

GREAT FALLS DAILY TRIBUNE

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EDITORIAL PAGE

HASKIN LETTER

By FREDERIC J. HASKIN

NEW TREES FOR FRANCE

Washington, D. C., Jan. 25.—Millions of plants and seeds are now being collected by the American Forestry association to be sent to France, to aid in the work of reforestation. The state of Pennsylvania has contributed 100 pounds of white pine seed and 50 pounds of Douglas fir seed. Minnesota has sent 200 pounds of white pine seed. But much more is needed. France can use 700 pounds of these seeds.

The request for American seed came from the French Forest service to the United States Forest service, but, while the American organization was able to send large quantities of plants and seeds that it happened to have on hand, it had no appropriation with which to buy additional seed for France. So it turned the request over to the American Forestry association—a private organization of great wealth and influence. Mr. Percival S. Riddsdale, secretary of the association, is now in France, investigating forestry conditions, with a view to placing the assistance of his association where it will do the most good.

The condition of the French forests today is so bad that it has enlisted the interest of foresters all over the world. More than 1,250,000 acres of French forest were actually demolished by the war, while over 60 per cent of the remaining merchantable timber had to be cut in the cause of defense. This would be a heavy blow to any nation, but to France, who had worked over and over again for the past fifty years, it is nothing short of a national calamity.

In America, wood is a common material. There is plenty of it, and only recently has it ever been suggested that the supply was not inexhaustible. One country has a forest conservation propaganda been launched. But in France, devastated by many wars, wood was not plentiful, even at the outbreak of the war. The nation had to import one-third of its lumber. Hence, the strictest kind of conservation was both preached and practiced, and every effort was made to increase the forested land. In a hundred years, France succeeded in creating 1,000,000 acres of new forest.

Over 12 per cent of the French forests is owned by the government. Fifty-three per cent is owned and regulated by communes and public institutions, and the rest is privately owned. Even the timber in the hands of the communes and private owners is partially controlled by the government.

It may be imagined, therefore, that after nourishing the woodland so vigilantly, France tossed it in the arena of war only with great pain and self-sacrifice. The first demand was from the French army. Barracks, factories, gunstocks, machinery, and miles and miles of trench boards had to be supplied. A French wood-service division was created under the ministry of munitions, which obtained its timber supplies only with the permission of the French forest service. Its work was made extremely difficult by the almost immediate occupation of the enemy, whose forces were shifted from point to point. Just as the French army located a lumber mill at a point approved by the forest service, and before its tent and machinery for a week or two of hard work, the German gun were certain to disturb operation.

Then arrived the British army. It, too, needed timber for barracks, stables and railroad ties, and it could not wait for supplies to be shipped across the channel. With a sigh of despair, the French forest service presented the British army with passports to certain sturdy pine forests, some of them containing trees a hundred or more years old. Next, came the Canadians, with a separate forestry regiment of their own, and more passports were issued. And, at last, came the Americans, with their fearful reputation for extravagance.

It began to look as if there would be a great work of confusion and resulting inefficiency from the overlapping demands of France's allies. So an inter-allied council for wood products for war needs was established, with headquarters in the famous old residence opposite the statue of George Washington in the Place des Etats-Unis (United States Place) in Paris. Here the allies settled their timber disputes, agreed on certain

CITY TAXES AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS. It has been urged on the attention of the editor of The Tribune that the articles recently published on this page, so far as they have effect on the mind of the taxpayers, will have a tendency to put a stop to public improvements and progress in the city, and that is a thing to be deplored, the objectors tell us. We think the argument is without merit. This newspaper is not opposed to public improvements. It is opposed to spending more than the city's income in the ordinary running expenses of the city government, and making up the deficit by increased taxation. A public improvement of any size cannot be made without first getting the consent of a majority of the property owners who will have to pay for it when it is completed. But new names can be added to the payroll of the city, and new positions can be created for the city taxpayers to pay for, without any consultation or approval on their part. Extravagance in city expenditures, too many jobs made for the sake of providing a good salary for some politician, or the friend of some politician, increased expenditures in all departments of the city government without regard to the means on hand to pay these bills of expense—these are the things that put a city in the hole, and not public improvements taxed against the property benefited. The majority of the taxpayers affected can always stop any public improvement they do not want to pay for by refusing their consent. The minority must give way to the judgment of the majority because that is the fundamental principle of democracy. To those who feel nervous about progress and city improvement being stopped by a campaign for economy in city expenditures we would say that we can see no force to their arguments. We repeat once more the statement that we are not opposed to city improvements, but are opposed to extravagant methods of carrying them out, and extravagance in the ordinary running expenses of the city.

The city of Butte is a good example of what reckless extravagance and padded payrolls will do to city finances. It was not public improvements that put the city finances of Butte in their present shape, but too many city salaries, and too reckless expenditure of the city cash in its regular and ordinary functions. The banks of Butte, which refuse to cash any more city warrants, offered to continue to buy them if the city council of Butte would cut a lot of names off its payroll and reduce its ordinary expenditures to fit its income, in accord with the recommendation of an expert efficiency engineer, who examined the matter to find the cause of their financial difficulty and suggest a remedy. That meant a lot of city employees losing their connection with the city treasury, and the city council of Butte refused the remedy. They said it was "ridiculous" and "absurd" and that the only remedy was to boost taxes. Several years ago they asked the legislature to give them authority to raise the legal tax levy from ten mills to twelve mills and they got it. They soon spent the extra two mills, and more, and now they are back to the legislature asking a five mill raise again, which will be equally impotent to save their credit, unless they change their ways and cut down city expenses.

There is a bill now before the Montana legislature to raise the legal tax levy in all cities from ten mills to twelve mills. It is the tax booster's favorite remedy for his own extravagance. It ought to be defeated. Its only effect, if passed, will be to encourage more extravagance and waste of taxpayers' money in every city in the state. Let them cut the pattern of their expenditures to the cloth they have. It is the only real businesslike way for any city to do. It leads to sound finance and improved city credit. It does not increase tax burdens. We hope the Cascade county delegation in the legislature will vote against the city tax boosting law. They will if they know that the taxpayers of this city are opposed to it, and in earnest about it. Let them know it.

THE PRESIDENT AND HIS CRITICS

It is remarkable how everything the president of the United States has done provokes the stern disapproval of his critics in the senate. He needs forgiveness for all the things he has done and the things he has left undone as the prayer book has it. Here is Senator Harding of Ohio, who finds that the president is "almost criminal" in his utterances in the correspondence with Berlin because those winged words of his that broke down the German autocracy and served to bring the war to an end as much as bullets did encouraged revolution and bolshevism. "I do not forget," he said in the senate, "that the executive during the war preached the doctrine of revolution in the central empires. The doctrine was preached that revolution was necessary to bring about tranquility in the world. You started a fire that is difficult to put out now." Here Senator Harding seems to admit that President Wilson's note writing is responsible for the flight of the German emperor and the collapse of the war party in Germany. But while he was doing that, Senator Lodge, another member of the amalgamated kickers' organization in the senate, was roasting the president

for writing these notes on the ground that they were futile and only encouraged the kaiser and his junkers, and Senator Harding appeared to have like views. The whole crowd told the president to shut up, for the love of Mike, or words to that effect, for he was only muddling things and making the winning of the war by the allies more difficult. They have taken on opposite tack now in the face of the facts they can no longer ignore, and Senator Harding seems to think that the collapse of the kaiser's government was almost a crime and the president next door to a criminal because he was responsible for it. Senator Penrose also finds his gorge rising fast because the president visited London instead of staying in Paris. He accuses him also of making "a triumphant tour" of Europe and ignoring the rule of Jeffersonian simplicity and so getting us in bad with the lovers of the simple life in Europe. He says the president is surrounding himself with "pomp and ceremony" and that he is "aping royally." Too bad! How the trust senator from Pennsylvania must hate this departure from the ways of old Thomas Jefferson, the father of the democratic party in this country. But that is not the worst part of the president's offending in the eyes of his critics. He has pursued the powers to accept all of his fourteen peace propositions when Henry Cabot Lodge has shown that five of them are "silly" and do not represent the views of the American republic. And Senator Harding has now discovered, a little late it would seem, that the president is a liar, and deceiving the world because he said that this country went into the war to make the world safe for democracy. "It was a lie from the beginning," says the senator for the president to allow the impression to go out that we were in the war "for democracy's sake." The word democrat or democracy has an evil taste in the mouth of the republican senator from Ohio.

How the senatorial members of the amalgamated kickers' association do hate President Wilson! We greatly fear that their malady will increase, and there is no cure for it, for the president continues to make them look like a pack of fools by the success he is having and the influence he exerts on the old world. He is the leading man at the peace conference today, and his policies are being adopted one by one, and that must be gall and wormwood to the little men in the senate who have been picturing him to the country as part fool and part knave. They look so small in the eyes of the citizenship of the United States compared to the heroic stature of the president that their gall bladder is likely to burst some day from engorged spite if the president continues his success abroad. That might be fatal to them, but no one would miss them much.

As a matter of fact, every candid man and patriotic citizen must now admit that the trip of the president to Europe has been fully justified by the results he has achieved. At first there was some doubt about this, even in the minds of his friends. There is none now. They must also be proud of the enhanced influence and respect which he has brought to the republic he represents and speaks for, and the nice sense of propriety and good taste he has shown in all his negotiations with European statesmen and rulers.

The Opinions of Others

TOM WILL BE TOO BUSY. (Columbia State.)

Doubtless there are a sufficient number of republicans to play Cassius, Anna and the other conspirators if vice President Marshall would only consent to assume the role of et tu, Brute.

THE BEST IN STOCK. (Toronto Mail and Standard.)

Hanging may be too good for the Hohenzollerns, but it is the best we have.

HE TOPS THE PAY ROLLS. (Anconada Standard.)

The profess will recognize Editor Ford as a man of high principal, anyway.

WON'T NEED MASKS THIS TRIP. (Louisville Post.)

The president's failure to appoint any senators may have been due to a desire to show his opposition to gas attacks in general.

THEY SHOULDN'T ANSWER THE BELL. (Macon Telegraph.)

Leave it to Holland and the custom of visiting around among the neighbors will be abolished.

THEY'VE CANCELED THE SCHEDULE. (Detroit News.)

Peru and Chile should be advised that these post-season games are never a success.

WILL DO CONSCIENTIOUS SPONGING. (Indianapolis News.)

Conscientious objectors who have been living off the army will now have to go to work or sponge on some more fortunate relative.

NAT WOULDN'T SHY, ANYWAY. (Knoxville Journal.)

The next woman aspiring to be the wife of Nat Goodwin can approach on the safe side when she starts to slip on the halter.

WELL, THE COOTIE IS NO BEAUTY. (Memphis Commercial-Appel.)

We wish they wouldn't call those places to which they send our soldiers "dehousing" stations; it's such a unpretty word.

An American author who recently returned from France says that he has never seen such dismay written on any human countenance as that on the face of a French forestry officer who, after a long and arduous journey, was met by the enemy. "Behold—the work and care of a century—it is gone! We can not do it again in a hundred years," said the officer.

This depletion of the French forests has grave economic aspects. For it means the virtual destruction of France's home wood industries, which before the war supported hundreds of people. Through the forested regions before the war there were numerous settlements—communities in which every household had its woodman and its woodworker. The industry is handed down from one generation to another. Thus 60 years ago these settlements were turning out only a slight variety of articles—mostly spoons, salt-boxes, shepherds' boxes, scales, wooden measures, bowls, funnels and spindles. But gradually the demand from Paris for wooden articles became vastly greater, and the skill of the artisan increased to meet it. Now every house has its workshop—or did before the war—where various complicated articles of wood and iron, like mouse-traps, clock-works, machine tools and lattice work, are turned out.

The reason this home industry has survived before the advance of the industrial factory is that the workers have been contented with small earnings. Most of them have their little farms or truck gardens behind their workshops, where they raise enough to support the family, and occasionally enough to sell in the nearby town. In the same way, France has also supported a large home basket and toy industry. It is now being destroyed by the advance of the industrial factory.

Major Wounded Three Times Overseas Back Visiting in Bozeman

Special to The Daily Tribune. Bozeman, Jan. 27.—(Maj.) Charles Sheridan, who has been granted sick leave for three months, is home to visit his parents and other relatives and friends in Bozeman, who received the news that he would be received in the thick of the fight overseas. He was wounded three times. He is learning to make good use of his left hand and arm with the use of the right.

THE MORTGAGEE'S INTEREST. Thou, too, sail on, O German state; Your course you shifted pretty late; Now, adieu to your water-line; You dare the gale and floating mine. We want to see her keep afloat. Because we own the darned old boat.

Major Wounded Three Times Overseas Back Visiting in Bozeman. Sheridan, who has been granted sick leave for three months, is home to visit his parents and other relatives and friends in Bozeman, who received the news that he would be received in the thick of the fight overseas. He was wounded three times. He is learning to make good use of his left hand and arm with the use of the right.

Start the New Year Right. Systematize your work and save time, labor and money. Do It Electrically. Just as the modern store, office, or factory, can afford the electric motor, cash register, typewriter, adding and billing machines, so can the modern housewife afford the electric range, dish washer, suction cleaner, floor polisher, sewing machine, washing and ironing machines, because they are acknowledged by all who have used them to be Safe, Clean, Economical and Certain. Whether you do all or only a part of your own work, it will pay you to look into what the newest electrical devices will do to relieve you of wasted time, work and worry this New Year. Information and demonstrations cheerfully furnished on all applications of electricity. Call at our display room, or phone 5921. At Your Service. The Montana Power Co. Electric Block.

United War Work Fund. Payment of Subscriptions Is as Follows:— December 2, 191850% January 15, 191925% March 1, 191925% The Second Installment Is Now Due. Please make payment promptly to S. S. Ford, Treasurer, at the Great Falls National Bank. Payment in full, if convenient, appreciated.

TRAVELETTE. By NIKSAH. Absalom's Tomb. The spirit of the days when Palestine was the center of history remains unchanged in many places of the Holy Land. This old world atmosphere clings about the Vale of Jehosephat and is typified in the tomb of Absalom. The Vale of Jehosephat shelters many tombs, none more pathetic and typical of Israel than this of the man who who might have been a king. It does not matter that Absalom never rested in this tomb—that he was thrown after his last fatal escapade into a pit and covered with a heap of stones. Absalom, it is said, himself had the stone monument carved, and the he never entered it, memories of him are more vivid here than elsewhere. His chosen resting place receives scant attention. It might be less desolate if it were entirely forgotten. Jews who pass that way mark the tomb and go out of their path to hurl a stone at it and curse the memory of the traitor to David and his country. The stones, scattered at the base of the tomb in testimony to Palestine's living hatred for the historic symbol of ingratitude. The tomb itself is cut from a great piece of bed rock. It is a square hollowed-out and surmounted by a pointed dome. Its columns are defaced by stones cast with good aim. Moss, and even small trees are springing from the cracks in its walls. If it were not a part of the valley floor it would not have survived so long to point a moral to the inhabitants of Palestine. As it is, the centuries and hatred have reduced it from the place of solemn grandeur planned for a king, to the most desolate tomb in a valley of graves. NOTICE TO CREDITORS. Estate of Edward B. Cranston, deceased. Notice is hereby given by the undersigned administrator with the will annexed of the estate of Edward B. Cranston, deceased, to the creditors of and all persons having claims against the said deceased, to exhibit them with the necessary vouchers, within 90 days after the first publication of this notice, to the said administrator, at the law offices of Freeman & Thelen, rooms 12 to 15, Conrad Bank building, Great Falls, Mont., the same being the place for the transaction of the business of said estate in the county of Cascade. Dated January 5, 1919. DAVID E. CRANSTON, Administrator With the Will Annexed of the Estate of Edward B. Cranston, deceased. (First publication January 7, 1919).

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