

The Santiam News.

Politically Independent

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POLITICAL SCHOOLS.

The indications now are that the university appropriation of \$125,000 annually that was provided for last winter by the legislature, will be referred to the people at the election one year hence. Just what action the people will take at that time is somewhat uncertain. The people of Oregon are very much in favor of a first-class educational system. They are, also, in favor of higher or a college education, providing of course that it can be placed within the reach of all the boys and girls of every locality. But it is doubtful, if our present system of state colleges should be submitted to a vote, that it would be sustained.

When our so-called normal schools, were taken up by the state, no one thought that it would cause the erection of a political combination that would debase our entire state politics. But such has been the case. In the state legislatures for several years the school combine has completely dominated legislative action. Nor was the session of last winter an exception to the rule of late years. While it is true, there was an effort to curb and hold in the back ground the aggressiveness of the normals, the university fully supplied or occupied the position in legislative matters the normals had previously held and the political influence of the schools was quite as great as at any previous session.

The entire object of the participation of the state colleges in politics, is to filch money from the state treasury. The aggressiveness of the members from the college counties, assisted by a strong lobby, composed usually of the faculty of the colleges, has been sufficient to dominate or control all legislative action. As a result, we have seen appropriations for the benefit of these colleges, increased at each session of the legislature until, at the present time, there is a revolt among the people against the extravagance.

Each of the state colleges are assuming a sort of political complexion—not Republican or Democratic, but of a character that is calculated to subject all things else of a public nature, to the interests of the schools. Indeed some of the presidents and professors hold their positions, not because of their efficiency as instructors of learning, but for the amount of political influence they can exert. Hence, if a professor understands the political game thoroughly and is an adept manipulator of political wires, his standing in the particular collegiate institute he may belong to or represent, is assured.

No aggressive and insatiable have these state schools become that they are coming to be looked upon by the people, as injurious rather than beneficial and a growth that must be subdued, if not completely exterminated in the end.

The fight that has been conducted to prevent the reference of the university appropriation to the people, exemplifies the tenacity and greed of at least one of these state colleges. The university people do not seem to care whether the people are willing to contribute the extravagant amounts of money they demand or not. They seem to be willing to take advantage of any legal technicality available, in order to prevent the people from expressing, through their votes, an opinion about the matter. They seem to think because money is collected from the people by taxation and put in the state treasury, that the people should exercise no further control over it.

One of these days, however, there will be an awakening. These political colleges will find out that the people will insist upon dictating how tax moneys shall be expended. They will ascertain that, while the people are favorable to higher education, providing it can be made general, they will oppose higher education for particular localities, at the expense of all the people.

Taxation to be just, should be equal. The burden should bear equally upon all and all should enjoy equal benefits so far as possible. If the state has made a mistake in undertaking to maintain colleges in particular localities, the sooner the correction is made, the better and less expense it will be and the action of the partisans of these established colleges is hastening the day materi-

THE NATION'S BIRTHDAY.

One Hundred and thirty years ago yesterday, our nation was born. An instrument known as "The Declaration of Independence" was promulgated and from which day our nation dates its existence. Probably every anniversary of the nation's birth has been celebrated more or less generally throughout our country in some way. We of to-day think we are patriotic and that we celebrate the day in a duly patriotic manner, when we hear the venerable document penned by Thomas Jefferson read, mayhap in a prosy manner, have listened to the spread-eagle effort of a citizen of more or less renown and then devote the rest of the day to witnessing sports of some character. Is it thinkable that our Revolutionary fathers celebrated the day in this manner?

To them the anniversary must have inspired a feeling akin to sacredness. It must have meant more to the heroes who fought from Bunker Hill to Yorktown, than it does to the people who celebrated it yesterday. They knew by personal experience of hardships and suffering, what the cost had been to make possible the establishment of a "Government of the people, by the people, for the people." The day must have meant more to the heroes, whose bare feet left marks of blood upon the frozen ground over which they marched, than it does to a vast majority of us who celebrated the anniversary of the day on which our fathers declared they were free and independent of the crown of England.

It is reasonable to suppose that we of to-day, 131 years after the birth of our nation, should have a less sacred veneration for the natal day than did the heroes of 76. But do we not inject too much frivolity and too little real patriotism into the observances of the day. Have we not allowed a spirit of commercialism to supplant the patriotism of our Revolutionary Fathers, in a great measure? Have we and do we to-day maintain the government of the United States in the spirit of purity and patriotism that inspired the formulation of the Declaration of Independence?

Each anniversary of the day on which we listen to the reading of the Declaration of principles, should generate within us a spirit of better and truer citizenship. It should inspire within us a determination to preserve and hand down to posterity a government which guarantees to all "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The anniversary of our natal day should be a day devoted to the teaching and instilling of the lessons of patriotism into the minds of the young, rather than a day given over to frivolity and sports. If our people could be made to realize the vast cost of blood and treasure the establishment and protection of the nation has demanded, surely our modern celebrations would be given a different turn from what they are now given.

UNDESIRABLE CITIZENS.

Since President Roosevelt promulgated the term "Undesirable citizens," in speaking of Harriman, Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, much has been said by the newspapers concerning who are undesirable citizens. As a simple concrete statement of fact, any citizen who is a habitual law-breaker, is undesirable. The town, county, state or nation would be the better for it, if all such citizens could be transported to some unknown and undiscovered land beyond the seas, where law-abiding and law-obeying citizens would hear of them no more. Every criminal law on our statutes was enacted to restrain and control the actions of these undesirable citizens.

Some citizens are more undesirable than others. Because of their ability to injure the body politic. Yet not all undesirable citizens are law-breakers. In nearly every community there are men who seem to enjoy blocking public enterprises; who will always oppose a public improvement; who are ever ready to discount upon their neighbor's faults, but will never commend his virtues; who pursue a policy which retards the growth of their town or community and who can see nothing good in an enterprise without it contributes dollars to their pockets, all of whom are undesirable. A town or community is the gainer when such people elect to emigrate. Then there are the scandal mongers and talebearers who are ever ready to embellish or magnify the story as he or she repeats it to a neighbor; the mischief maker and he who is continually quarreling with his neighbor; the loafers and drones who are content to subsist upon the earnings and exertions of others, all are undesirable and a detriment to any community in which they may live.

This undesirable list could be greatly extended, for anyone who does not contribute to the benefit and welfare of the community in which he or she lives—who is a drone or a detriment, is undesirable. The question for all of us to take home to ourselves is: "Am I an undesirable citizen?" "Am I pursuing a course of conduct that will make the world the better because I have lived?" Every man or woman has the ability to make the world better, no matter how humble his walk in life may be, if he will. Any man can be a law-abiding citizen if he will. The citizen who is law-abiding; who does his duty as a citizen; whose example through life is worthy of emulation; who makes the world better because he has lived; no matter how humble his station in life may be, is in no sense an undesirable citizen.

EAST AND WEST.

It is interesting to learn that the yellow man as well as the white man, has a "tradition." Mr. Harold Bolce comments this important fact to the world through an article in Apuley's Magazine for July. The Japanese small as he is physically, labors under the weight of a mission to the world, says Mr. Bolce. He has heard a call to go forth and convert the white races to the error of their ways. If he succeeds, the change which we shall experience will be considerable, for he maintains that our religion, our economics and political institutions all need reforming.

The Japanese, it appears, does not deny that he has borrowed railroads, telephones and science from Western nations; but he reminds us that his use of them is a great deal better than ours. Our progress is hindered by conventionalism and tradition. Japan has discarded both. As we go forward we "drag at each other a long heaving chain" which links us to the superstitions and customs of the past. In an hour and a half from the island empire have attained to complete intellectual freedom. They reverence nothing but truth; they fear nothing but error. One of our eminent philosophers compares our religion to a cup of tea. It has an aroma and leaves from the past. It is a stimulant; but in other respects it is worthless. One religion differs from another only as black tea from green. Chinese among them is a matter of local color. The mission of the Japanese, as they see it, is to bestow the blessings of intellectual freedom upon the rest of the world. Since they already enjoy this blessing and we do not, therefore, in their own estimation, they are our superiors. Divine Providence has appointed them to be our teachers and possibly to use their army and navy as instruments of instruction, just as we fortified our pedagogy in the Philippines with military force.

As to our religion, the Japanese smiles at our silly stories such as we smile at the myths of the Greeks and Romans. He thinks it is a sign of mental weakness in us to reverence them. What we call "inspiration" is, him an absurdity. "If the Bible is true," he says, "inspiration makes it no truer. If it is false, inspiration cannot save it." He does not see good in all religions and some bad. The good he accepts; the bad he rejects. The stories about the progress of Christianity in Japan in 1854, he says, are much error, Mr. Bolce believes. Its ethics and some of its economic teachings find acceptance there, but as an ecclesiastical system it is condemned. The Japanese is an agnostic. He places Jesus and Herod on a par on the same level, taking something from each but yielding divine honor to neither. He lumps all our beliefs about heaven, hell, the resurrection, and so on, together as superstition, which he declares, is vain when compared with science. Our religion is no better than our religion. It is still enslaved to tradition. We permit the process of industry to go to the biggest hog; Japan distributes them throughout the state, and public utilities are made to exist for the people; Japan makes these contributions to the general welfare by state ownership. She has, in fact, without noise or turmoil instituted a state socialism, which is pretty nearly perfect and which makes her in all probability, the most efficient commercial factor in the world. That her state socialism has not destroyed private initiative is too patent to need assertion.

All this the Japanese claim for themselves, while they say to us that our economics still waddle blindly in hypocrisy and error. In this as in religion, we are dominated by superstitions and frightened by shadows. Japan alone has the courage to take the mill by the horns and deal with realities. This, they claim, is the second ground of their superiority to the "pure Caucasian breed."

The third is their centralized form of government, which combines the maximum of executive force and efficiency with the maximum of individual liberty. They do not believe that our dual system, with its centrifugal tendencies, enhances either personal liberty or governmental efficiency. As an example for the world to follow they deem it a failure.

Is the Japanese claim of superiority to the Western nation wholly unfounded? In the competition between the east and the west which has just been begun and which will continue until one of the other has won a decisive victory, will our bondage to religious and economic tradition help or hinder us? If it hinders, have we the force of character to emancipate ourselves before it is too late?—Oregonian.

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