

GRESHAM OUTLOOK

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FOOD DISTRIBUTION.

It is noted occasionally that the big commission houses of Portland are moving, one by one, over to the east side and spending thousand of dollars in the erection of new stores and warehouses.

To the person who produces something to sell the commission houses represent the middlemen with whom he has to share his profits; to the consumer the commission man looms up as a toll gatherer to whom a tax must be paid in order to get something to eat. The middleman takes toll from both and that is why he can erect big buildings on costly sites and laugh at the efforts to oust him from his position.

The efforts of the farmers' organizations have been directed against the middleman, and he has been a much abused mortal, but the distribution of food is one of the great problems of the age.

Were distribution satisfactorily solved the high cost of living would be reduced, for much needless and costly handling would be done away with. When the population is small there is much bartering. With the use of money there is freer trading. As congestion increases the farmer no longer finds it practicable to devote his whole attention to peddling out to his own customers. The greater markets are eager for his produce. The cities, lacking effective machinery for distribution, find use for the commission houses.

STORM BENEFITS.

Some form of intermediate handling must always be had, where population is large; but it cannot be said from this that the number of commission men may be indefinitely increased, or that commission houses, by virtue of their business, possesses the natural power of dictating the price the producer shall receive, as well as the amount the consumer shall pay.

Cities everywhere are beginning to realize that there is more than one way to distribute food. Some cities have proved that the wholesale terminal market meets many of the demands. It facilitates the passage of food, cheapening the cost of transportation, and eliminates excessive charges of useless handling.

There must be some intermediary, but waste and monopoly have strengthened the belief that the cumbersome machinery now in existence in most cities may be improved. If the commission merchants could add anything to the subject the public would be glad to hear from them, but of course they will not. They will let the Grange and Farmers' Union make resolutions and combinations and say nothing. But they will continue to "saw wood."

RURAL CREDITS.

So much has been said and written on rural credits, which, as a grange measure, is now before congress, that it is interesting to note the avidity with which the members are taking up the question. The report of the congressional committee was made in the House on January 4. W. C. Hawley, of Oregon, is a member of the committee which is composed of five senators and five representatives.

The report was voluminous and went into too much detail to be reproduced here, but a careful reading of the bill, which covers several pages of the record, shows that it is not materially different from the one advocated by a member of the Multnomah county grange. There is an evident desire to speed the passage of the bill, both republicans and democrats deeming it good campaign stuff in the coming contest for president.

There is every prospect that the measure will be passed this session unless some of the members of congress get to wrangling over certain phases of the bill, particularly on the personal credit phase. As it is a democratic measure it is possible that some of the republicans will endeavor to have its passage delayed out of partisan spite, but that would only precipitate criticism which some would like to avoid.

While the report was under consideration there was an attempt to

switch the subject in an effort to disparage the efforts of the president to bring the nation to preparedness in the event of war, and the name of W. J. Bryan was coupled with some of his criticisms of the president on that subject.

However, there is a belief that some sort of rural credit or farm loan system will be adopted before the presidential campaign begins.

VILLA, THE BLOODY.

Villa, the Mexican guerilla, is taking revenge for the recognition of Carranza by the United States by killing Americans. The recent slaughter of fifteen, taken from a train, should be made the reason for his subjugation by his nation if Carranza is unable to do the job. There is no occasion for further "watchful waiting" on the part of President Wilson or anyone else.

What manner of men can these be who were willing to guarantee safety of person to the most bloody, villainous criminal in Mexico's blood-stained history, in order to procure for Carranza freedom from the harrasing of Villa's guerillas and then not raise a hand when he murders our own countrymen?

If they allow him now to go unpunished it will be asked of them by what manner of reasoning do they arrive at a point where they are willing to forget the most infamous crimes against American women, the most unparalleled brutality in the treatment of American men, the confiscation and spoliation of millions of American property and give their author no concern after this last deed of brutality?

If nothing is done there will be very little room for surprise. There was a time when the prestige of the United States in Mexico was considerable. There was a time when the Stars and Stripes were a sufficient protection for an American citizen, no matter where he went in Mexico. But that time seems to be gone, and today there is no trifling guerilla chieftain or presumptuous aspirant to power in Mexico so cowardly as to fear to show indignity to the flag, or to vent his contemptuous ill-will toward this country upon any hapless American who crosses his path.

There haven't been so many Oregon weddings in Vancouver the past week as was to have been expected during such cold weather. The cold snap has saved this state a few dollars in license money.

It is said that Wilson will leave his fate to public opinion. He probably meant democratic public opinion, for it would be useless to let the republicans have any say in the matter.

In a new English fireproofing process for timber chemicals are used which do not discolor wood but permit it to be nailed glued, painted or polished as though it had not been treated.

You have probably noticed that turkeys are cheaper now than they were a few weeks ago. The turkey thirst may have had some connection with the days before prohibition.

Applicants for office are asking Secretary Olcott all kinds of questions regarding election costs. Why don't they wait until after the primaries?

Huerta, Mexico's ex-president, is dead. A few more of Mexico's guerilla leaders might be profitably added to the list.

If this is leap year in the old countries perhaps the women will show the men that it is better to stay at home than to go to war.

Mrs. S. Larson, of Stoughton, Wis., a few days ago used a telephone for the first time in her 91 years.

After two or three mild winters, when the soil is alive with worms, and full of their eggs, something is needed to kill them. Hosts of fruit parasites have wintered in safety on every tree and bush, but such a spell of weather as we have just experienced will slay them by the billions.

We are prone to find fault with anything that tends to our discomfort, but we rarely can see the blessings that follow.

The storm has been a benefit that we will all realize when it is all over with.

KICKING HIMSELF OUT.

When Josephus Daniels, a fourth-rate editor from North Carolina, also Secretary of the Navy, put the muscle on Rear Admiral Fiske and ordered him not to write or talk on naval subjects, he made himself unpopular with the editors of this nation. Josephus Daniels is something—not somebody—for the newspaper profession to be ashamed of.

It is not to be supposed that Rear Admiral Fiske would make any statements that would embarrass the administration, and the people of the United States have a right to know the truth about their navy. If Josephus Daniels is making a bid for unpopularity and a quick get away from his present job he is going at it right, but here's hoping he will never go back to newspaper work when he kicks himself out.

Hudson Maxim sees danger in unpreparedness in case an enemy attacks us. He asserts that a quarter of a million men could land on our shores every month with such a small opposing force as we could put against them. While nearly everybody believes in preparedness a great many will be apt to think that Mr. Maxim is talking for the effect that good advertising will do for some of his inventions.

A New York doctor says that any operation upon the nose during the prevalence of a grip epidemic is likely to give the patient an acute attack of influenza. If the other fellow is the best man you had better keep your nose over in the next county, in case of any misunderstanding during the prevailing epidemic period.

The high cost of living is to be noted in the circumstances that our mothers knitted their own stockings, whereas now the dear girl mothers of our grandchildren have to have their silk ones by the dozen pairs. But stockings were not in the exhibition class by the girls of the good old days long since.

A wireless echo says that Aunt Sally Bernhard is getting better and that she will come to the United States again. Good news; we dearly love everything that remains of Aunt Sally, and she won't ever have to hitch her cork leg on the outside when she comes to Gresham. We love that, too.

There will be many great opportunities for the American people this year, but the greatest of these will be the one to deliver another devastating blow upon the slats of a depraved and devilish democratic party.

Two 22,000-ton freight and passenger steamers running between New York and San Francisco are to be equipped for oil fuel and will become the largest merchant vessels in the world independent of coal.

According to a French scientist birthmarks in families who are not of good social position indicate that they are of knightly descent, the marks being due to the fact that their possessors' ancestors wore armor.

Minimum, any insertion, 10¢.

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For signalling between aeroplanes there has been invented apparatus for blowing fine black dust from a reservoir by the exhaust from the motors in such a way as to form dots and dashes.

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