

Sherman County Journal

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1933.

THE COMMITTEE HAS WORK TO DO

The governor has appointed a committee. It looks like a good committee with one possible exception; the taxpayers are not represented by as many members as are the tax spenders and the relief agency heads, but that may be taken care of by others.

All they have to do is to determine how much money the state needs and propose a feasible way of raising it, a way that will meet with sufficient popularity to guarantee its acceptance by the citizenry of the state. That is job enough for any committee and we do not join with those who say it must be done quickly. It is more important that it is done well.

We have expressed the opinion that a sales tax is not the proper means of raising money at this time when every effort is being made to increase sales instead of hampering the exchange of goods for money. The arguments against a sales tax are that it puts a bar, however slight, against each sale and that it taxes the least able to pay. Therefore, it is a poor tax for times like these.

The proposal to raise four or five million dollars through a tax on liquors would, if put into effect, defeat the purpose back of the repeal of the 18th amendment. Bootleggers and home brewers would flourish as in the prohibition days. Oregonians are not going to drink enough liquor to pay a tax of five dollars per year, anyway.

We hope the committee, composed as it is of the leaders in every major organization of the state, will be able to propose something new instead of something that has been already found impractical or decidedly unpopular.

It may be possible for the counties to handle their own relief problems better than the state can do it. The farther the organization is from the people it serves the smaller chance it has of administering properly and the more remote the source of the funds given or relief the more lax are the local agencies. It is easy to give Bill Jones and his family state or federal money but it would be watched more closely if it was locally appropriated and raised. The longer we have huge funds for relief the longer we will have long relief lists.

There is no doubt that there is need for relief. However, the fact that the taxpayers are straining to raise such funds should cause the agencies administering it to be very watchful of the funds paid out.

Practically every county has a greater amount of delinquent taxes than they have unpaid warrants because they have spent less money than has been appropriated. It might be impossible to raise money on this potential income at present but bonds might be sold that could be paid from this fund. The legislature could allow county courts to transfer to the relief fund.

Whatever is recommended by the committee which meets to day it is to be hoped they do nothing that materially increases taxes and thus hampers the recovery that is said to be on the road.

POOR BUSINESS

No one who attended the children's fair at the county fair grounds last Monday could help but be impressed with the poverty stricken appearance of the buildings and grounds. Not one window could be found that was not cracked and there are few that are not gone entirely. Small boys have certainly done a complete job of destruction.

Whether we are to have a fair again soon or not it behooves the county officials or the fair board—which ever has the responsibility—to have some repairs made on the buildings before it is too late. Snow and rain should be kept from the interior of those buildings having floors and locks should be put on all doors to prevent the entrance of irresponsible persons. It might be advisable to post notices warning everyone from the grounds under penalty.

The county has the authority to keep boys from breaking windows and thieves from stealing equipment and stricter watch should be kept of this public property.

The present generation is happier going someplace instead of staying home regardless of the destination. We didn't know the same inclination had taken charge of government until lately, though.

It is easy to feel the touch of fall in the air unless one has an overcoat.

There's a lot of hoey about who smacked Huey.

Grass Valley

Blackberries \$1.25 per crate. We pay 14c for eggs. 2 lbs steak 25c. 2 lbs butter 45 c. 2 lbs cheese 35c. Grass Valley Meat Market.

Misses Maud and Helene Homewood returned Sunday from a two months visit to their family in Iowa during which time they spent several days in Chicago looking over the fair. It is really a pageant of progress they say with replicas or originals of nearly every manufactured article old steamships, old locomotives, old airplanes. The wonders of science as pictured or described were found interesting.

The Baker and Lemley families attended the Sherman county picnic in Portland last Sunday.

Dr. and Mrs. Foley returned from Portland Tuesday after a short visit to consult with other doctors about Rachael's health.

Oscar Ruggles and family don't intend to live on spuds and beans this winter for they just returned from a trip to Mt. Adams with several gallons of huckleberries.

Elmer Coyle and son Gordon who have been working here left for their home in Oregon City this week.

M. J. Murphy, railroad engineer, who formerly pulled the train from Shaniko to Biggs on this line, was here this week repairing his house.

L. R. French was in Umatilla, Morrow and Gilliam counties this week working on the barge system for wheat shipment.

Roy Barnett somewhat recovered from his foot injury of last week is staying in town while hauling wheat.

Stanley Krasow is home from Portland, looking pretty peaked due to a sinus operation while on his stay in the city.

Doris Stradley came home Monday night from Spokane where she has been a guest of her sister for the past three months.

Rinehart Wassemiller and Miss Alice Dawson of The Dalles were married in Hood River Friday by Rev Hilgendorf of the Lutheran church. Mr. Wassemiller Sr. having watched the ceremony spent a few days visiting.

Miss Ottilie Wassemiller returned to her work as nurse in the Emmanuel hospital in Portland this week. She has been vacating here for several weeks.

V. A. Baker and family were visitors at Forest Grove last week.

Les Peterson is home from the hospital with his injured foot in a cast and a couple of pins sticking through it.

Harold Hughes was in Portland last week for his final visit before



Well, Roberts says if he'd only make love to her like a reasonable man she'd fall for him hard. That means she's still safe. . . . Bill Latham, you've got to get that girl back home in a hurry. Those infernal sheep and my foolish scheming sent her to Texas, and in order to get her home those sheep must be disposed of—in a hurry. God help me, I'll have to buy them myself—and if that Higuenes bandit ever gets on to the identity of the purchaser, he'll induce her to seek me so hard, when I'm unable to defend myself, that I'll never have the heart to eat a mutton chop again. Glenn, my boy, fighting your fight is going to be mighty expensive, but as an adjunct to the family I guess you're worth it." He telephoned to his office in New York, instructing it to secure him transportation and a drawing room to Los Algodones, Texas, and the following day was en route to consummate the crookedest piece of business he had ever contemplated—that of swindling himself!

In due course he arrived in Los Algodones and put up at the Mansion house. Neither the town nor the hotel had changed a particle in the twenty-five years that had passed since he had seen it last.

Nobody knew him, nor did any of the faces of the loungers in the chairs tipped back against the front of the hotel awaken in Crooked Bill the faintest flicker of recognition. At the

school matters claim his entire attention.

Hays Boyce is home from Prineville where he has spent the major part of the summer working.

Chris Taylor once a Grass Valleyite but now a resident of the John Day bottoms east of Moro, was in town last week for a day or two.

Vern and Taylor Baker and Edwin Peters went to the huckleberry patches on Mt. Hood this week to try their luck and ambition.

Bill Roth had the misfortune or bad aim to shoot himself in the arm with a small calibered rifle this week.

L. C. Dickson parted with his tonsils last week while in The Dalles.

Floyd and Elmer Thun have gone to California after working here during harvest.

Mrs. Florence Beezley is visiting here for a few days from Portland where she has been living for several months.

general store he purchased a pair of overalls, a canvas coat and a gray sombrero, which, combined with a soft white shirt and black tie and the boots (a relic of other days) which he habitually wore, metamorphosed Crooked Bill into a very fair imitation of a Texas citizen of the wide open spaces. Thus garbed he called upon Don Prudencio Alvizo.

"My name's Blodgett, Mr. Alvizo," he announced, and soothed his conscience with the thought that it was his middle name. "I understand you're the attorney for Tom Antrim's estate. I also understand he left quite a smear of sheep."

Don Prudencio nodded. "Are they for sale?"

"A sale might be arranged, with the consent of the court, Senator Blodgett," Don Prudencio answered guardedly.

"Fine," said Crooked Bill. "I'll buy them. I've a notion I can make a turn on those sheep. I understand Antrim's heir lives in New York, so I presume she'll be glad to sell and get rid of a nuisance."

Don Prudencio shrugged. "Maybe so." With his eyes he inquired what Senator Blodgett's offer might be. Flaxing looked up the market quotations in an El Paso paper Crooked Bill promptly named a figure one dollar per head above the highest market quotations.

Don Prudencio stirred slightly. "I will sell you those sheep, subject to the confirmation by the court," he purred. "I am the executor for the estate. The sheep have been counted recently and I will guarantee the count. I will write for you an offer for all those sheep, which you will sign. Then I will accept, subject to the confirmation by the court and you will pay me now on account ten thousand dollars, no? I am a queeck trader—like you."

"I'll have the money wired to the credit of the estate in any bank you name. It will be there tomorrow. You've sold something."

Don Prudencio Alvizo might have looked sleepy, but behind those slightly liversh eyes he was very wide awake. Within ten minutes he had William B. Latham sewed up on a contract of purchase and sale, provided the court approved Don Prudencio's action as executor.

When Crooked Bill had the contract safely tucked in his pocket he commenced talking with Don Prudencio about the deceased Tom Antrim, and learned that for a few days following Antrim's death the sheep had remained in charge of one Bill Dingle, Antrim's foreman. Later Dingle had been rather forcibly relieved of his charges by Jaime Higuenes, of the Rancho Valle Verde.

"That Dingle might be a good experienced sheepman to care for these sheep in case the court approves the sale," Crooked Bill suggested hopefully. "Where might one get in touch with him?"

Don Prudencio gave him minute directions for finding Mr. Dingle, and with a heart beating high with hope Crooked Bill took his departure.

"Tomorrow I'll hire a car and driver and he me out to saw those sheep off on Bill Dingle," he decided. "I'll give that grass thief a bargain he just naturally won't have the heart to refuse. Then I'll get an airplane to freight me back home in a hurry, because I mustn't waste any time with that Higuenes bird always on the job. Once home, I'll wire Roberts I'm very ill and to come home immediately. After that—the Deluge."

CHAPTER X

For a long time after Crooked Bill had left his office Don Prudencio Alvizo sat in his swivel chair and stared hard at the opposite wall. He was thinking equally hard. Presently he took down the telephone and called the proprietor of the Mansion house and with him held a conversation in Spanish. Then he hung up and waited. Presently the telephone rang and Don Prudencio answered, "Gracias." He hung up and wrote on a scratch pad the initials W. B. L. Thereafter he continued to stare at the wall for another hour.

The following night he appeared at the Rancho Valle Verde. Roberts was dressing for dinner, and Don Jaime was lying in his long chair on the gallery, with Ken Hobart beside him. "Hello, Prudy, what brings you out?" Don Jaime hailed him.

"I am mystified," Don Prudencio replied, and forthwith related in meticulous detail his impending sale of the Antrim sheep to a fat-headed old gentleman for a very great deal more than they were worth. "He said his name was Blodgett, and signed the contract, William L. Blodgett," the lawyer continued. "He did not say where he was from, but I could see he knew nothing of sheep and was a city man. He did not bargain with me and he

seemed to me to be quite too anxious to buy the sheep. So I telephoned to the Mansion house to inquire if he was stopping there and when I described him they said they had a guest there from New York by that name, but that his baggage carried the initials W. B. L."

"Hum-m-m!" Don Jaime grunted and sat up very straight. "He isn't a very good liar, is he? What does W. B. L. of New York, want of the Antrim sheep, and why should he pay such a high price for them? This is indeed very mysterious, Prudy. Did he deposit the ten thousand?"

"He did. It was telegraphed from New York."

"I wonder what the old idiot is going to do with those sheep?"

"I imagine he's going to get Bill Dingle to care for them."

"Not on my range, Prudy, the minute those sheep pass out of possession of the estate of Thomas Antrim, deceased, they're going to get off the Higuenes range. If they linger there'll be a fight or a foot race."

"Do you suppose Miss Antrim will agree to sell the sheep, my friend?" Don Prudencio queried.

"Sell them? Of course she'll sell them. You are her executor and you recommend the sale. I am her friend and business adviser and I certainly will be guided by such experts as you and me in making his decision, naturally he will sign an order of sale. Have a drink, after that long and interesting report!"

"Weeth de-light," said Don Prudencio.

The following morning Don Jaime motored in to Los Algodones, and Roberts accompanied him. As they swung down the main street past the Mansion house, with its row of chair-warmers on the front porch, Roberts started and laid a half-detecting hand on Don Jaime's arm.

"Jimmy, look! See that man sitting on the right of the line—the one in the blue overalls and canvas coat?"

"Yes."

"He's a replica of my Uncle Bill. If he had Uncle Bill's clothes on I'd get out and kiss him without question. Good gracious, what a marked resemblance! Why he and Uncle Bill are as near alike as twins."

"So?" murmured Don Jaime and stepped on his foot throttle. "Now that's mighty interesting."

He parked in front of the bank, excused himself to Roberts, entered and sought the cashier.

"Ed," he said, "yesterday ten thousand dollars was wired here to the credit of the estate of Thomas Antrim, as a first payment on account of the purchase, by one Blodgett, of the Antrim sheep. That young lady outside in my car is Antrim's heir, Miss Roberts Antrim. I want to know what New York bank wired it."

"Certainly, I don't think I violate any confidence. The Twelfth National."

"Who ordered the transfer?"

"A man by the name of Glenn Hackett."

"Thanks," said Don Jaime, and climbed back into the car with Roberts. When they were half-way back to Valle Verde he said to her very casually, "Do you know a man in New York by the name of Glenn Hackett?"

Roberts jerked erect with surprise. "Why, yes! He's one of my dearest friends and my Uncle Bill's attorney. Do you know Glenn, Jimmy?"

"No—and I hope I never do. I dislike him very much. He's in love with you!"

"That's none of your business, and besides, if he were, Jimmy, you couldn't expect me to discuss the subject with you. Who has been telling you about Glenn Hackett?"

"The fairies," Don Jaime replied enigmatically. And though Roberts pressed him to tell her more and employed every feminine wile to break down his resolve not to, he refused. As they alighted at the hacienda the outrageous man still further mystified her by saying:

"And I don't think so much of your old Uncle Bill, either."

This statement when there was not apparently any reason why Uncle Bill should ever be the subject of thought, was the final feather that broke the back of Roberts's curiosity. "Jimmy," she pleaded, "would you care to save a human life?"

"Some humans. You, for instance."

"Then tell me what has lowered my innocent Uncle Bill in your estimation."

"He's crooked."

"Oh, Jimmy, he isn't! His friends call him Crooked Bill because he's well, rather joyously sly, cunning and prudent. But dishonest—never!"

"He's out to boost the stock of this Glenn Hackett person to you and to depress mine."

Roberts smiled a small and knowing smile but said nothing.

without the slightest flicker of love-light in his eyes. "Are you enjoying your visit at Valle Verde, Bobby? I've wondered if you didn't feel a bit lonely and neglected here."

"Oh, no, Jimmy! You're such a friendly, comfortable person when you are around the house. Will you return from Los Algodones in time for dinner, Jimmy?"

"I don't know. I'll do my best to complete my business and be back in time. I don't relish driving around this country at night because just at present, for me, at least, the night has a number of eyes."

"You mean—?"

"I mean that your foreman, Bill Dingle, has been across the line, and something tells me he went there to hire some renegade to bump me off. I don't particularly blame him for that. A man acts according to his lights, and I gave Dingle and his men a pretty tough deal."

"But you went to town today unarmed, Jimmy?"

He shook his head, half removed his tropical whipcord coat and displayed



"I Gave Dingle and His Men a Pretty Tough Deal."

a gun under each arm, in a shoulder holster. "I try to appear non-poisonous off the ranch," he explained.

"Well, I have a few friends who keep me advised on matters in which I am interested. I'm pretty safe in daylight, but coming home in the dusk I'd just as lief have a good man for company. So you stay home, Roberts, and I'll take Ken Hobart with me. He's very reliable."

With a careless nod he left her, to drive over to the men's quarters for his foreman. Roberts stood in the patio entrance and watched him—saw Ken Hobart come out of the saddle room, receive his orders and go to his own adobe bungalow for his coat and a couple of carbines and ammunition belts. Then the two drove away, and Roberts, with terror in her heart, went to her room and wept, as her lively imagination pictured Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes, all bloody and limp, lying in the deep gray dust of the road to Los Algodones.

In the cool of the late afternoon Don Jaime dropped into a vacant chair beside Crooked Bill on the veranda of the Mansion house, after first inquiring, in Spanish, if by a chance the chair was reserved for any friend of his.

"Not at all," Crooked Bill replied in the same language, albeit haltingly, for the years had been long since his tongue had ceased so many vowels. "Help yourself, my friend."

"I thank you," Don Jaime replied in English, "I observe you do not speak Spanish too well. I beg pardon for addressing you in that tongue, but observing that you appear to be of this country I supposed you spoke the language of the country."

"Never was much of a hand at foreign languages," Crooked Bill replied with the utmost friendliness.

Don Jaime produced two cigars and handed one to his neighbor. Crooked Bill favored the weed with a swift, furtive appraisal, saw that it was a brand that retailed at three for a dollar, and decided he might risk it. "Much obliged," he murmured. "I'm a stranger here," he added. "My name's Blodgett—William Blodgett."

"I am pleased to meet you, Mr. Blodgett. I am Jaime Miguel Higuenes."

Crooked Bill started noticeably. "The h—l you are!" he burst out, unguardedly.

"Ah, you have heard of me?" Don Jaime's face betokened mild surprise and inquiry.

"Why yes, Senator Higuenes—if you will forgive me for bringing up a delicate subject. I believe you're the young man who waltzed old Tom Antrim into the bosom of Abraham."

"I had the pleasure," Don Jaime replied modestly.

"Would you mind shaking hands with me, Senator Higuenes? By the holy poker, that was a first-class job of work you did on Tom. I'm delighted to meet you, sir."

"The pleasure is mutual, Mr. Blodgett. You knew Antrim?"

"I should tell a man. He skinned me on a cow deal once. That rascal was so low he could kiss a rat without bending his knees."

To be continued.

Tourist, arrested in Paris—I tell you I'm an American citizen! You can't do that to me! Officer—Sing the Star-Spangled Banner.

Tourist—I can't. Officer—You're released. I see you are an American.

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