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NATION-WIDE DRY REFERENDUM ASKED

Removal of Question From
Politics Would Please
Leaders.

Washington, D. C.—A studied effort is under way here to interest dry members of congress in a nation-wide referendum on the prohibition question.

Of all the proposals advanced by the wets, this one now is looked upon by the wet leaders as the most promising means of solving the wet and dry problem which has agitated both houses for several seasons to the exclusion of pressing public business.

Dry senators and representatives have been told by the wet leaders that congress cannot effectually settle the controversy without a direct expression from the people, who, the wets contend, never have received an opportunity to pass on prohibition either before or since the 18th amendment was ratified.

Removal of this subject from the field of national politics would be welcomed by leaders of both of the major parties, but they do not believe it can be done through the medium of individual state referendums such as those held in the last general election because of the different forms in which the question would be presented.

NATIONAL FOREST FIRE LOSS \$638,351

Portland, Or.—Forest fires in and near the 22 national forests of Oregon and Washington did \$638,351 damage to tangible resources, according to the annual fire statistical report just issued by the district forester's office here.

The report covers 1490 fires, which burned over 241,432 acres of federal and private lands.

Figures include damage to merchantable timber and protection for forest, \$430,466; valuable young tree growth, \$130,781; forage, \$1591; improvements and miscellaneous, \$3395. These damage figures do not include such real economic losses as soil damage, wild life, water conservation and recreational values, on which figures are not available.

Of the area burned, 93,032 acres were mature or merchantable forest; 82,718 acres valuable for the protection of stream flow, and 57,165 acres, potential forest land. Merchantable timber burned amounted to 157,672, 000 board feet. Practically none of this timber is salvable.

Cost of fighting fires amounted to \$500,070. It is found that 690 fires were started by lightning, and 800 were man caused. Smokers started 281 fires; campers, 236; incendiary, 88; railroads, 33; brush burning, 31; lumbering, 22; miscellaneous, 59.

IDAHO WANTS LAKE WATER

Legislature Foretells Possible Use
by Other States.

Boise, Idaho.—To forestall any possible steps toward storage of water in Idaho lakes and streams for use in other states, until such time as careful study proves that Idaho does not need the water, house and senate of the Idaho legislature passed a bill empowering the governor to appropriate and hold in trust for the people of the state the water in Priest, Pend Oreille and Coeur d'Alene lakes.

This was done a few hours prior to a joint committee hearing at which representatives from Oregon and Washington placed the merits of the Columbia basin project before the legislature. Headed by J. A. Ford, secretary of the Columbia irrigation league, this delegation met the waterways committees of both house and senate.

Norwegian Envoy Will Stay.
Washington, D. C.—Helmer H. Bryn, who has been recalled by his government after serving as Norwegian minister here for more than 15 years, will remain in Washington with his family indefinitely on account of the condition of his son, Johannes, who was injured recently in an automobile accident. His recall is presumed to have resulted from a disagreement with his government over the wisdom of pressing certain shipping claims against the United States. Johannes Bryn has applied for American citizenship.

Conferees Split on Banking Bill.
Washington, D. C.—Conferees of the senate and house on the McFadden branch banking bill have been unable to agree, a report to the house said.

Kirkland Dentist Held as Slayer.
Seattle, Wash.—Dr. C. C. Dobbs, Kirkland dentist, was arrested here by authorities investigating the slaying of Letitia Whitehall, 14-year-old high school student.

COUNTY HEALTH NURSES

Sixteen Oregon Counties Employ 23
Public Health Teachers

The Oregon state law permitting counties to employ visiting nurses for tuberculosis work and to establish tuberculosis hospitals will soon pass its tenth birthday. This law was passed by the legislative session of 1917. The bill had the active backing of the voluntary health agencies of the state, including the Oregon Tuberculosis association.

Jackson county was the first to employ a public health nurse under the new law. This was done early in 1918. Coos county followed closely behind Jackson, employing a nurse later in the same year. Miss Jane Allen, demonstration nurse from the staff of the Oregon Tuberculosis association, had worked in both Jackson and Coos counties, giving health nursing demonstrations. These counties, therefore, had plenty of public backing to take advantage of the new permissive law. Miss Rosetta McGrail was the first nurse in Jackson county, while Miss Amy Cardiff was the first employed by Coos county.

The Oregon Tuberculosis association has continued the practice of supplying demonstration nurses to counties where the value of the service is not well enough known to permit the hiring of a nurse from county funds. On January 1st, 1927, county nurses were at work in sixteen counties, and one other county had just appropriated the funds for nursing service during 1927. Six of these counties have two nurses each, making a total of 23 nurses.

Eight counties that are without nursing service have filed applications with the Oregon Tuberculosis association for demonstrations of nursing service. Since there are only three nurses on the staff of the Association, a waiting list is established and the counties will be served in order of their applications. These nurses are paid from Christmas Seal funds.

It is the duty of the county nurse, according to the wording of the state law, "To give instruction to tuberculosis patients and others in such county relative to hygienic or sanitary measures to be observed in preventing the spread of disease; to act as visiting nurses throughout the county; to report communicable diseases of which they have knowledge; and to perform such other duties as may be assigned to them by the board of county commissioners." During the ten years since this law was passed there has come about a change of emphasis in the training of nurses, so that while they perform the duties enumerated in the law, they are primarily teachers of positive health, giving to children and adults the rules and spirit of normal healthy living.

MEAT STORY CONTEST

Chance for High School Girls To Win
University Scholarship

Local high-school girls are to be given an opportunity to win a university scholarship through competition in a national meat story contest, according to announcement of the event which has just been sent out to home economics teachers by the National Live Stock and Meat Board. Several scholarships are being offered in the fourth annual contest to be sponsored by this institution of research and education.

To compete, a student must write a story or theme on some phase of the subject of meat or the livestock industry. The stories are to be judged by a committee of home economics authorities. Dr. Louise Stanley, chief of the bureau of home economics, United States department of agriculture, who has been chairman of the judging committee for the three previous contests, will again serve in this capacity, it is said.

The board gives as the reason for this annual competition for scholarships a desire to stimulate a greater interest in the study of home economics, a subject which is considered of great importance to the coming generations of housewives. It is pointed out that today education is playing a most important part in the solution of the housewife's many problems. More than 10,000 girls competed last year, it is said, and the contest-directors express the belief that even more will enroll for the present contest, which will come to a close on March 15.

TRIUMPHS OF GENIUS

Had our farmers employed the same methods of sowing and harvesting 1926 wheat as were used 100 years ago, it would have required the labor of 115 million people for 9 months, and the labor of 50 million people in addition. By modern methods, the great crop was sowed and harvested by 3 or 4 million farmers in a few months.

Statistics show that had our railroads used the same methods of moving the great commerce of

1926 as were used, but 20 years ago, cost to the producers, shippers and consumers would be 350 per cent greater, and because of shortage of cars and lack of facilities, much of it would still be unmoved in the warehouses or rotting in the field.

Just as our farmers met the situation by using modern methods and machinery, so our railroads met it by providing additional facilities, including larger engines and cars to haul more tonnage per train.

Had primitive methods been used in cultivation and transportation of our crops and commerce in 1926, our condition despite our boundless resources, would not be unlike that of China or Russia, where modern methods are neither used nor understood and where both productivity and transportation are alike still in the primitive stage.

As a people we have had the good sense to avail of the achievements of inventive genius, and have progressed and prospered as have no other people in the world.

In regulating transportation and public utilities, we should see to it that facilities provided to accommodate our growing industrial needs, like larger locomotives to haul heavier trains, are not wastefully restricted by laws reducing and limiting either capacity to serve the public in moving traffic or to earn a reasonable amount on their cost. We are a big country and must do business in a big way.

CHEAP POWER

Samuel Gompers, for many years chief of the American Federation of Labor, has been succeeded by a man who is a student of industrial affairs and who notes the possibility of changing location of many industries because of long-distance power transmission. William Green, now head of the federation, has made the following statement which indicates how closely labor is watching the development of power:

"Power is one of the few commodities now sold at less than pre-war rates. This reduced rate follows in part from economies in power production and transmission, central generating stations with interconnections using hydro-electric and steam-generated power to supplement each other in carrying the regular as well as the peak loads.

"With the tremendous water power of our western country, we may confidently expect the center of population to shift to the west. Irrigation will make it possible for the west to feed a larger population. Already industries are developing which will make the west self-sustaining. Air and motor transportation, telephone and radio communication will reduce the barriers between the east and the west. Industries are moving to the smaller towns and farm work is becoming mechanized. These changes are of fundamental importance to the labor movement."

THE PLAGUE OF LAWS

Wm. P. Helm, Jr., who specializes in government statistics, in an article in the American Mercury, entitled "The Plague of Laws," declares that total number of laws theoretically operative in the United States, including city, county, state and national, approximates 10 million, and that the time has come for a new Justinian to junk the whole complicated mess and substitute a simple code, like that of the Roman lawgiver.

In 1925 no fewer than 13,000 new laws appeared on the statute books of the 48 states. Fifteen thousand American cities added 4,833 laws in one year, and there are some 13,000 important towns and cities, and all of them are busy grinding out ordinances. State legislatures will this year grind out thousands of additional laws. Commenting on the situation, the Salem, Oregon, Capital Journal says:

"The growth of bureaucracy can be traced directly to the extension of the law, and bureaucracy grows by multiplication of the laws. They supplement each other. The more laws, the more bureaucrats to enforce them. The more bureaucrats, the more laws to increase and extend their power, until we have reached the point where the whole top-heavy system is breaking down and the law becomes a joke."

It can be added that particularly every new law increases taxes, and one of the best ways to bring about tax reduction is to stop passing new laws.

Garden seeds planted in Oregon are found to do better if planted about 1 1/2 times deeper than the diameter of the seed. Seeds planted shallow come up more quickly than those planted deeper, but the latter soon catch up in growth and develop sturdier plants because of the deeper-seeded roots, according to experiments conducted by the plant class at the state college.

OREGON STATE NEWS OF GENERAL INTEREST

Brief Resume of Happenings of
the Week Collected for
Our Readers.

The Hood River county court appointed W. J. Koonen county fruit inspector.

Oregon's 1926 apple crop is estimated at 3,000,000 boxes, with 5021 cars shipped up to January 15.

A modern 100-room hotel will be built in La Grande this year, according to a late announcement.

Joseph E. Elliott, 45, was killed while blasting stumps at his place one mile northeast of Canby last week.

Receipts of the state real estate department during 1926 aggregated \$17,256.50, according to a report just issued.

The logging camp of Clark & Wilson at Wilk, closed since early December, resumed operation last week with 200 employees.

The Redmond postoffice is now listed as an office of the second class, receipts having gone over the top December 31, with \$250 to spare.

Monmouth voters last week approved the bond issue to purchase a site for proposed new normal school buildings. The vote was 186 to 8.

Both the Bandon and North Bend chambers of commerce have approved the proposed game preserve from the Coquille river at Bandon to the California line on the south.

The potato production of Columbia county this year in shipments eclipses the combined carloads of the last five years, according to A. L. Morris, potato inspector of Columbia county.

The St. Helens Pulp & Paper company began last week shipping its product of kraft paper into the markets of the world. A carload is now leaving each day. There are 250 men on the payroll.

There was collected by the state treasurer during the last two years inheritance tax aggregating \$1,117,000, or approximately \$350,000 in excess of that collected during the preceding biennium.

Thomas W. Riches, Silverton native, died at his home there last week. He was born at Silverton 73 years ago and lived there all his life. He was postmaster from 1888 to 1892 and from 1896 to 1907.

Plans for construction of a sulphite pulp and paper mill of large size at Astoria have been matured, and contract on preliminary construction work has been awarded according to a recent announcement.

An even 10,000 hens have been signed up by Lane county farmers for the proposed branch of the Pacific Poultry Producers, to be established at Eugene, according to Q. S. Fletcher, county agent.

Receipts of the state insurance department during 1926 aggregated \$702,789.32, while disbursements totaled \$32,904.52, according to a report prepared recently by Will Moore, state insurance commissioner.

Fifteen thousand cubic yards of crushed rock has been contracted for to be used on the Oregon-Washington highway from Pilot Rock through Pendleton to Freewater, C. E. Carter, state engineer, announced.

Will Moore, for the past four years insurance commissioner, fire marshal and real estate commissioner under the administration of ex-Governor Walter M. Pierce, resigned his office to become effective February 1.

When Walter E. Smith, formerly of Linn county but now a resident of Klamath Falls, was 4 years old, he swallowed a needle. The other day when he was 37 years of age, the needle worked out of his body through his hip.

Sheep men of Baker county have organized under the name of the Baker County Wool Growers' association. At the annual meeting to be held about May 15, permanent officers will be elected and a constitution and by laws drawn up.

There was one fatality due to industrial accidents in Oregon during the week ending January 20, according to a report prepared by the state industrial accident commission. The victim was J. C. Longquist, timber tapper, of Portland.

Hordes of mice are devastating grain fields in Klamath Falls section of the country and a well organized drive is under way to rid the community of rodents. Five years ago the mice made a similar invasion of grain fields near there.

That the battleship Oregon has fully justified its presence in Portland harbor is the statement contained in a report filed with Governor Patterson by the Battleship Oregon commission. The report shows that approximately 50,000 people paid for the privilege of visiting the ship during the 18 months it has been in the harbor, while another 100,000 persons were admitted to the ship without charge.

SPECIAL TAX LEVIES UNFAIR

Insurance companies have been obliged to turn tax collector in addition to providing protection for the public, because of special insurance taxes included in premiums paid by policyholders.

The original purpose of such special taxes was to maintain state insurance departments, but a recent survey shows that only \$1 out of every \$27 of these taxes goes for that purpose. The rest is used for state functions for which policyholders have already been taxed as citizens. These functions have no more relationship to policyholders than to any other type of taxpayers.

Figures published by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States show special taxes paid by policyholders in 1925 amounted to \$72,951,023. This is \$20,000,000 higher than the total amount collected from the policyholders in 1922, yet the increase in the amount of money spent for the maintenance of state insurance departments was just a little over \$339,000 during this time.

In other words, insurance companies, through insurance premiums, have to collect millions of dollars annually and turn it in to the general tax fund. Then some agitator will claim that insurance rates are too high, but never point to the fact that a good slice of government overhead has to be included in insurance rates.

In addition to the foregoing figures, counties and municipalities assess special local taxes against insurance companies in many instances. It was recently brought out at a hearing in Kentucky that municipal taxes charged against fire insurance companies range from \$5 to \$75,028.

The Insurance Department of the United States points out that "the proportion of special insurance taxes collected from policyholders, which is spent for service to them, has been constantly declining from 64.8 per cent in 1915, until it amounted to only 3.65 per cent in 1925. In that year 96.35 per cent of these special imposts was spent for general state purposes."

As the cost of government increases with every added function, innumerable schemes to "camouflage" tax levies and keep the general public in ignorance of the full amount of taxes it really pays, are created. Industries against which special taxes are levied, and which are forced to collect these amounts as part of the price of their service or commodity, are too often unjustly blamed by the public for costs which they cannot control. Insurance is a good illustration.

MORE LAWS — TO BE BROKEN

"Insurance is a purely social scheme, not a police auxiliary. Most owners who are responsible and can afford the cost carry liability insurance."

"Now, in order to provide liability for the damage cost of the irresponsible, it is proposed to load it on the responsible. But it will not have the effect of keeping off the road any reckless driver who has the money to pay a premium. Upon a certain class of people, it will have the effect of a license to drive as they please and let the insurance policy pay. It would open the way for fraud," says The Insurance Field.

"The regulation of automobiles is purely a police problem. There are laws and regulations to control drivers, but they are largely disregarded and unenforced in every city and on country roads. The automobile has become a necessity. The public gives its consent, participates in its use and to that extent surrenders its rights to particular protection except through the exercise of police regulation. The pedestrian is therefore put on the same notice as the car driver — each must look to himself. He can't hand his responsibility over to a third party."

If the states and cities already fail to enforce their police regulations, what is to be expected when more regulations are added which make it easier for the irresponsible to escape all personal responsibility?

OUR NEW FORESTS

New York has 30,000,000 tree seedlings ready for planting distribution, and most or all of these will be set out into permanent forests, this year.

There was a day when New York white pine forests seemed inexhaustible; but they melted away like June snow in the face of the great American market. Now, however, intelligent tax laws and a growing realization of the need of forests for health, beauty, fuel, building materials, water conservation, bring a replanting of the once deserted forest lands.

Perhaps no crusade in the history of American business has been as rapid or as effective as that for reforestation. The tendency is so strong toward reforestation that an

actual gain in forest acreage may be brought about within the next decade.

One thing can prevent this gain — preventable fires in the great forested sections. Education for those who will be taught, punishment for those who will not obey, will have to be extended until the whole nation realizes that a burned forest is a crime.

MORE FARM INCOME

"The Agricultural Review frequently has pointed out that the income of many American farmers is not confined to the receipts from sales of products of the farms; that the aggregate earnings of those engaged in agricultural activities is far greater than the total net farm revenues. The reason for this is that most farming operations are seasonal in character, which leaves much time to be otherwise employed. Not all farmers are located within reach of steady outside employment, nor where they can profitably engage in a supplementary business enterprise. But the number who are so situated is large, and is rapidly increasing."

"Highway construction, and public works of various kinds give a great many farmers opportunity to profitably employ their otherwise spare time. The decentralization of industries, which now appears to have fairly started, is bringing employment within reach of previously isolated farms, and in addition is supplying vastly greater and better local markets. Improved highways are bringing customers to rural doors, and making it possible to conduct profitable side lines."

"Electrical development promises to greatly increase these opportunities, and to make rural life easier and more attractive by supplying power and light to all farms within a considerable radius of the newly created industrial centers. A competent authority declares that electric current, at reasonable rates, will be available on more than a million American farms, or one in six, within a very few years. The development of super-power systems already is opening the way for industrial decentralization in a larger way. A super-power system is one in which the power generated at various favorable points is connected up by means of high-tension lines, so that it can be delivered at any point within the system, in such quantities and at such times as may be required."

"Modern industrial tendency is toward smaller production units, employing from a few hundred to a few thousand people each. Skilled factory managers in most lines produce factories of this size more efficient than the larger ones. Standardization of machinery, and of all parts and most products thereof, renders these smaller units independent of the great, congested industrial districts."

NEW AIR MAIL RATE

A new postage rate on air mail, effective February 1, is announced in the Postal Bulletin by the postmaster general. The new rate is 10 cents for each half ounce, regardless of distance, and amends the previous regulation requiring 10 cents an ounce for the first 1,000 miles and five cents more for each additional 500 miles."

The new rate includes the transportation of mail to and from mail routes, while the old regulation required the adding of 10 cents extra for delivery to destinations on extra contract air mail routes off the transcontinental line. To provide a uniform rate, like the 2-cent first class postage rate regardless of distance, is the object of the new regulation. All the sender will need to know now before affixing stamps, is the weight of the letter in half ounces, or fractions thereof.

FLU EPIDEMIC MAY SPREAD

There is danger that America this year may suffer an influenza epidemic similar to that which swept the country in 1918. Influenza in Europe may find its way across the Atlantic within a few weeks, much after the way the 1918 epidemic entered."

Public health physicians in Atlantic ports have been advised to keep an extra close watch for any signs of importation of the disease. Already a number of cases have sprung up in the eastern part of the United States.

"Now is the time to be on guard for the influenza germ," Dr. Pierce, assistant state public health service, warned. "Watch your resistance and vitality, making your resistance and vitality, making you susceptible to the influenza germ. Influenza is a common cold with a fever."

That's Right

It isn't your position, but your disposition that makes you happy or unhappy.—The Outlook.

MAILED FIST SHOWN CHINESE BY POWERS

The Armed Forces of Great
Britain and Japan Are
Mobilized.

Shanghai.—The mailed fist, as exemplified in the armed forces of Great Britain and Japan, thrust itself into the foreground of the Chinese situation. With additional reports of constantly spreading anti-foreign and anti-Christian agitation, and the success of negotiations for the return of foreign concessions to China undecided at Hankow, both powers made unmistakable military moves which, however, were described as "merely precautionary measures."

From Hong Kong the British dispatched three companies of Punjab, northern India, troops to Shanghai, while from the Sasebo naval station four Japanese destroyers departed for unannounced points in China.

In Hong Kong it was stated that the departure of the native Indian soldiers marked the commencement of the British quota for the defense of Shanghai, in accordance with an agreement with the United States, France and Japan, revealing for the first time that the powers had so completely considered the possibility of the foreign settlement being attacked that it had been decided how many men each power should supply for the defense of the concessions.

The dispatch of the Punjab troops to Shanghai follows closely a disturbance here Saturday night, during which scores were injured when police of the international settlement battled with celebrating tramway strikers.

U. S. TO ACT ALONE IN CHINESE CRISIS

Washington, D. C.—The American government is preparing to act independently of other powers in the present Chinese crisis, it was plainly indicated at the White House after a cabinet meeting at which the situation was discussed.

President Coolidge does not consider there is any similarity between the American situation in China and that of the other foreign powers. He pointed out to callers that the British and other foreign powers had extensive concessions in China, where the United States has none. Therefore, he does not believe the respective situations are analogous.

Simultaneously with the promulgation of this official viewpoint by the White House, the house foreign affairs committee voted unanimously to report favorably the Porter resolution, calling upon President Coolidge and Secretary of State Kellogg to pursue an independent course in China and to negotiate treaties with China on a basis of equality.

BAN JOHNSON REMOVED

Ill Health Declared Cause for Relieving
American League President.

Chicago.—Ban Johnson is no longer active president of the American league, the organization he founded 27 years ago.

The American league executive, baseball's stormy petrel, was removed from actual control by his club owners Sunday night on the plea that he was suffering from ill health. He will retain his salary for the present as his contract runs until 1935, but it was said that he would never again be in active control of the league's affairs.

The showdown between Kennesaw Mountain Landis, baseball commissioner, and Johnson, over the dismissal of Ty Cobb and Tris Speaker, did not come off.

Frank J. Navin, president of the Detroit club, and vice-president of the league, was named to assume the duties of president.

Joint Usage of Idaho Lines Granted.

Washington, D. C.—The interstate commerce commission granted permission to the Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation company and the Northern Pacific for joint possession and use of the line of railroad under construction by the Northern Pacific in Clearwater county, Idaho, between Orofino and Headquarters, and of the existing Northern Pacific line between Joseph and Stites.

Hagenbarth Heads Wool Growers.
Butte, Mont.—Frank J. Hagenbarth of Spencer, Idaho was elected president of the National Wool Growers' association for the 14th consecutive year. The next annual meeting will be held in Ogden Utah.

Lee Named Insurance Commissioner.
Salem, Or.—Clare A. Lee of Eugene was appointed state insurance commissioner to succeed Will Moore, who has resigned.