

The Athena Press.

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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ATHENA, JULY 16, 1906

It is a noticeable fact that the organization of the Blue Mountain Editorial Association was effected at Dayton Saturday without the depressing and blighting presence of Wood. It is also worthy of mention to note that his name wasn't even mentioned during the session. Fact of the matter is, the Washington boys will have nothing to do with a "jungled" fossil, whose milk-shake notoriety originated in an imaginary war with a Chinese section gang in the sage brush jungles of Franklin county. In legend, translated from the Chinese, the war is supposed to have originated over the ownership of a tattered woolen blanket, a flask of coffee varnish and a mulligan can. A compromise was made in which the section boss retained the mulligan can, the Chinese the blanket and the colonel was awarded the varnish. Furthermore the Association is not seeking members outside the pale of the craft; consequently roman candle gardeners, and bum potato kings, masquerading in the distorted guise of aristocratic country journalists, are not wanted.

Many practices which ten years ago, five years ago, one year ago, and even six months ago were in favor, public opinion having no condemnation for them, are now held to be odious and even criminal. This is perhaps the most notable development of the day, namely, the creation of a higher standard for the conduct of American business. The revelations of graft in the insurance and railroad companies are a shock to national pride and yet there is hardly an American who does not know that in one form or another graft has entered largely into the corporate life as into the political life of the country. The saving clause of the situation is that it seems a passing phase in our national progress. The optimist has reason to rejoice that the national conscience has been touched and that public opinion is establishing higher ideals.

When Kansas was suffering from the visitation of grasshoppers the whole country united in raising money and contributing food and clothing for the sufferers. Many a mean man was developed then. The contributions were so generous that opportunity was afforded for graft. And

more than one man now rich laid the foundations of his fortune in the cash or goods which he stole from the relief fund. Much the same thing has been noted in a smaller scale in the San Francisco case. It is about the smallest business in the world.

The kickers on the farms are not so hard to get along with as those in the towns. On the farm there is the kicking cow and our long eared friend the mule, while in town there is the old mossback who wants all the privileges of municipal living without paying for them and blocks, so far as he can, every municipal improvement. The cow may be sold for beef and the mule traded for a shotgun, but nothing but a funeral will get rid of the town kicker.

Hereafter the "opened through mistake" excuse will be a mistake that will cost \$200. The postoffice department has ruled that mail must be looked over before leaving the office, and that any letter put in your box by mistake must be returned before leaving the postoffice under a penalty of \$200 for failure to do so.

Before the scientists get through with it the question of whether the eruption of Vesuvius caused the earthquake or the earthquake caused the eruption will get down to the base of the problem whether the hen that laid the egg or the hen that hatched it, is the mother of the chicken.

In other words, the Supreme Courts divorce decision places a good many society people in a position where they cannot throw rocks at M. Gorky. Gorky thinks America is a hideous place. The trouble with Gorky is that he forgot he came here to prepare to do as Americans do.

The American people are gradually evincing a disposition to criticize Senators who draw their pay, but do nothing to earn it. They do not seem to think the honor of being represented by such men counts for anything.

One of the newspapers of Boston has a column headed: "A Few Cold Facts About Boston." Curiously enough, it is not the society column.

The New York Mail calls it the "Vesuvian palimpsest." It was bad enough as it was.

A LEGITIMATE INQUIRY.

While the Oregonian cannot agree with Senator Fulton that Secretary Hitchcock is a man in his dotage, yet we must say we wish the Secretary had pursued land thieves with as much vigor in other Pacific States as Oregon. For it is the firm belief of many, and there are numerous indications of its truth, that the frauds which have been unearthed and prosecuted in Oregon are small in number and trifling in degree, to those committed in California and Washington. And if the whole truth could be known what should we not discover also in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming?

It cannot be said that the resources of the United States are not ample for investigation and prosecution of land fraud in these states, at the same time.

But, since the secret of the government cannot be known, the fault may lie with the office of the Attorney-General, as well as that of the Secretary of the Interior. It is the business of the Department of the Interior to ferret out the frauds, and of the Department of Justice to prosecute them. Much has leaked out, from time to time, about the operations of the land thieves in other Pacific

States; but the prosecutions have been confined almost wholly to Oregon. Heney has done admirably well. Could not able prosecutors of the offenders in other states have been found? In Louisiana, indeed, much has been done in bringing land thieves to justice, and something in Mississippi and Arkansas; but why has little or nothing been done in the Pacific group, except Oregon, where, in all probability, the offenders have been fewer and their operation smaller than in any other Pacific States?

It seems certain that the General Land Office, under Hermann, was, to say the least, loosely conducted. Secretary Hitchcock believed that he had detected fraud in it, and connivance by Hermann therewith. The importance of Hermann's position naturally caused the Secretary to pursue inquiries into all irregularities reported in Oregon; for if Hermann could be connected with any, it naturally was supposed his collusion would be surer of discovery with those committed within his own state. Hitchcock was "going for" Hermann; Pater and the other members were caught, and Pater's statements drew Senator Mitchell into the net. This was a result not anticipated nor intended, when the inquiry began; but it added notoriety to the proceedings, which was heightened greatly by the further disclosures obtained through Tanner; by which, also, the prosecution was enabled to dispense with the testimony of Pater and others and place its work upon a surer basis. Now, though undoubtedly there are great frauds in the same line in our other Pacific States, that ought to be prosecuted, the department at Washington City seems to have satisfied their sense of what was due to official zeal and duty, by dwelling on those discovered in Oregon, while neglecting the rest, in the other states. Creditable, therefore, as is the activity displayed in Oregon, it does not make up for the negligence or delay elsewhere; and if "big fish" were the ones most desired, who knows what big fish might have been taken also in the pools and sloughs of corruption in these other states, where the timber lands have been exploited by speculators to greater extent than in Oregon.

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ARRIVE Daily.	TIME SCHEDULES ATHENA, ORE.	DEPART Daily.
9:12 a. m.	Walla Walla, Dayton, Pomeroy, Lewiston, Colfax, Pullman, Moscow, the Couer d'Alene district, Spokane and all points north.	9:42 a. m.
12:30 p. m.	Mixed, Walla Walla to Pendleton.	
4:53 p. m.	Fast Mail for Pendleton, LaGrande, Baker City, and all points east via Huntington, Ore. Also for Umatilla, Heppner, Portland, Astoria, Willamette Valley Point, California, Tacoma, Seattle, all Sound Points.	4:53 p. m.
	Mixed, Pendleton to Walla Walla.	7:05 p. m.

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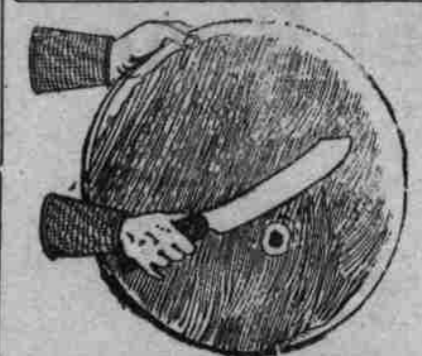
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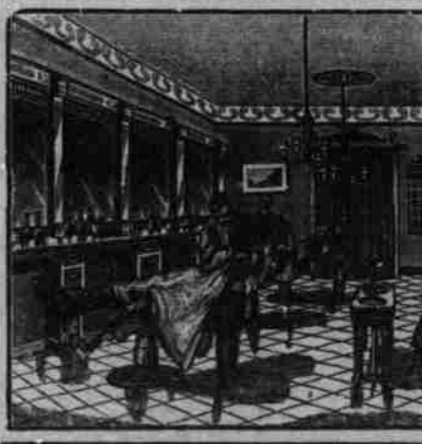
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