would come to the estate and arrogate of feudal lords dominating a population of tenants, which is contrary to the American ideals and policy. The enormous productiveness of irrigated farms makes it easy to lease them on terms profitable to the landlord; and this is very well so long as the tenant may ultimately buy his holdings. But in the case of great estates paying heavy returns there would be no chance for him to buy. The economic conditions which are breaking up the bonanza wheat farms in Dakota and the large cattle ranches in Texas, would not apply to irrigated tracts. Here the landlord's profit would include not only the normal rent of his land, but also the fee for water, and he would not be likely to sell.

As to the second difficulty which the Reclamation Service encounters, that of vested rights of persons already using water. Where the water supply is limited, an irrigation system cannot be satisfactory unless all users have the same rights and are subject to the same rules. Numberless questions of equitable distribution, maintenance and repairs of ditches, precautions against waste and the like, cause dissension and litigation under the best of systems. Where users from the same limited source had various titles to their water the troubles would be fatal.

Here, then, is a case where the interest of private owners comes squarely in conflict with the interest of the public. Which should give way? The usage of civilized nations when such a conflict occurs is long established and invariable. Napoleon III invoked the right of eminent domain to construct the boulevards of Paris; Manchester invoked it to condemn and destroy unhygienic tenements; railroad companies invoke it daily to establish their rights of way, and cities are using it more and more to open parks and playgrounds. There is, therefore, abundant precedent and cogent reason for the United States government to confer upon the Reclamation Service the power of eminent domain for the condemnation of all land and all water rights which in any way hinder or limit the usefulness of President Roosevelt's beneficent project for the irrigation of arid areas.

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