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WHO WANTS BUSINESS METHODS DISCARDED?

The Portland Evening Journal, organ of the Portland plutocrats and special interests, is continuing its dirty and unfair fight upon the legitimate newspapers of Oregon. It brands all publishers as grafters who accept the business of printing a delinquent tax list, although it admits that the principal graft in this business has been in the county of Multnomah and that it participated in the graft, and has so far failed to return any conscience money to the public treasury.

In last evening's issue the Portland Journal prints an alleged interview with Judge Bushey of Marion county in which the cost of publishing the delinquent tax list is discussed, and figures are given covering several years past. These may be right or wrong and at worst show little evidence of graft, and none of collusion between the publishers, since their bills were not excessive and differed in their totals. Only regarding the past two years does the present publisher of the Capital Journal have any personal knowledge, since these are the only ones he has printed. Of these two lists the Portland Journal has its obliging tool, Judge Bushey, says:

The Salem newspapers had evidently agreed on their rates and bills by 1915, when the 1913 delinquent list was published—32 cents an inch for each of five insertions, costing the county \$328 for each paper. The same rate was charged for the publication in 1916 of the 1914 delinquents, and five insertions in each paper cost the county \$368.80 each. Not only was the largest type possible used with heavy slugs, but there were hundreds of needless repetitions. For instance, in one list the name of the O. & C. R. Co., is repeated 118 times; in another, the name of the Hammond Lumber company is repeated 31 times, and there are 84 full descriptions of tracts in the same locality that could be referred to clearly on the space of a postal card.—Portland Journal.

And here is all the graft the Portland Journal is howling about! Marion county, second largest in the state, handles nearly a million dollars in taxes, and to collect it and close the books finally, it cost for advertising in 1913, \$658 (for both newspapers) and in 1914, \$737.60 (for both papers) and this bill was not paid by the county, but by the delinquents. What private business concern or corporation, doing a million dollar annual business, is able to clean up its collections for \$600 or \$700 a year?

And who is doing all this kicking about advertising the delinquent list? County judges and others who are backed up by the hangers on and grafters about the court houses of Oregon. Men who fleece everybody who come their way scalping county claims, buying tax liens in the dark and putting honest people to all kinds of trouble and expense.

The Portland Journal may have been a party to grafting the taxpayers of Multnomah county in the publication of the delinquent list, as it now confesses it was, but there has been no graft in Marion county in this, respect, as the figures given by Judge Bushey and reprinted above from the Portland Journal are proof. The price paid here is only commensurate with the service rendered, and the service is one of the most important in the conduct of county affairs in a business-like way. The county expenses are made up in budget form and a tax levy is made to cover them—if the taxes assessed are paid. If they are not paid the property of the delinquent must be sold to realize the money necessary to meet the county budget. There is only one way this can honestly and effectively be done: by advertising thoroughly, with a full and correct description, all the property delinquent and the date upon which it will be sold if the taxes are not settled before that date. The burden falls—not upon the man who has paid his taxes—but where it should fall, upon the property owner who has not paid. It is properly not an expense upon the general treasury, and the present method of advertising this delinquent list and charging the cost against the delinquents recognizes this fact.

But the delinquent has rights in this matter also. One of these rights is full notice of his delinquency, through publication in its fullest possible sense, and not by the precarious, uncertain and unbusinesslike method of postal cards through the mail, an expense which, the man who has already paid his taxes, would have to bear. Assessments are made a full year, or even more, before taxes become delinquent, and a large amount of property changes hands between the time of making the assessment and the levying of the taxes, so that a large per-

centage of these postal cards would go astray. Many persons would find their property bought out from under them when they had supposed the former owner had paid the taxes, and many non-resident taxpayers who had in the meantime changed their postoffice address, would never receive the postal card notice. To advocate selling the home or other real property of a delinquent taxpayer on a postal card note is absolutely indefensible from any standpoint of justice or honest administration of public affairs.

And nobody, so far as we are able to learn, besides the Portland Journal and Judge Bushey, wants to handle collection of taxes in the dark in an old fashioned and unbusiness like way, except the usual house gang of tax lien speculators, warrant scalpers and hangers on. Possibly the abstract companies which thrive on tangled titles—and all of these worthies who would take advantage of the hard-pressed, ignorant or perhaps careless property owner. You will find one of these tin horn county court house speculators hiding behind every county judge, clerk or sheriff who wants to discontinue the advertising of the delinquent tax list.

Business efficiency, honesty and fair play demand the advertising of the delinquent tax list in the most open and above-board manner—through the newspapers—the Portland Journal knows it and Judge Bushey would know if he possessed sense enough to properly conduct the business affairs of a county of the wealth and importance of Marion.

SITUATION MORE TANGLED

Great Britain has notified the world that she has placed mines in certain waters near the coast of the Netherlands; and Germany comes back with the announcement that she has extended the zone inside of which she will wage relentless war on vessels of all nations, and warning all such to keep out of it. At the same time she establishes a route which can be traveled with safety so far as she is concerned by strictly passenger vessels. These must be vouched for by the United States as carrying no contraband as defined by Germany. It is in effect a declaration that if England and the allies do not cease trying to starve the Germans, that Germany will use every means at her command to bring the hunger phase of the war home to Great Britain and France. What the result will be can not be forecasted, nor can the course this country will pursue, all depending on surrounding and circumstances of individual cases. At first glance it would seem that this is a breach of the promise made this country by Germany that she would not attack ships without warning. The arming of ships "for defense" by Great Britain, these ships being able to cope with submarines is another feature that will have to be dealt with. Germany claims this arming makes it impossible for her submarines to warn a vessel so armed without the utmost danger to themselves. Taken all in all, the situation as the common herd would express it, is "getting no better fast."

There remains after today but a dozen days for the legislature to clean up its calendar. It can safely be stated that night sessions will have to be resorted to if all the bills are to be acted upon. It has been the hardest working lot of legislators ever assembled in Oregon's capital. True, three Saturdays have been without the legislative work in the halls, but the committees have been at work and nothing can be done until their reports are in. Every day the desks of the president and speaker have been cleared, and before each adjournment there is a busy few minutes of announcing the meetings of committees. The bone dry bill being practically out of the way, the consolidation bills getting pretty well in hand and the appropriation committee already reporting back many of its bills gives promise of getting at least all important measures attended to. The 29th session has set the pace for work, and it will probably add to that record a reputation for economy.

Commissioner Miller of the Public Service Commission has written a lengthy letter to President Sproule, of the Southern Pacific, calling attention to the desperate situation of Oregon industries on account of the car shortage. He covers the case fully and concludes: "Unless immediate and positive efforts of securing more power and additional freight equipment are adopted, this year will be a duplication of the very unsatisfactory conditions existing last year. Will you arrange to promptly meet this need?" Owing to the fact that President Sproule is a very busy railroad president and may overlook replying soon, we venture to make answer for him. Briefly the answer is: "I will—not."

A Baker City man undertook to get from under the coal shortage by ordering a shipment of coal from Wyoming by parcel post. The idea was to beat the car shortage also, but the storms stopped all trains and the Baker man is still shy his coal. The shipment cost \$83 a ton which is much like some subscriptions for the heathen, it requiring more for the freight than the amount contributed. It is seldom Uncle Sam goes back on those who rely on him, but the coal trust and the car shortage, backed by a real blizzard were too much even for our good old uncle.

President Wilson's peace ideas will have to materialize soon as it will not be long until spring trench cleaning begins on the western front. After the curtain fire is hung on the line it will be too late until the summer campaign is over.

Some Little Stories and Gossip of the Legislature

The bone dry bill is up before the senate this afternoon and several amendments have been proposed which will be thrashed out. It evidently is not dry enough for the senate for the amendments proposed would cut out from the list of those permitted to receive liquor for certain purposes, fraternal societies and about everything else. While so far it has not been proposed to cut off the use for sacramental purposes, and perhaps will not be, there are some who would go to this length and make no exceptions whatever. Some of these hold that as the use of wine is emblematical entirely, water would do just as well. However, it is not expected that any material changes will be made in the bill other than those suggested with regard to making the law still more drastic. If the amendments are adopted the bill will have to go back to the house and the amendments be concurred in or some compromise reached before the bill can go to the governor. With this possibility in sight it may be the bill will not be in the hands of the governor until some time next week. However, it is likely most of the advance supplies laid in against a long drought have all been ordered, and delay will not largely increase the business at Hornbrook or other California shipping points.

When Senator Dimick was in the chair yesterday afternoon during the discussion of the Moser bill concerning tuberculosis hospitals, Senator Orton thought to bullyrag the president pro tem by objecting as bills from the house were read the first time. "I object,"

OPEN FORUM

THE BRIDGE QUESTION

To the Editor—We are tax payers in both counties, a resident of Salem all my life, naturally much interested in this bridge movement.

I should like to suggest a plan that seems practical to me.

I should prefer to see the \$12,000, or a requisite portion of it, that it would require to plank the railroad bridge, used in putting in a large steam ferry. It would have to be built here as it could not be brought through the locks at Oregon City.

I think we should not consider anything but a concrete bridge, the cost of course would be great, we must expand to great things, why not now? We would have something to show for the money invested, and a bridge of this kind would require no outlay for upkeep. We would not be facing this situation again as a concrete bridge would be permanent structure.

It seems to me a steel bridge every twenty five years or so, with all the expense of up keep added, would equal a concrete bridge in the end, furthermore I understand in government work that all steel construction must be drilled, but the average contractor has a method of cold steel punch, which the government claims crystallizes the steel thereby materially shortening its life. If we should build a steel bridge this cold steel punch method is doubtless what we would get.

My plan for a steam ferry would be to operate it until the two counties were ready for a concrete bridge, and when the time came that the ferry was no longer needed here let it replace the one at Independence which is owned and operated by Marion and Polk counties.

The question of a landing, I suggest the Marion county court, if it does, in this case when corporations are given everything they want, condemn enough water front belonging to a private corporation for a landing at the old ferry site.

Let us by all means have a steam ferry, let it be built right away that no more valuable time be lost, and operated until we have a concrete bridge.

—ONE INTERESTED.

legislature was one with the charm and poise of the "Lady of the House" from Wasco and Hood River counties, Mrs. Alexander Thompson. She is bright, vivacious, a good listener, and an equally good speaker. She is not insistent about having the woman's privilege of the last word, for she does not need it. She speaks seldom but when she does it is briefly and to the point. The result is that when she does speak the influence of the legislators pay attention, and are benefited thereby.

She has made a splendid impression not only on the members but on all who have heard her or had the pleasure of talking to her. She has broken down and swept aside a large field of deep seated prejudice admitted by many against women holding office, especially a legislative office. There is not a more popular member in the house and another like her, if there are such, would add brilliancy to some of the debates in the senate. Just as a suggestion it might be a good plan to send her to the senate next session, this of course, if the people up east of the mountains do not take a notion to give the congress of these United States an example of what suffrage means and produces in "way out on the Pacific coast."



'Twas Ever Thus

When I am well I josh the doc, and say his pills are made of chalk, which never cured a human ache; that all his science is a fake. I roast him bitterly because he is too handy with his saws, and seems so anxious to remove one's backbone from its old time groove. But when my organs all go wrong, and I'm no longer hale and strong, but doubled up with grievous pains, clear from my fetlocks to my brains, the doctor is my only hope; I clamor for his pills and dope. And if he brings his saw and spade, and says he thinks he'll have to wade all

through my system with the same, I say, "Go on, and hew my frame!" And when I'm lying on my bed, with poultices upon my head, I murmur softly to the nurse, "The good old doc no more I'll curse! His science kept me from the grave, and after this I will behave." But when I'm on my feet once more, I hang around the corner store, and say the doctor is a fake who couldn't shoo away an ache. Thus, when our cares have taken wings, we hoot and jeer at solemn things.

100 Members IN 100 Hours Watch This Space

MY HUSBAND AND I Jane Phelps

THE PARTING

CHAPTER CXXXVI. Muriel went to the train with us, at my earnest solicitation. I felt that I could not face Clifford alone. I need not have worried. He acted just as though nothing had happened, while I felt as if the whole world were tumbling about my ears. He chatted amiably with Muriel and me the few moments we had to wait, petted Edith, and sent gracious messages to mother and the girls. Was he trying to send me away so pleasantly that I might forget my determination to leave him? I wondered as he waved me a final good-bye, and threw a kiss to Edith.

Comments. "I got a nice daddy, hasn't I mamma?" Edith cuddled up to the train and drew out. "Marse Hammond shure am feelin' som' fine today," Mandy volunteered, as she made us comfortable. "I don't member his bein' so happy lookin' in a long time." "And to be rid of me," I thought; then came the remembrance that had he so wished he might have been rid of me for all time. Life was too much of a problem for me. I was worn out with worry, tired to death of thinking. I couldn't do anything, at least for a time, so I would rest. I laid my head on the back of the seat and closed my eyes.

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