

THE SCIO TRIBUNE

ISSUED EVERY THURSDAY BY
T. L. DUGGER, EDITOR AND PROP.

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THE GOVERNMENT

MERCHANT SHIPS

One of the chief measures now before congress, is the purchase of a merchant marine by the government. President Wilson, when making his only political address since his inauguration, last week at Indianapolis, placed particular stress upon the importance to the people of this measure and indicated that he would use all his influence to have the measure enacted into law at the present session.

The policy of government owned and operated merchant vessels, right at the present time, is of great significance. Presumably, if the government owned and operated a line or lines of freight carriers at the present time, the freight charges would be based upon the cost of operation plus the interest on the investment and plus a reasonable margin of profit. Manifestly it would be unjust to private freight carriers for the government to do otherwise. But, the government ships would serve as a freight regulator, which would make the present excessive tonnage charges impossible.

With a tonnage freight rate of from 40 to 50 shillings from Portland to Liverpool, England, a freight rate which the government ships would enforce wheat, instead of being worth \$1.35 per bushel f. o. b. Portland, would be worth at least \$1.75 per bushel. Wheat carriers now get any tonnage freight rates they demand.

But it is going to be a difficult matter to get congress to enact this law. All congressmen who oppose government ownership and all the influence of private owned ships, will fight the adoption of the measure to the finish. The vast majority of the republican membership of congress also, will oppose the measure for political reasons—just because President Wilson is so pronouncedly in its favor.

The Tribune believes the government should undertake the ownership of any kind of property when it is so used by private owners that it becomes oppressive to the people in general. This is particularly true as applied to the railroads, steamships, express companies and the telegraph. While the incorporations engaged in the above lines of business are entitled to a reasonable profit, they should not be allowed to so monopolize their undertakings that they become oppressive to the people.

We hope that congress will enact the ship purchase bill. Even if such government owned ships should be tied up in docks. The mere fact that they were ever ready to enter into the carrier business, would hold private owners down to reasonable freight charges.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The present high prices at which grain is being sold as compared with the prices for many years, reminds one of the price conditions of fifty years ago, when wheat was worth \$2.50 per bushel. The underlying cause for the high prices then as now, was war.

The beginning of the end of our great civil war was at hand. General Grant was then forging the chains which were fastened about Lee's army with a death grip and which grew tighter and tighter to culminate in its surrender early in April at Appomattux. General Sherman had completed his memorable march to the sea and was about to undertake the march northward, prepared to crush any hostile army which would dare to intervene.

The rebellion was conquered before summer began. President Lincoln was just completing his first term and was inaugurated the second time before the surrender of Lee's army and the crushing of armed resistance to the flag. The assassination of the great emancipator occurred on the evening of April 14 and his death early on the following morning.

During the year, nearly all of the volunteer Union troops were discharged and sent to their homes. This writer, being of the number, was mustered out of the service in the month of August.

While the prices of grain, seems bound skyward at the present time, most other commodities which go to make up a living, have not materially increased. Fifty years ago, the price of every commodity was high, much higher than the present colossal war will probably cause. That our readers may be able to make a comparison of the prices then and now, we quote a few of them, from memory. Wheat \$2.50 per bushel and reached \$3 before the decline began. Corn \$1 to \$1.10; fat hogs 10 to 12 cents per pound, live weight. An ordinary respectable suit of clothes \$50 to \$60. A pair of shop made boots \$18 to \$25. Unroasted coffee 50 cents per pound. Farm laborers from \$35 to \$50 per month until the return of the soldier boys, when the decline in labor soon began.

Should the European war continue for some months or years, which seems an impossibility, we are likely to have almost civil war prices for grain before the end of the present year. Indeed, such prices would obtain now, if ocean freights had not been multiplied two or three times. Our farmers will be wise if they make wheat their principal grain crop this year, for all indications point to good prices when the coming crop is harvested. Other commodities are likely to be increased somewhat in sympathy with grain, but nothing near the prices which prevailed at the close of the civil war. There is no existing cause to greatly increase domestic manufactures. Indeed, the foreign war, alone, prevents them from becoming cheaper.

While war is a deplorable affair, be it wherever it may, the United States is fortunate to not be involved and to be in a position to benefit from the misfortunes of other nations. We occupy just the reverse of fifty years ago. Then Europe was fattening from our misfortune and now we are reaping profits because of her troubles.

As a matter of course, President Wilson's Indianapolis speech does not suit the Oregonian. Anything labelled "democratic" arouses that paper's ire, at once. But the speech will suit the desires of the general masses of the people, for all that.

DO IT NOW

If farmers or others, who contemplate buying building material, fencing, machinery of any kind, wagons, buggies or even house supplies, would purchase them at once and pay cash therefor, our stringency of times would cease at once.

Money is valuable to a community only when it is moving. It can do you or anyone else no good if it lies idle in the old stocking or the bank. Unless it keeps moving, men cannot pay their debts, merchants are at a standstill and business generally is depressed.

Much of the so-called hard times and money stringency is in our minds. We conclude that the financial outlook is not good and we close our purses to all expenditures not absolutely necessary. The result is "hard times." On the other hand if we all would undertake contemplated improvements, buy the machine, wagon or whatever we need, the hard times buggaboo would be curtailed instantly.

The Tribune does not blame anyone for being economical and provident. It does not desire to see people spend money needlessly. But it does believe that the people could do much towards dispelling "hard times" if they would purchase what they need and pay spot cash for it.

Money is absolutely valueless while it remains inactive in your pockets or in the bank. If you owe a debt to your neighbor and have the money, pay it. Then he can pay someone he owes and the "hard times" buggaboo is dispelled at once.

The Tribune is in receipt of the last annual message of Governor West to the Oregon legislature. The document is a plain statement of fact of all features of the state government, is candid and the recommendations for future action of the legislature are of a very sensible, practical nature. Governor West's last state paper, certainly reflects honor upon himself and an evident desire to advance the public's interests in every sense.

If the members of the legislature which met Monday, live up to their promises of economy and retrenchment, they will do much towards restoring the Oregon legislature in the confidence of the people. The people expect that our Linn county members will make good.

City Health Notice

Any person or head of family, having any contagious disease in the family and who fails to report the same within ten hours to the county or city health officer are subjected to fine.

Any person having such disease or recovering from the same, are not allowed to appear in any public place, street or public gathering unrecovered and properly disinfected under penalty.

Copied from State and City Health Laws.

When you want printing done, the kind that is pleasing to the eye. The Scio Tribune office is the place to get it. We always please. We never disappoint.

Money can't buy Glasses

FROM
Dr. M. L. Morris

Which are not backed by a Guarantee of Absolute Satisfaction or your Money Back.

At Scio Hotel twice each month.

SEE HIM JANUARY 25

MANY HENS EGGS ARE LOST YEARLY

Of the \$500,000,000 to 700,000,000
200,000,000 Are Lost in
Transit

New York, Jan. 4.—Hens of the United States lay between \$500,000,000 and \$700,000,000 worth of eggs every year, and of that tremendous number of eggs \$200,000,000 worth are either destroyed in transit between the nest and the retailer or are ruined by improper handling.

That was part of the testimony given by William Mann, an attorney employed by the New York Central lines to determine why such large claims were made by commission men for damaged eggs. He testified at the Attorney-General's inquiry into the butter and egg industry of this state.

"An estimated loss of \$50,000,000 worth of eggs in the United States results from needless breakage in handling, while a loss of \$150,000,000 annually results from unnecessary adding, spoiling and deterioration of good eggs due to improper handling," Mr. Mann said.

This investigator also said he had found numerous instances where dealers outside of the city made a business of buying at a small price eggs that were not fit for use, shipping them to agents in this city, who then filed large claims against the railroads for damages. Other firms, he said, had depended for their profits upon the damages they could collect from railroads. "The hen invariably lays a good egg," he said, "but one in every 10 is broken in shipment, and three are so badly handled they are stale, so that six of every 10 eggs reach the consumers."

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Dr. T. K. Sanderson

DENTIST

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