

The Athena Press

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ATHENA, ORE., APRIL 23, 1909

Athena is able to master her water problem without the editorial assistance of either of the Pendleton papers. From a local viewpoint, both publications have stepped outside their own sphere,—straining at a gnat, as it were. This is essentially a home problem that should have been amicably settled within the local circle where community interest is the prime factor to be considered. Personal prejudice, one way or the other, can accomplish nothing in bringing about a correct solution of the question whether or not there is sufficient water in the gravity system to supply the city for domestic purposes. The Press reiterates that Commissioner Watts' plan to crosscut the source of supply with a trench, dug down to bedrock, is the one logical course to pursue in a practical investigation to find out whether the pipes are carrying all the water the system affords. Surface prospecting reveals nothing but surface indications. The solution of the problem can be found only on the bedrock, and the sooner the investigation is made the sooner agitation will be put to rest. The rumor filtering through present agitation that in event sufficient water is not in evidence, private parties stand ready to secure a franchise and furnish the city water, may as well die a-borning, for no matter on what plan water is procured, or what it costs to secure it, municipal ownership will continue to direct operation and control of the system. Private ownership or control of Athena's water supply need not be given serious thought, for one minute, even.

Following the announcement of the purchase of the Ogle land by the Athena Land & Investment company, is that of the purchase of the Estes tract, adjoining on the west. This land, in connection with the Ogle tract, embraces the entire scope of bottom acreage south of the city. The company authorizes the statement that the limit of sales will be confined to from one to five acre tracts, only. This decision is a wise one. The five acre maximum makes it possible to double up population over what the ten acre maximum would have given, and there will doubtless be many smaller tracts sold. In point of a population builder, the Press believes this enterprise is the foremost of any other within the scope of resources that knocks at Athena's door. With these acre tracts, in connection with a good school, Athena will have superb advantages to offer prospective homebuilders; something to advertise; something which will attract attention abroad; something that will make people "sit up and take notice." This is Athena's opportunity, and united action is all that is wanted to place the city in the rank where she justly belongs.

John Goff was a farmer back east who never got along very well, but who never would admit that his way

of doing things was at fault. To hear him talk you would think he was the one perfect specimen of humanity in that community and the rest of the bunch were formed of the residue after all the sound material had been used up. If things went wrong about the premises somebody else was to blame in every instance. If he planted his corn so late that the frost came before it was ripe, he laid it to the weather. If he slashed down a great quantity of hay and it spoiled in the curing, he cursed the climate instead of giving judgment. And he was only the type of many who through slipshod methods of doing things, and by reason of over confidence in their own inerrancy, make a losing fight in life and blame the world for their own incapacity.

Forest conservation means the striving for a better utilization of forest products and the consequent checking of useless waste as much as it does the protection of forests from fires and the reforestation of lands which should grow timber, according to foresters and progressive lumbermen of the new school. Few people have a clear idea of the importance of the study of proper wood utilization, and one of the effects of the establishment of the Forest Service District offices most beneficial to the people of the west is the possibility of a close, helpful relation with a branch of the service whose workings have heretofore been little understood in this region. This is the Branch of Products. The work of this part of the Forest Service has to do with the best and most economical utilization of the products of the forest, not only lumber and its products but also the bark, resin, sap and even leaves of the trees of which these parts are of value to man.

Iowa's tax laws are to be revised if the Senate will fall in line and enact the Harding bill which passed the House of Representatives. The Harding bill provides for \$10,000 and for a commission of five men who shall examine the tax laws of Iowa, other States, draw up new statutes correcting the weakness of the Iowa tax laws and report back to the next Legislature. The five men are to come two from the House, one from the Senate and two to be named by the Governor.

Professor Collins, who had been at the head of the Astoria, Illinois, high school for twelve years, and with whom the Athena school board was in correspondence, has been elected as principal of the Medford high school. Here was a good man, but it was through no fault of the local board that Athena did not secure his services.

The benefit of telephone communication on National Forests have been brought forcefully to the attention of the Forest service on account of the large number of Forest fires during the last year. The need for phones has not been underestimated in the past and many miles of telephones, lines have been constructed in the National Forests.

Athena does not escape the grand jury's booze dragnet, but offenders against the provisions of the local option law have been indicted here as well as in other towns of the county.

CHANGE IN TARIFF SENTIMENT. The debate on the Payne bill has shown a wonderful change of sentiment on the tariff question. The newspapers of the country are com-

menting on the way party lines have been broken and party platforms ignored. The New York World claims President Taft is a free trader. Taft has advocated a permanent tariff commission which has always been opposed by the radical protectionists.

The Washington correspondent of the Philadelphia Press, always a strong protection newspaper, tells of the change in sentiment on the tariff in the following:

"It was generally remarked that when members of the house could vote on specific schedules and without placing their votes on record, they paid little attention to party platforms and declarations. When the hide schedule was up no man pleaded more strongly against taking the duty off this product than did the so-called free trade democrats from Texas.

"When the opposition to put lumber on the free list was debated, some of the strongest arguments came from democrats from the southern states, and the vote showed a good protection element in that section. The votes of the southern democrats saved the lumber schedule. Republicans from the middle west just as easily forgot their protection theories and voted with Mr. Tawney, of Minnesota, to make lumber free.

"Stodious observers believe they see in the breaking down of the party lines on the Payne bill the beginning of the end of the tariff as a party issue. The southern Atlantic coast and gulf democratic states are now as strongly devoted to protection as in Pennsylvania and New England. This is evident from the frank admissions of representatives from that section and two-fifths of the vote for protection on lumber was furnished by them today.

CHEERING OUTLOOK FOR WHEAT

It is the opinion of the Portland Journal based upon a preliminary canvass, that never before in the history of the Pacific northwest has there been at this time of the year so fine a wheat crop prospect.

The Portland paper estimates that the acreage this year will be increased about 15 per cent and finds that the conditions all over the wheat growing areas are far above the average. If these favorable conditions continue until harvest, the Journal thinks it not extravagant to predict a total yield for Oregon, Washington and Idaho for 70,000,000 bushels.

The assurance that prices will be high makes this outlook all the more cheering. The prospect of dollar wheat is enough to fill the farmer's heart with joy, even though he knew this year's crop would not be more than the average.

Dollar wheat back in the depressing days of 1893 and 1894 would have struck our Inland Empire growers as a measure of boundless wealth. Those who passed through the ordeal of that period recall that when the price rose to 40 cents it seemed as if the hard times were over; and when the price mounted to 50 cents, many farmers said they wanted nothing better. Sixty cent wheat became the basis of fortunes, and while the cost of production is somewhat greater now than then, there is undoubtedly good profits around 60 cents, a handsome return at 75 cents and rapidly amassing wealth at a dollar.

It looks as though our farmers have entered upon a year of unprecedented prosperity.—Spokesman Review.

MAKING GOOD ROADS.

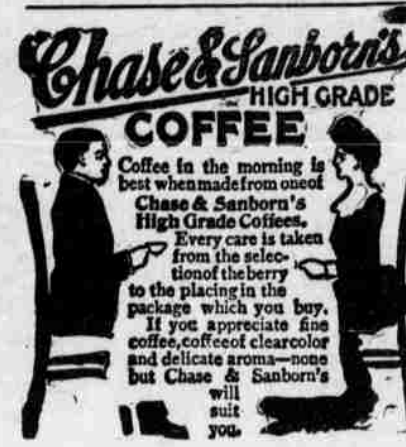
An Iowa exchange says: Inasmuch as the good roads question, or, rather, the lack of good roads, is now the dominant one, the following receipt for making roads will come in handy: First, locate your road, or the foundation of it. This can be very nicely done with a glass bottomed boat, and if that is not to be had take a stick and poke it down into the water until it strikes something harder, a little harder, than the water. That is the road. Then take up your road and run it through a wringer several times until the water is thoroughly squeezed out of it and hang it on the clothesline until it cracks in places. It is then dry enough to work unless a rain has soaked it again. In that case it should be put through the wringer and drying process until it is quite dry, when it will be fit to work. Then lay it out where you think it ought to be and get a copy of the code and look up the road law. Kick to everybody in authority—the road boss, trustees, street commissioner, or the editor of the local paper—about the awful condition of the roads and state emphatically and with vehemence that "something ought to be done right away." That will cause a stir and somebody will get busy. Inside of six weeks or two months when they have nothing else to do, two or three of the enthusiastic property owners will tackle the road job with four horses, two slushers, and 20 cents worth of chewing tobacco and a large consignment of local, state and national politics, and when they have worked two days you will note a great change. There will be a pile of dirt right in the middle of the road so high that the highest water the oldest inhabitant ever heard of will never get over it. This pile of dirt will outlast any other kind of road, as nobody will ever drive over it except in the dark. If you know of a better way to make roads than this, just send in your ideas."

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