

Sherman County Journal

SHERMAN COUNTY OBSERVER, Established Nov. 2, 1888
GRASS VALLEY JOURNAL, Established Oct. 14, 1897
CONSOLIDATED, MARCH 6, 1931
WASCO NEWS-ENTERPRISE, Established 1891
CONSOLIDATED MARCH 4, 1932.

Published Every Friday at Moro, Oregon, By
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Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice, at Moro, Oregon, under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES-PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

One Year \$1.50
Six Months 1.00

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 1933.

WHAT OF WHEAT?

Fields of wheat that stood last week, trimmed of hay strip, white strawed, red headed, are now being resolved into long strings of sacks and rows of yellow straw for it is harvest time when wheat becomes a marketable commodity instead of a growing plant.

What will happen to wheat as it enters the new stage is unknown. There is little of it, if 500 million bushels can be called little, and a bounty has been placed on it to raise the price. Yet the warehouses in the northwest are full. It begins to look as if millers bought wheat before the tax became effective and do not care to buy now that the price is higher. A company with a full granary is not a good customer at a high price.

If the market for flour falls off there may be a lull in the selling of wheat that will hold down the price for a time. Or it may be that if benefits are paid to exporters for selling wheat across the ocean that will stimulate sales. It has been a long time since the outlook for wheat was complicated by so many factors.

Now the market is affected by crop reports from harvesting sections. In a few months reports of intentions to plant, fall rains and favorable snows will change the market. It is foolish to conclude that next year the crop will be as small as it is this year. We will probably raise more wheat on reduced acreage than we grew this season. That will surely depress the market although the farmer may be protected by an increased tax levied on the millers.

BY MOONLIGHT

Probably everyone in this section has ridden over the Columbia river-highway on a night when a bright moon gave the hills a misty, vague look and the water a bright sheen. On such a night one might be riding in a dream, for moonlight, even at its brightest, is a half light and in it common things and common scenery assume strange looks.

The scenery along the Columbia is not ordinary scenery and moonlight makes it appear more striking than usual. The hills whether tree covered or the plain hills might be of some soft substance molded to fit the turns of the river while the river itself shines as bright as a new blade ready for cutting and slashing. It may be a better way to look at the river than in the daytime for while the hills are rocked ribbed and mighty they have been cut and moulded by that comparatively slim stream as yielding as it appears.

PAYING FOR PREYING

The press has reported an occurrence that seems to just beat everything. A New Yorker, whose funds were permanently low, was taken by a group of gun men and he was held for a goodly ransom. None of his relatives could pay it, so, being gentlemen of some ability at persuasion they persuaded the kidnappers to let their victim go upon a promise to pay a small part of the asked price at some future date.

We Americans have bought radios, refrigerators, baby carriages, automobiles and nearly everything else on time, we have paid fines on credit after regaining liberty, but dealing with racketeers on a time payment basis is something new, even to this blasé generation. Are times so hard with crooks that they are taking up the installment method in order to increase business?

With the approaching repeal of the 18th amendment there is a serious problem that needs much thought; how to handle the liquor business in a satisfactory manner? How to make every one honest, and, how to make every one obey the laws are other problems in the same class.

Almost anything can happen to wheat in the next twelve months. With the government aligning itself on the side of the farmer his position can hardly fail to be more favorable, however.

Perfection is an elusive thing. We never quite attain it for having won or accomplished our immediate end we cogitate a moment and likely remark, "Now if,--"

The last administration had as its goal a car in every garage and a chicken in every pot, this one is working for a job in every family and beer in every glass

We note the demand for and sale of that hybrid tool, a bottle opener and a cork screw. Who said they never come back?

Grass Valley

Art Bibby is here this week and is still in the notion of coming back here to live permanently.

Lieutenant John Homewood and wife were here Sunday from Wyoming to see Mr. Homewood's mother, Mrs. L. R. French. They took their little girl home with them.

Miss Cassie Holmes is at the Wm. Mitchell home caring for Marguerite Mitchell who was badly burned several weeks ago.

Little Bobbie Johnson has been ill lately.

George Wilcox and daughter Janet left for Portland Monday night for a short visit while George attends buyers week.

Harold Hughes and Arne Annula were among the party that made the climb up Mt. Hood last Sunday under direction of the Hood River post, American Legion.

Dean Olds has moved from the Dugger house to the house formerly occupied by the Tetz family.

Phone in your order for fresh Meats, Fruits, Berries and Vegetables at the Grass Valley Market. Special prices for harvest meats. Ice 75 cents per 100 pounds. Eggs taken in trade. Earl Olds.

Miss Margaret Morgan is visiting at the Frank von Borstel home with Mrs. von Borstel. They attended school together at Monmouth.

Henry Tetz is moving his household Rufus preparing for the opening of school there within a few weeks. Henry returned from summer school just a short time ago.

Homer Wall and Judge McKee were visitors here Tuesday while looking over the county.

"Parity Prices" Basis of Farm Relief

With the whole theory of the agricultural adjustment act based on means of obtaining "parity prices" for the farmers products, increased interest is being shown in the changing relationships between the things farmers sell and those that they buy, according to L. R. Breithaupt, extension economist at Oregon State college. This is particularly true as to wheat, now the object of a definite control program.

The government index of prices paid by farmers as of July 15 is 105 per cent of the 1910-1914 average, now used as the normal period. This is two points rise since June and five points since March. As this index goes up so will the price of farm products need to rise if a fair purchasing power is to be attained.

The average price of wheat on July 15 had risen to 86.9 cents a bushel, or almost as high as the pre-war average, but since that time the price has gone down and commodity prices have probably raised somewhat above the 105 index, so parity is not yet in sight for wheat.

As for Oregon, the farm price of wheat has not reached any such figure, as an unusually large spread has developed between Pacific coast cash wheat prices and those at Chicago. This has amounted at times to between 20 and 30 cents a bushel. When one adds to this freight charges from farm to terminal, it is seen that the "front page" report of Chicago future price is far above what the Oregon farmer can get for his wheat.

This abnormal spread between the Pacific Northwest and Chicago prices is blamed on the excessive stored supplies of wheat in this territory resulting from near collapse of the export outlet the last two years. In an effort to correct this situation and avoid dumping the western wheat on



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"In what line of endeavor?"
"Cows."
"On a large scale?"
"Oh yes!"
"I should know him or of him, then. What's his last name?"
"Latham."
"William B. Latham?"

Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes set down his glass and stared at her. "Is Uncle Bill slightly lame in his left hind leg—just a suspicion of a limp?"
"Yes. Do you really know my Uncle Bill?"

"No, I do not. But my late father knew him very well. They got into an argument once as to which was the best for the country—the gold standard or Bryan's sixteen-to-one silver idea. Your Uncle Bill was an outcast in Texas, at the time being a Republican. My father, of course, was a Democrat. In their argument they waxed personal, and finally your Uncle Bill called my father a d-d anarchistic greaser. So my father yelled: 'Hurroo! Faugh-a-nose!' and hit your Uncle Bill on the nose and canted it five degrees to the southeast. My parent then ran to his house to get his gun, which he wore in a pommel holster, and on his way there your Uncle Bill shot his hat off. This was getting personal, so my father retaliated by shooting your Uncle Bill in the heel."

"Why, Uncle Bill never told me about that, Don Jaime?"
"Why should he? He came off second best, didn't he? He was drunk at the time and my father was intoxicated, otherwise there would have been two funerals. Father was heart-broken when he sobered up, and sent his lawyer to your Uncle Bill to apologize, so your Uncle Bill accepted the apology and sent back one of his own. When I was a very small boy your uncle sold out his ranch to old man Hobart, whose son, Kenneth, is now my general manager. Does Uncle Bill treat you with civility and decency?"
"Of course he does. He's adorable. He's a love."

"Very well, then, I'll not kill him. You must agree, though, that I did you a real service in bumping off old Uncle Tom."

"Uncle Bill says you did," Roberta admitted. "But then he's biased."

"My father always declared that Uncle Bill was all wool and a yard wide. Dinner's ready, thank God. That stout saddle-colored female who appeared in the door just now says we'd better come and get it or she'll throw it out."

"What an extremely old-fashioned young man you are, Don Jaime."

"Please do not call me Don Jaime. The dog is really a title of respect, and is used by one's employees or social inferiors—rather like having a pullman porter address you as 'Judge' or 'colonel.' You may call me Mr.

the eastern markets via the Panama canal, the agricultural adjustment administration is seriously considering using a small percentage of the income from the processing tax on wheat to establish an export subsidy or equalization fee by which to make possible export of this northwest surplus wheat to the Orient. Such action, it is stated, would not only restore the normal relationship between Chicago and western markets but would also protect the markets of the entire country from being depressed by distress selling of Pacific coast wheat through the east for what it would bring.

With this widening spread of wheat prices coupled with the fact that western farmers usually have to pay somewhat higher prices than the national average, little hope is seen for attaining "parity" for northwestern wheat growers unless some such method is found for reducing the burdensome export surplus in this region.

"After I was demobilized in the spring of 1919 I really started to put this ranch on a paying basis. I cleaned up on cotton in 1919 and '20. And cattle prices were unbelievably high. I had a feeling, however, that such a wartime prosperity wouldn't last, so I sold all my cattle in the fall of 1920, and in 1921 I didn't plant any cotton. Well, the market smashed on both—and lucky Jim didn't have any!"

"Instead I raised alfalfa and stacked it; then I bought cattle for a song when the banks and the governmental loan agencies foreclosed. Cheap cattle and cheap feed, you know. I had my moments of panic; the road was rough and rocky in spots, although that, of course, made it all the more interesting, the victory all the more delightful. I think that when one has had to fight for his land and his people he learns to love both, no matter how unlovely or uninteresting they may appear to those whose lives have been spent in shelter and without effort."

"My life has been spent that way, I must admit," Roberta confessed. "And I like it," she added.

"Why not? You've never tried any other life, have you?"

Roberta noticed that her host was much more at his ease, now that their conversation had veered into new channels. It occurred to the girl that Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes had lived more in five minutes of his colorful life than had the last three generations of Hacketts. And the Hacketts were a long-lived race.

"What gainful occupation, if any, does Mr. Latham practice now?" Don Jaime asked Roberta.

"He plays the stock market."

"With success, I hope."

"He has always been very successful until recently, when he lost practically everything he had—or at least he would have lost it without the aid of some people who love him. We

anticipate a reverse in the market which will pull him out, if not with a profit at least without terrific loss."

"My father loved your Uncle Bill, even if he did shoot him in the heel and disagree with him politely. I would be glad to give my father's friend a leg up. You live with your Uncle Bill, I take it."

"I've been his ward and a member of his household since my tenth birthday. I have never known a wish he hasn't hastened to gratify, at whatever cost. So, you see, now that he's old and liable to suffer financial reverses, it is my duty to take care of him, and for that reason my Uncle Tom's estate comes to me somewhat in the nature of a godsend."

"One more reason why I should be dealt with charitably in the matter of your deceased avuncular relative," the young man suggested humorously. "Well, we'll pull you out all right on the sheep."

"I understand the estate is boarding on you, Mr. Higuenes. 'Es nada,' he replied. 'That is, the grass they consume doesn't amount to that,' and he snapped his fingers. 'The knowledge that I am serving a distressed lady is a rich reward.'

Two maids removed the empty soup plates and set the roast down in front of Don Jaime. 'A wild turkey,' he informed Roberta. Then he sharpened his carving knife on the steel and attacked the bird, dissecting it in a very neat and scientific manner.

"Can you cook, Miss Antrim?"

"Heavens, no!"

"I had heard it was a lost art with the rising generation. I'm a rattling good cook, myself, if I do say so. Most Latin males are, you know. I enjoy cooking fish and game."

"How about boxing?"

"Great sport. I have three vaqueros who are paid five dollars a month extra to box with me."

"That, I suppose," said Roberta dryly, "appeals to your Irish blood. Are you of a religious turn of mind?"

"Well, I built a church in my pueblo and I support a padre for my people. I play the organ in my church and I've rehearsed the choir until it's really rather good. You must come to mass with me tomorrow and listen to it."

"Why were you armed today? Do you always carry that arsenal?"

"No," he replied soberly. "I do not. But of late I have felt that discretion might be the better part of valor. You see, I have been unfortunate enough to make some new enemies recently. The last time I went abroad unarmed I was carried home on a stretcher."

"I fear," the girl suggested, "that the Antrim sheep are proving to be a source of embarrassment to you."

"Oh, not at all! My enemies never embarrass me, I assure you." He said it so simply, so earnestly, so absolutely without brag or bounce, that Roberta laughed aloud.

"You are a new note in life," she declared. "Mrs. Ganby, do you not find Don Jaime a source of profound amusement?"

"Don Jaime, I must admit, is different," Mrs. Ganby replied guardedly. "I'm sure of it, Mrs. Ganby. He isn't a bit religious, but he is very charitable—so charitable, in fact, that I am certain he is obliging me, in the matter of those sheep, at considerable loss and nuisance and inconvenience to himself."

"Not at all," her host protested. "I expect to collect from the Antrim estate a reasonable fee for my services, to reimburse me for my outlay or inconvenience."

Roberta had a feeling of helplessness in this man's presence, for he was a new experience with her. She had never met a man who remotely resembled him—so ruthless, forceful and dominating.

Not knowing what to say, she was silent and attacked her meal. When presently, her glance met Don Jaime's again he was smiling at her, whereupon she itched with a desire to pull his undoubtedly Celtic nose. "He has all the audacity and assurance of the Irish and all of the ego of the Latin," she thought.

"What an indolent, semi-insolent glance he has! And he isn't good-looking at all. Still he isn't bad-looking. He's just masculine and knows it. All of his life he has been accustomed to being high and low justice on this ranch; because these peons of his kotow to him he thinks he can get away with murder. He's just a Mex-

ican feudal baron who has established his feudal way just far enough north of the border to make good with it."

"Is it possible for one to send a telegram from your ranch, Mr. Higuenes?" she asked.

"Just a Mexican Feudal Baron."

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"Certainly. After dinner you can telephone your message to the office at Los Algodones and charge it to my account."

"I suppose I should go to Los Algodones in a day or two to consult with my attorney."

"Well, the longer you delay your visit, Miss Antrim, the more agreeable it will be to Prudencio Alviso. Prudy's almost a full-blooded Spaniard. About one thirty-second Aztec or Yaqui, but that's enough to make him want to take life easy. Be kind. Your visit on a business mission will cause him to bestir himself."

Roberta laughed again—softly, suddenly, for again she had a swift vision of Glenn Hackett and compared the activities of his law office with the somnolent status of Don Prudencio's legal mill.

"I feel like Alice in Wonderland," she declared suddenly.

"Speaking of bees and birds and scolding wax, and cabbages and kings," said Don Jaime, "I am sincerely delighted to have sold Prudy to you. He's so slow, so deliberate. I know he'll just lengthen out your visit to the Rancho Valle Verde until you get to like the country. Just now you think my country's bare and lonely and desolate, but—it will grow on you. To one unaccustomed to wide horizons there is born, in Texas, a feeling that one is lost. But presently one discovers that out of all this loneliness and vastness a surprising number of good-natured and contented people come; they're friendly and they do not talk too much, although they do talk to the point. I'll miss my guess a mile if you find yourself without a serious interest in Texas. Mees—I mean Miss—Antrim—Antrim."

"He's secretly excited and disturbed," Roberta thought. "Ironically 'I'm as 'e.' I wish dinner were over."

Provisionally, it was not a long course dinner, such as Roberta had expected would be served and which she had looked forward to with dread. A soup, a salad, a roast, two vegetables, a light dessert and black coffee. That was all.

"He runs his household like a sensible man, at any rate," the girl reflected.

She watched a humming bird flitting from flower to flower, saw a quail come forth and bear away a crust tossed him by Don Jaime. Then, as the shadows lengthened, the mocking birds, repetitive with food and happy, perched in a lime tree and paid for their meal in melody. Roberta had never heard a Spanish mocker before and was delighted with the beauty and variety of their extensive repertoire.

"You are fond of music?" Don Jaime queried.

Roberta nodded and she tossed a quick order in Spanish to one of his dusky maids.

From behind the climbing passion vines on the gallery across the patio a guitar was strummed; Roberta heard the mellow notes of a harp as unseen fingers ran the scale. Then a girl's voice—without much volume, but wondrously sweet and sympathetic—commenced to sing "La Golondrina."

"When I am unhappy," Don Jaime explained, "they sing that sad song to me and make me unhappy."

"Why don't you have them sing something joyful?"

"My dear Miss Antrim, no Higgins ever wants to be made happy when he's unhappy. It's like enjoying poor health. We must feed our racial melancholy."

"You incorrigible Celt! Are these professional entertainers brought out from Los Algodones?"

"No, they're part of the ranch assets. That harp has been in our family since the first Higgins emigrated to Madrid. Hello, bub, you getting sleepy? Tired after your long ride today, eh?"

Robbie had left his chair and climbed up into Don Jaime's lap; his thin little arm was around the brown, powerful neck, his head cuddled under the big square chin. Don Jaime held him close with his left arm, and Roberta noticed that with his right hand he gently massaged the atrophied muscles of the boy's left leg.

The purple shadows crept over the patio, the music sobbed and mourned behind the passion vines.

Presently Don Jaime shook Robbie gently. "Come, son," he said softly. "Say your prayers—in Spanish, as I have taught you. Nuestro padre—"

The sleepy voice spoke haltingly the unfamiliar words, the man prompting from time to time. When the prayer was finished he rose and, with the boy in his arms, stooped over Mrs. Ganby that she might kiss her son good night. Then he passed around the table to Roberta's chair. "Innocence and helplessness," Roberta heard him murmur. "Who could not love it!" He stooped over her and lowered the boy until the childish lips brushed her cheek; then he bore the lad off to bed.

The two women exchanged glances, the mother's eyes were moist. "That is the Latin in him, Miss Antrim. He's not ashamed to demonstrate his affection."

Roberta did not answer. She was thinking of a remark that Crooked Bill had once made in her presence. "When children and dogs love a man a woman is usually safe with him." She wondered now if Glenn Hackett loved children and dogs and decided presently that he would love his own children, if and when he had them, but that he would not be interested in dogs or human beings beneath him in the social scale.

To be continued.

Hojack—What do you do with your dull old razor blades?

Skookum—Shave with them.

They have to EAT
Those men who pitch hay and work summerfallow from dawn to dusk
Let us provide the foods, Staple Groceries—Fresh Vegetables—all reasonably and fairly priced.
H. Zeigler's Quality Store
Grass Valley :: Oregon



Just a Mexican Feudal Baron.