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ATHENA, ORE., JUNE 4.....1909

There is developing throughout this state a great deal of interest in the taking of the next census. The federal government makes a count of the people, the houses, the horses the farms, the schools, and some hundred of other things, such as assets and liabilities, every ten years. This is required because it is written in the constitution with supposed reference to apportioning the congressmen among the states according to population. But the fathers of the republic never dreamed that the innocent and simple enumeration they called a census would grow into such a complicated statistical machine as the world has not elsewhere seen. This decennial count costs millions of dollars and gives work at good wages to tens of thousands of the favorites of senators and congressmen. The census of 1910 will be the 13th. There is a fair chance that it will be mostly tabulated by 1920, or just in time for the 14th census. This lapping over was not known during the earlier years of the country, on account of the simplicity of those lines.

The recent session of the Grant county grand jury and the circuit court have in a measure brought to light the fact that the justice court is a fifth wheel. This expensive piece of judicial machinery is rapidly becoming a superfluous thing, says the Eagle. Trivial matters which should be tried out and settled in the justice court are carried over to the grand jury or the circuit court and the taxpayers are called upon to settle the added cost incurred. The justice court was established for a purpose and it has a concurrent jurisdiction over a designated class of misdemeanors and civil actions and it is its business to settle these matters without the intervention of grand juries and the circuit court. If every neighborhood row in the country is to be brought to the attention of the grand jury and pushed into circuit court it would be just as well to abolish the justice court and thus avoid an expense which is certainly uncalled for unless these courts exercise the functions which the law has granted to them.

Government land, which it is alleged is held by William Hanley, a rancher and manager of the Harney County Development Co., amounts to between 82,000 and 83,000 acres. Land legally owned by the company makes the total amount involved more than 147,000 acres. The story of the land deals which bring Hanley before the federal court as defendant in a criminal prosecution, began 15 years ago, when Peter French and Dr. Glenn of California bought thousands of acres in Harney county with the object of converting the whole vast area into a stock range.

One-fifth of our remaining timber is in public forests, and to these forests the nation and the States are practicing forestry. Four-fifths of our timber is privately owned, and it is being cut almost exclusively for present profit without regard to the future. The problem of providing a timber supply can not be solved by the National Government alone, by the State alone, nor by individuals alone; all must work together. Since the railroads are among the largest consumers of wood, they will suffer heavily from the much higher prices and the actual scarcity of timber which will occur if our forests are not conserved. Railroad companies can most advantageously undertake both the growing of timber and the economical utilization of the product.

The construction of railroads by bonded districts is only an idea carried a little further than the construction of irrigation canals by the same process. California and Idaho have successfully done the latter and Oregon can go a little further.

THAT PUBLIC MONEY.

A good high school for next year assured! That sounds good to my ears. I am just a little hard of hearing. Just a little pessimistic about most things, and so this high school proposition soaked in a little slow, but I am of the opinion now that it is a go. Of course it could amount to nothing without the opinion of U. Gesagen, so I hasten to venture it. Still there must be some knockers. It must needs be that knocking be done, but woe unto him who doeth the knocking. I suppose some will think the board have gotten a little extravagant in the expenditure of funds, especially those who have no children to educate. Athena children are not worth as much as children in other places. They are a sort of cheap lot, and most any kind of education will do them. "Readin' and writin' and 'rithmetic, taught to the tune of a hickory stick." That is about it I guess, and in the minds of some that is sufficient. No! Let me say it with all emphasis. Our boys and our girls are just as deserving of competent teaching as any lot of boys and girls in the northwest, or anywhere. One thingis certain, if a cheap lot of teachers do the teaching a cheap lot of pupils will be turned out. We must have teachers who are alive, who have ideals, who have ambition, and who will impart the inspiration of these things to their pupils. Then above everything else we need teachers of character. Teachers who are not afraid to stand for right, and be citizens of worth. Let us spend our money, the public money, for the public good. Do you know a better way than to spend it in the uplift of those institutions that turn out the future public? Some of us get awfully stingy when it comes to doing something for some one else other than ourselves. Let us look to the future. Let us make a class of men and women who will not fill our penitentiaries, but a class of men and women who will make respectable citizens and efficient mothers, loved and honored of all. The school is one mighty factor in the making of character.

U. Gesagen.

Strayed from my place north of Athena, one brown filly, 3 years old; one black yearling filly with one white hind foot. Will pay reward of $10 each for information leading to their recovery.
Oliver Dickenson, Athena, Oregon.

JUDGING A CIGAR.

The Only Real Way to Find Its Quality Is to Smoke It.

On no point is the average smoker so ill informed as that of judging a cigar. Nine times out of ten, upon being handed a cigar, he will hold it to his nose, unlighted, sniff at the wrapper with a critical air and deliver his verdict in a self satisfied manner. This characteristic maneuver is always a source of amusement to any tobacco man who happens to observe it. There is only one way to ascertain the quality of a cigar, and that is to smoke it. No expert will pass judgment on a cigar until he has lighted it and smoked it well down toward the middle. The first and most important point upon which he bases his opinion is the "burn." Tobacco may have every other virtue, but if it does not hold the fire and burn evenly it is poor tobacco. Next in order of importance comes the aroma—the smoke must have a pleasing "smell;" next comes the flavor—the smoke must be smooth and not "scratchy" or bitter. Then there is the color—rich brown, indicating a ripe leaf, well cured—and last is workmanship—good if the wrapper is put on smoothly and the "bunch" is made so that the cigar "draws" freely and is neither too hard nor too spongy, bad if the reverse.—Bohemian Magazine.

ROMANCE OF HISTORY.

These Things Read Like Legends, but Are Matters of Fact.

A peasant girl called half witted did promise to defeat the victors of Agincourt and did it; it ought to be a legend, but it happens to be a fact. A poet and a poetess did fall in love and eloped secretly to a sunny clime; it is obviously a three volume novel, but it happened. Nelson did die in the act of winning the one battle that could change the world; it is a grossly improbable coincidence, but it is too late to alter it now. Napoleon did win the battle of Austerlitz; it is unnatural, but it is not my fault. When the general who had surrendered a republican town returned, saying easily, "I have done everything," Robespierre did ask, with an air of inquiry, "Are you dead?" When Robespierre coughed in his cold harangue Garnier did say, "The blood of Danton chokes you." Strafford did say of his own desertion of parliament, "If I do it may my life and death be set on a hill for all men to wonder at." Disraeli did say, "The time will come when you shall hear me."

The heroic is a fact, even when it is a fact of coincidence or of miracle, and a fact is a thing which can be admitted without being explained.—G. K. Chesterton in London News.

No Drums In the Middle Ages.

As we come to the middle ages, when the nations of modern Europe were struggling into existence, we find that at first the drum was not used at all. So, although melody had been known and practiced for many centuries, rhythm had been quite forgotten, for what there is left to us of the music of the middle ages contains no bars, and we know that it was slowly and monotonously chanted, without the least accent.

In the eleventh century, however, things began to improve, more particularly as the crusaders brought into Europe all sorts of percussion instruments from the east. Various kinds of drums, tambourines and cymbals were then seen in Europe for the first time since the days of savages, and they have been used, with very little change, ever since.—St. Nicholas.

An Epistolary Hint.

In the letter from Boston was a special delivery stamp.

"What did she send that for?" the woman wondered. "The information she wants can be sent in an ordinary letter. It won't need to be sent special."

"That stamp," said the man, "is a delicate hint to be quick about answering. It is a hurry up device used by many men. It is very effective. A two cent stamp does not always spur one on to any special effort, but a special delivery stamp means that the writer wants what he wants when he wants it, and the most dilatory correspondent alive is not going to let any grass grow between the scratches of his pen when answering."—New York Press.

Mantle Rays.

"There are X rays and X rays, and there are also rays from those mantle things that you put on gas burners to improve the light." The speaker, a photographer, pointed to a batch of fogged plates. "I know to my cost that there are mantle rays," said he. "For a month I stored new plates in a closet along with a mantle, and all of them got fogged. The mantle, you see, contained thorium, a radio-active substance that penetrates a cardboard plate box as easily as it penetrates glass. I didn't know that till my doctor told me so last week. My ignorance cost me over a hundred plates."—New York Press.

Shunted.

Editor—Is this your first effort?

Budding Poet—Yes, sir. Is it worth anything to you?

Editor (with emotion)—It's worth a guinea if you will promise not to write anything more for publication until after this has been printed. I want your entire output, you understand.

Budding Poet—I promise that, all right. When will it be printed?

Editor—Never while I'm alive.—London Telegraph.

A kindness done to the good is never lost.—Plautus.