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"The Spirit of Lexington."

Years ago the cry used to be, "Down with this," and "Down with that." It didn't make any special difference what it was, the main idea was to down it. The word "down" appears more on the pages of ancient and mediaeval history than any other word. One is surprised that anything of importance was ever accomplished.

Last Saturday the speeches delivered at Lexington at the Farmers picnic had as their theme, co-operation. It wouldn't have taken five minutes to say all that was said about the other things. Co-operation was in the air and after the first speaker started we were off on high gear.

What was the reason for all this co-operation talk. In the first place, a farmer is a man who is in partnership with Nature. All races of men, worth mentioning, have been on chummy terms with Mother Earth. Co-operation among the farmers is a new thing. Some think it isn't but we do. Early man was a wild, roving sort of an individual, living in caves and subsisting upon raw meat and what fruit was within easy reach. Later on he domesticated wild animals and moved about to find fresh pastures for his flocks. Warfare, however, was the business of life and co-operation wasn't even dreamed of. The strong men held the land and leased it out and the word farmer comes from the Anglo-Saxon meaning revenue, or what was paid for the use of the land.

With the introduction of gunpowder came the downfall of Feudalism and every one went to work, and most of them on the farm. All articles of clothing and what the table required were supplied by the farmer himself. Some men found that they could make articles better than their neighbors, so they gave up part of their farming operations and went into the manufacturing business. One day a man by the name of Watt, who knew of the expansive power of steam, made an engine by which the hard work of turning the machines was done by the engine. With its invention came the factory and large scale production. Towns sprung up and industries grew. To manage a factory right implied the working together of all the departments—co-operation. The owners united and the operatives caught the idea and organized.

The farmer in the mean time had remained much as he had been in the years gone by. He worked long hours and sold his product for what he could get. The word farmer gradually became a byword for struggle, suffering, and sacrifice.

It is the purpose of the Farmers Union to better the hours of labor on the farm; to help him secure a just proportion of what he produces; to share in the benefits which the state distributes; to make life more attractive and enjoyable on the farm by bringing them closer together so they can discuss subjects of common interests and, in general, to elevate and dignify farm life so that the farmer will

take his place in the political, economical and social world that he should occupy. Farmers have been laboring under the same delusion that many of the rest of us have been, that competition is the life of trade. The "Dark Ages" were the days of competition. We are now just entering upon the co-operative age. Competition implies unsanitary working conditions, poor pay, strikes, crooked dealing and an attempt to make man follow other than his natural inclinations. Co-operation tokens good working conditions, satisfied workers, short hours and better pay and good products.

We believe that the time is here when men should lay aside their imagined troubles and get together. Nine tenths of our afflictions are in our heads. We can cure the other one tenth and when we do the rest will take flight, like unto bats from a belfry. That the farmers of this state are getting together and doing things better is but proper and right. The Farmers Union represents the efforts of intelligent men and women laboring with head, heart and mind, and their meeting last Saturday at Lexington was simply to enunciate the same truths that prompted the minute men at another Lexington over a century ago.

Mr. S. E. Van Vactor. An Appreciation by the Herald.

The United States has been termed the melting pot for the world. To our shores come thousands of people of every race and condition of life, diverse religions, customs, and habits, and from this mass of humanity we evolve the American citizen, the man who stands alone and in a class such as the world has never seen before. The institution which accomplishes the greatest amount of this process of transformation is the public school. Well has it been said that the free public school is the cornerstone of the republic.

There have been men who fought with every resource at their command the public school. Governor Berkley of Virginia thanked God that there were no free schools or printing presses in the colony. Printers printed mostly lies and the schools imparted dangerous ideas which could but mean harm to his Majesty's realm.

There have also been men who have given their time and money to spread the good of public instruction. No one but he who has been in the work knows of the thanklessness it generally carries with it. Any man who has held such a position for many years deserves a pension and a letter of introduction to St. Peter.

Mr. S. E. Van Vactor has completed a nine year term as a member of the School Board. When Mr. Van Vactor began his directorship we had, what is commonly called, a grammar school. There were seven or eight teachers and school was held in the old building just behind the present school. George Currin and W. P. Scrivner were the other members of the board and Mr. C. E. Woodson was clerk. As Heppner grew these men appreciated the need of better school facilities and department after department was installed. The course of study was enlarged to include a four year High School course, a Business department was introduced and instruction in music came also. Mr. Van Vactor is the man to whom a great deal of the credit goes for the building of the new \$45,000 school that we now have. The creating of public sentiment necessary for such an undertaking was a small part compared to the foresight and business judgement which carried it to a successful conclusion. It was due to their efforts that a reliable bonding company

backed the contractors and were forced to complete it when the contractors went broke, that \$1800 was secured in addition when they failed to complete it on time and that \$1700 more was necessary to be spent in reflooring parts of it before they would accept it, giving Heppner a modern school in every particular and probably the finest structure of its kind in any city of like size in the country. It stands on the accredited list and its graduates enter without question any college in the country.

The record of the school since Mr. Van Vactor has been connected with it is one of continual progress. There have been times when the policy of the Board has been subject to raze and fire. Every one makes mistakes, the wise man doesn't make the same one twice. The main thing is to get the thing done. The world takes its hat off to the man who steps in and starts something where before there was nothing doing. That Mr. Van Vactor has done something needs but a look in the direction of the school.

Treat Lexington Fair.

That the people of Lexington deserve praise for the manner in which they entertained the Farmers Union and its friends last Saturday is the common verdict of all that were there. It was a varied program and there was something for every one to enjoy. The place where it was held was satisfactory to all. With such treatment as they accorded us we don't see why it should not be made a permanent thing for Lexington. Some suggested that is be brought to Heppner, others to Ione or some place farther north. Heppner will have the fair, Ione will probably have the Fourth of July celebrations, why not let Lexington have the Farmers Union picnic. We believe that many people favor this and more would after they have given it thought. Over in Umatilla County this year several of the small towns wanted to celebrate since Pendleton did last year and considerable feeling was aroused when it was mentioned that Pendleton was undecided what she would do. Pendleton finally concluded that it could not afford to antagonize the smaller places. Here we have a better way of dividing the big days and we hope that the present arrangement will continue. Some great man once said that we better hang together or we will hang separately. Let's get together on this picnic.

Pleasantries.

"Farmer" Smith is a man who has the faculty of quickly perceiving the true relationship of things. All knowledge is comparative and one man says that this is important or that is wonderful according to his degree of understanding and his understanding is determined by his experience. Those who heard his speech at the picnic Saturday remember what he said about the man who claimed that he had a right to kick against that which wasn't right. Farmer's ideas are the deductions drawn from years of experience and that they were carefully drawn conclusions is proved in the fact that he doesn't have to reorganize them very often. He appreciates the value of kicking and also knows the dangers. Kicking is a habit and comes under the class of nonproductive labor. Habits can't be put off at will like a Sunday shirt or the editor's bill. The man who is a chronic kicker is a good man not to know.

Some time ago the writer was on a train which stopped at a small town to let a wrecking crew pass. During the fifteen minutes stay we got off and many of the passengers went into the little restaurant near

the depot. The lady in charge was a small dark haired woman who seemed to have little in common with the people about her or with the world in general. She overheard a man make a remark about his coffee to his fellow-passenger and she informed him in no uncertain language that in the state of Utah there was no law compelling him to drink it. The man begged her pardon and quietly slipped from the stool and sought the more congenial chair car.

Last Sunday the gentleman who sells the Studebaker car suggested a trip to Ione. It was a delightful trip, the car taking the hills like a Portland boulevard, they tell me they have them there, and in a few minutes we stopped at the hotel. Drivers always stop at the hotels and the unwritten law in motoring is that the driver's stomach must be carefully attended to. The dinner was an undecidable cooking melody. That which impressed us most, however, was the friendly spirit about the place. The manager met us with a smile, the guests were all good-natured looking people and even the dog wagged his tail in friendly greeting.

We are just awakening to the fact that goodwill is a business asset and joy legal tender. It is just as easy to smile and it's more convenient. We can't afford to scarp, scuff, and swear for these react upon our natures and are bound to put a drama pugnaribus on our social relations. There's no corner on happiness and fortunate is he who has more than a speaking acquaintanceship with the things that tempt her in our direction.

The Cost of Modern Living.

When a man says that it costs more to live now than it did twenty-five years ago we usually tell him that it's worth it. There's no doubt that it costs money to oil the streets but dust, dirt, and disease take off cubits of your stature and woefully distort your vocabulary. Photographs used to be exhibited only at fairs and you paid a nickle to hear the pig squeal. They are now in the section hand's home. Automobiles have largely taken the place of horses. A travelling man stopped in here last week and said that it was almost impossible to get a team for canvassing work in the small towns. The inevitable reply was that automobiles had driven them out of business. Good schools cost money to build and more to operate. No one wants to do away with the schools. A few years ago there were not enough students at the State University to organize a good company of militia, now there are nearly a thousand and they do not pay probably more than one fourth of what it costs to educate them. Yes, it costs more to live now than ever before and it looks like it will for some time. We are, however, going to get more for our money than we have in times past. We are living longer, better and happier than ever before. Knowledge is becoming the property of common people and we are doing things easier than they were done before. We now have time to spend in improving the mind by reading and broadening ourselves by travel. The average man is a better man now than ever before. But it costs more to live now, that's true but we think it's worth it.

One man wants every automobile to carry a sign in big letters. "Safety First." The place to put those letters is on the windshield in front of the driver so that he can constantly read them.

Denver proposes to have courtship parlors, "spooning quarters," vulgarly called. But if the people of Denver will let the young folks alone they will get married soon enough, without municipal encouragement.

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