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ATHENA, ORE., DEC. 4, 1906

It may be stated that coal land frauds now being investigated at Salt Lake may be instrumental in turning the western coal fields under government control. The feature of the investigation was the testimony of George D. Holliday, the original locator of the Sunnyside mine, now owned by the Utah Fuel company. He told the story how he located the mine in 1897 and was visited by agents of the coal company and given the alternative of selling for a few hundred dollars or of being driven off. Holliday went to Salt Lake and interviewed the officials of the coal company and the Rio Grande railroad and told them "God never made a man who could take from me what I honestly came by, and if you jump my property I will come and settle with you, and not with your hired assistants." The witness organized the Holiday Coal company and started development. He left for Alaska, but at Portland received a wire notifying him that the property had been jumped. He returned and was advised by the stockholders of the company to go over to the Sunnyside property peacefully. He was met by seven men armed with Winchester and fired upon. Litigation followed and the majority stockholders decided to sell out to the Rio Grande interests for \$20,700. Other witnesses testified to the existence, up to August last, of a secret rate for the Utah Fuel company by the Rio Grande, making a difference in some cases of \$200 a car on all supplies for the mines and company stores.

An exchange says there are many farmers in all sections of the country who do not study the proposition of saving their strength or that of help in their employ, but go at their work like a steam shovel into a bank of earth. Such men will often be seen closing a gate in the field and after wards jumping over the fence; they did not think about passing through until after it was closed. They will pack fodder corn on their back into the barn and feeding yard from the field without a thought of using a push cart or stone boat and horse for that purpose. They will be seen with water and slop pails in their hands carrying drink to the stock where an open trough or underground pipe would conduct the same into the pens and yards at a small expense and a great saving of strength and time, which means money, when help costs two dollars per day—the prevailing price for anything who were trousers in the field this summer—regardless of his ability or willingness to do farm work in an intelligent manner.

The November Crop Reporter, published by the agricultural department, estimates the year's corn crop at 2,881,096,000 bushels, or an average of 30.3 bushels per acre, as compared with an average yield of 29.8 bushels as finally estimated in 1905, 26.8 bushels in 1904 and a ten year average of 25.2 bushels. This indicates a steady increase in the corn crop per year, due in large part to the

department's invaluable work for the improvement of seed and of cultivation methods. At an average of 40 cents a bushel, this year's crop will return to the farmers the tremendous sum of \$1,125,438,000, as against \$1,116,696,000 estimated by the department of agriculture as the income from the largest previous crop, that of 1905, when the yield was 2,707,993,000 bushels.

Stockholders of the Pennsylvania railroad have been paid a semi-annual dividend of 3 1/2 per cent on their holdings. This dividend completes a remarkable record of 50 years, during which time the Pennsylvania has never failed to pay a cash dividend at each semi-annual period. The first dividend in May, 1856, of 4 per cent, was on \$10,886,004, and amounted to \$435,440. The dividend of 3 1/2 per cent just paid is on \$305,794,500 stock and amounts to \$10,702,807. Including the present dividend, the total cash dividends paid by the Pennsylvania during the half century aggregate \$269,116,854. The total cash and scrip dividends together are \$294,628,993, an amount nearly equaling the present capital stock.

A town that never has anything to do in a public way is on the way to the cemetery. Any citizen who will do nothing for his town is helping to dig the grave. A man who curses the town furnishes the coffin. The man who is so selfish as to have no time from his own business to give to the city affairs, is making the shroud. The man who will not advertise is driving the hearse. The man who is always pulling back from any public enterprise throws bouquets on the grave. The man who is so stingy as to be howling hard times, preaches the funeral sermon, sings the doxology and thus the town lies buried from all care and sorrow.

Industry waits closely upon legislation. Already western farmers are considering the planting of crops from which they can manufacture alcohol, to be denatured and used as a source of power. There is a great desire for some cheap and effective substitute for gasoline, the supply of which is limited and the price of which has steadily advanced for several years.

There are two ways of spending a dollar. You can spend it at home, gain an easy conscience, make another friend and perhaps get the dollar back tomorrow, or you send it away, feel that you have sinned, offend the home merchant and forever lose the dollar and the blessed influence for good to yourself and neighbor.

Corn cobs are for "maple syrup" and denatured alcohol. Corn and wheat are now to be used for making artificial rubber for automobile and bicycle tires and for golf balls—in fact for any use to which rubber is put.

Belva Lockwood says it is just as necessary for women to study the law as to learn to cook. A good many other women seem to take the same view of the case, and they are not studying law either.

Naturally the president hopes that the country will not become so interested in the discussion of the fact that he is in favor of spelling reform as to forget that he is opposed to race suicide.

The bank examiner is a good deal like a streak of lightning. The worst has already happened when we hear the report.

SHIP-SUBSIDY LOOT

All our advocates of ship subsidy are in the position of those who make complaint that our ocean carrying trade is done at too cheap a rate, and

the government therefore ought to step in and pay subsidies out of the treasury, in addition to the freight money now charged against the goods. This is precisely what all the arguments for ship subsidy come to.

It is complained that American ships can make no money in carrying the products of our country to foreign markets because foreign ships carry them at so low a rate. Hence our subsidy advocates are actually contending that freight rates on our products to foreign countries ought to be raised, by taking money in large sums directly out of the treasury, and turning it over to shipowners.

We are in a continual fight with our railroad managers to get lower rail rates, and are reducing the rail rates by law, all along the line; yet we are told that ship rates are too low, and must be increased by direct payments out of the public treasury. The miserable foreigner is doing our ocean service, or much of it, for us too cheap, and we are oppressed thereby.

It is the shallowest argument ever made for loot of the public treasury. The object is enrichment of new syndicates, formed for plunder. Everything on land having been appropriated, attention turns toward the sea; but since the sea is the free highway of nations, monopoly in the carriage of our products over it can be had only through the subsidy method.

It is "protection" gone mad. A proposition of this nature is, however, notice, acknowledgement or proof that the essence of the so-called principle is enrichment of a few among us at the expense of the many. Since foreign ships can and do carry our products at rates admittedly low—too low for our own competition—why not permit them to continue it? Why pay subsidies and build up a new set of millionaire monopolists and plutocratic syndicates at home, at the expense of the people on either side of the same; who are to be charged on the one hand higher rates for transportation of their products, and then are to be robbed on the other hand by taking money they have paid in the form of taxes into the treasury and putting it as freight money into the pockets of the ship subsidy exploitation?

Secretary Root, in his speech at Kansas City, seemed to think that the argument for subsidy was complete, when he remarked that England was paying to steamship lines several million dollars a year, which makes competition by us costly and difficult. But Great Britain is an island empire; her chief thought always must be of the sea; her political situation and her vast colonial interests require her to pursue a policy not necessary for us; and, after all, the few millions she pays for assistance of steamship lines is but a bagatelle in proportion to her vast commercial, shipping and naval interests. With her colonies and dependencies she must maintain connections; and incidentally she is in position to do much of our ocean transportation at lower rates than we can ever do it for ourselves.

Strange to say, we have people who are dissatisfied because England and some other countries are in position to work for us so cheap. Yet the whole agitation for the ship subsidy bill now before congress has its origin in the designs of a body of franchise-grabbers and subsidy-mongers on the treasury of the United States. Exhaustion of other schemes has concentrated their efforts upon this one.

RAILROAD COMMISSION

It is said that the new railroad rate law, which will be presented to the legislature in January, will provide for the creation of a railroad commission of three members, each of whom shall receive a salary of \$5000 annually.

Such a salary may seem large to many, but if there is need of such a commission the individuals composing it should be of the very highest character and should be paid accordingly. We have had cheap railroad commissioners. We have paid them \$3000 a year when as a matter of fact they did not earn \$1000. It is to the advantage of the railroads as well as to individual shippers that the personnel of the commission should be men of not only the highest integrity, but men of sound judgment and a knowledge of the business they are to supervise. Men can be secured to serve the people at a salary of \$5000 a year who can be depended upon to do their duty and who will be above the possibility of corruption. A commission composed of men willing to work for two or three thousand dollars a year might prove to be in every way worthy the confidence reposed in them, but the people cannot afford to take chances in hiring cheap men when there is so much at stake as there is in the conflicts that constantly arise between the railroads and their patrons.

THE BIG-SHIP MANIA

With the sea trials of the huge Dreadnought exceeding expectations and three new fighting monsters contracted for, the big battleship theory has become a formidable condition in England. The example of increased naval armament is there for other nations to accept or confess their limitations. The fact that our bureau of naval construction is working on plans for a 20,000 ton battleship to match the Dreadnought and the announcement that American battleships may be built to equal the new English craft in fighting efficiency show the drift toward naval "jumbomania" here.

Where is the end to be if each new battleship is constructed with a view single to its superiority over its predecessors? The 21-knot Dreadnought, a floating fortress with the speed of a cruiser, dooms scores of battleships of an old pattern to the scrap heap, as our own 19-knot Virginia and Rhode Island, together with the new Connecticut, have made our best ships of the Spanish war obsolete.—New York World.

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