

GREAT FALLS DAILY TRIBUNE

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EDITORIAL PAGE

BETTER PAY FOR TEACHERS

It is stated by those who should know that the average pay for school teachers in the United States is about \$600 per annum, and even that figure is better than it was a few years ago. The statement is made that the average in Montana is now nearer a thousand, but where the figures are obtained is unknown. Naturally, Montana teachers are paid better than in other states, but still the figure is low compared with what is required of teachers and the pay that wholly untrained labor is receiving in this state. For the future of our nation and for our race there are no positions which, as a whole, are of more importance, and a real effort should be made to attract the best possible talent.

As an illustration of how the people of the United States are beginning to appreciate the value of their teachers comes recent action by the Wisconsin legislature by which a minimum wage of \$60 per month is fixed for rural teachers. Four years ago the minimum was fixed at \$40 per month, and before that it was the least that stingy taxpayers could get anyone to teach for who had passed a certain examination. In Wisconsin, we are told wages were sometimes as low as \$30 and even \$25 per month.

It is to be hoped that this upward grading of teachers' pay is going to result in an uplift in the quality of the rural teachers, and while educational qualifications must of course be given first consideration by those who engage the teachers, what might be described as the morale and psychic qualifications are really of greater effect in the school room. The difficulty is that there is no way of actually testing these except by long experience, and furthermore people are not always agreed upon the results of the test.

Lately there has been complaint in Montana of a lack of teachers for the country schools. Largely that was because young women who had the educational advantages necessary for teaching and the ability to hold a teaching job could receive bigger pay at something else. Possibly the end of the war may make less demand for women workers in the business and industrial life of the nation, but it is not likely that there is going to be any material reduction in the pay of women any more than in the pay of men. Without a doubt the woman who is capable of managing a school room full of children ought to be paid more than women of no higher capabilities who are employed in offices and at similar work. Teachers—particularly rural teachers—are not so paid today, altho in the cities the conditions are better.

There is no doubt at all that the pay of teachers should be such that it would attract the best quality of young women; and it is grossly unfair, in this supposed land of equal opportunity, that the educational advantages of the country boy or girl should be so meager in comparison with those of the boys and girls in the cities. No effort should be spared to equalize opportunity for all the boys and girls of the state. The proposal for the consolidation of the rural school districts in Cascade county is a step in that direction, and it is to be hoped that the fathers and mothers in the country districts will take interest in the subject, and see that it is approved by the voters.

TO ENFORCE BROTHERHOOD

Nikolai Lenine, leader of the bolsheviks and premier or president of a part of Russia, in his latest pronouncement seems to fear that putting his program in effect is going to take a long time, but he is sure that it is going to succeed in time. "The destruction of capitalism," he says, "may cost many lives;" but these are not to stand in the way of the regeneration of society. It was Marat who planned to accomplish the revolution in France by the use of men armed with dirks who could handily cut the throats of those who opposed the ideals of the revolution. He had already made a good start in the way of cutting throats when Charlotte Corday decided that the cutting of Marat's throat would be a good way to help France. The understanding is that Marat did not like that way of bringing about reform, but no definite word to that effect has ever come back from the place he went to.

Lenine and Trotzky evidently have the same notion about how to bring about universal brotherhood in the world, for they do not propose to stop with Russia, but propose to take lives until men and women all over the world are brot to see the folly of capitalism and the beauty of a soviet form of government—which, by the way, is only very vaguely understood here, but which in a general way, means a government by the producers alone.

Marat was not the first who tried the throat-cutting method of bringing about political reform. Neither will Lenine be the last. It never has succeeded in bringing about anything but misery for all concerned; first to those who had their obstinate throats cut, and in the end to most of the fellows who did the cutting. There is something in human nature that resents efforts at forced reform, and there are very few persons who are willing to be slaughtered without making some effort towards fighting back. Then it may be the reformer—no matter how much of an idealist he may be—who gets the

worst of it; while the unregenerated believer in capitalism goes on his way with a little less respect for the person who would kill to reform than he had before.

That's what all this fighting in Russia is about—at least so far as the fighting between Russians is concerned. There are a lot of them who object to being killed because they will not believe as Lenine and Trotzky want them to believe. Lately these people seem to be having the upper hand, but that does not mean that universal brotherhood is any further away; in fact, quite the reverse. Universal brotherhood is much more apt to come when people are tolerant of the views of others than when there is a tendency towards burning at the stake and throat cutting by those who do not agree with each other.

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Chairman Hays of the republican national committee announced that for the next presidential campaign of his party no contributions in excess of \$1,000 from a single person are to be excepted. That is interesting if true, but there are ways of getting around a pledge of that sort without actually violating its letter. Any politician can tell how. Still, the fact that Chairman Hays feels called upon to make a public pledge to this effect is an indication of progress.

It will be remembered that in the campaign of 1908 Bryan announced that single contributions to the democratic campaign fund of that year would be limited to \$10,000; but the pledge did not seem to help him any with the voters. At the time President Roosevelt publicly attacked him for such demagoguery as refusing large sums of money. There is little doubt that if Roosevelt were alive today he would be loudly applauding the declaration by Chairman Hays; and it would not be the first time that he had publicly denounced some principle or policy promulgated by Bryan and later adopted it as his own.

Of course it is not yet decided that Mr. Hays is going to have charge of the republican campaign next year, and possibly his successor may not coincide with his views on the point of campaign funds. The democrats can easily meet his challenge, if it is so regarded, and probably go him one lower, for democrats as a rule do not get so many contributions above \$1,000—most of the members of the party have not that much to give.

CREDIT FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE

There appears to be no doubt that the woman suffrage amendment is going to be agreed to by the senate and that it will be passed up to the states for ratification. It is generally believed that a sufficient number of legislatures will promptly ratify it as soon as presented to them, but the chances are that such action can not be taken in time to give the women of the non-suffrage states votes in the presidential election next year. A good many of the legislatures will not be in session next year.

There is no doubt, however, that the passage of the amendment is hastened by the approaching presidential campaign. Without the adoption of the amendment a great many women will have something to say about who shall be president, and politicians want the credit of the suffrage amendment for their party as they believe it will make an effective appeal to the women voters; and it must be remembered that every state west of the Mississippi, except New Mexico, and in quite a number east of that river, the women have the right to vote now. Naturally, politicians of both parties are going to claim all the credit they can. Because the present congress is republican that party will claim the credit while democrats will contend that the amendment passed because of the president's appeal. Speaking of these contending claims, the Springfield Republican remarks:

When they get the ballot, however, the women of the United States will know whom to thank. The politicians and leaders of no political party will have much claim upon their gratitude. The credit will belong to the women who, from the time of Susan B. Anthony to the present day, labored unceasingly and stout-heartedly for the political emancipation of their sex.

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The Opinions of Others

- MUST HAVE POWERFUL MICROSCOPE. (Detroit Free Press.) Julius Barnes, United States wheat director, says he sees a drop in the cost of living. Mr. Barnes is what is known as an optimist.
- WHY WILSON CABLED HIS MESSAGE? (Omaha Bee.) The suffragette ladies will not let any grass grow under their feet, but will be right after congress from the tap of the bell.
- QUICK, BOY, A FOUNTAIN PEN! (Charleston News and Courier.) Perhaps Foch's return to the front will operate as a gentle hint to the Germans.
- WOULD 'A BEEN UP TO POSTERITY. (Pittsburgh Gazette-Times.) Isn't it fortunate there were only 14 points? Suppose there had been 40!
- WILSON IS AFRAID SO. (Columbia Record.) It will be an extra session, but will it be an extraordinary session?
- OH, WELL, IT'S A PLEASANT DREAM. (Anaconda Standard.) Evidently Senator Poindexter is obsessed with the idea that he is somebody.

HASKIN LETTER

By FREDERIC J. HASKIN

OUR ANTIQUE PATENT OFFICE

Washington, D. C., May 25.—If you invent a new hair tonic or a carbon-resisting spark plug, you must approach the patent office by way of a patent attorney, at considerable expense; you must wait a long time while an overworked examiner is getting around to your invention; and its practicability will finally be passed upon by this man, who does not earn as much as a master mechanic, and has to support nights residing upon the merits of inventions. The record of your patent, if you get one, will then be stored in a building which has once burned down and is far from fireproof now.

The patent office is an antique. It pays salaries that were good fifty years ago and are pitifully low. It has a force that was adequate before the Civil war and is swamped by the present volume of business. And it has a building that was once regarded as enormous, and is now wholly inadequate.

The patent office should encourage and foster the inventive genius of which America is supposed to possess so much. It should make it easy for the inventor to get a patent when his idea is practicable; it should protect him and his patent thoroughly; and it should aid in the development of great inventive ideas with scientific advice, funds and laboratory service. In a word, the patent office should be a leader of the inventive brains of America, instead of which it is a drag.

These facts have been evident to the judiciary for some time, and they have been officially reported by the patent committee of the national research council, which was appointed by Secretary of the Interior Lane to find out what was the matter with the patent office and to recommend a plan of improvement. The committee recommended that the patent office be taken out of its obscure corner as a part of the interior department, and be made a separate government department. Secretary Lane has made it known that he is opposed to this measure. What will be done, therefore, it is hard to predict, but something must be done, and, to put our patent office on a par with those of other leading civilized nations.

The committee which made this investigation consisted of inventors, patent lawyers and an ex-commissioner of patents, Thomas Ewing. Besides independence for the bureau, it recommended increased salaries, increased working force, and a single court of patent appeals to take the place of the existing patent courts.

In support of its recommendation that the patent office be made an independent department, the committee points out that a bureau thus emancipated has always developed remarkably. A case in point is the department of agriculture, which used to be only a little seed distributing bureau. When it was made independent it developed rapidly into the greatest department of the government.

In its infancy, a hundred years ago, the patent office was the brain of the nation. When Jefferson was secretary of state, he and the states of affairs were not reflect on the individual efficiency or character of the patent office employees. The bureau has more work than it can properly do, and many of the patent examiners take work home in order to keep up with this ever increasing number of applications.

A trip thru the patent office shows clearly the difficulties under which the employees work. The building, termed

NEW U. S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HEAD
Homer L. Ferguson, newly elected president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, is president and general manager of the Newport News Shipbuilding company of Newport news, Virginia. He was born at Waynesboro, N. C., March 6, 1873. He is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy and Glasgow University, Scotland.

grand and majestic by writers half a century ago, is now much too small for patent office needs. The famous museum of patent models long ago gave up the space it occupied to office desks. Even so, examiners are crowded sometimes five and six into a room. If an inventor brings in a model for demonstration, the examiner has only his desk or the office corridor in which to test it.

Filing cases line all the walls and form high partitions, shutting off light from some of the desks. These filing cases contain copies of all the patents issued, arranged by classes. The number of patents in a class is of course always increasing, which means that more room is needed, and also that the examiner must work longer on each case.

Besides being altogether inadequate, the building has been declared unsafe from fire. And this is the building that houses the nation's collection of patent records—a collection the value of which cannot be estimated, and one that could never be replaced if destroyed. In 1877, fire destroyed photo-lithographic copies of drawings which were replaced with difficulty at a cost of \$60,000. Eighty-seven thousand models were lost in that fire, and it was confined to one section of the building. Yet no suggestions that a new, fireproof patent office building be erected has ever been taken seriously.

It would naturally be expected that, as the work of the patent office grew, its force and building space would be increased. As a matter of fact, one commissioner went before congress five times to urge that the building be enlarged, and was told that the patent office was getting along all right as it was. The sixth time he got part of what he wanted.

The patent office now employs about four hundred examiners, and it should have at least six hundred to do its work thoroughly. It takes twenty-one months on an average to put thru a patent. With an adequate force the time could be cut almost in half. After its investigation of patent office conditions, the patent committee concludes that the root of the trouble is in the low salaries, and that the bureau will never have an adequate working force until congress permits it to pay examiners more than the present salary of \$2,700 a year.

The patent examiner must have both legal and technical knowledge. The longer he remains in the service the more expert and the more valuable to the government he becomes. But the patent office cannot keep its expert examiners. It is an ordinary occurrence for a young law student to take a position as examiner for a few years to gain experience, and then to enter an industrial or commercial firm as patent counsel at double his government salary.

How the patent office might be made a great force for encouraging invention is suggested by a plan for a department of invention and discovery worked out by an examiner. This department would contain a bureau of information and education, which would disseminate information on inventions by bulletins, press reports and field agents. People would be told what sort of inventions are needed, and how to develop them. A man has wasted years of his life over a non-profitable invention, or over a bit of apparatus that another man had perfected and patented long before. The public would be made familiar with inventors' rights and how to develop them. Help of this sort the present patent office has neither time nor means to offer the public.

Another bureau would concern itself with the utility of inventions. Thomas Jefferson assumed that an invention was not practicable until he had seen it work. Four hundred patent examiners, with sixty or seventy thousand patents pending at once, have no time for detailed study of each one, and often are forced to assume that an invention is practicable.

The utility bureau in the proposed patent department would have laboratories and demonstration rooms. Its work would be to test the usefulness and working power of each invention, and to report the result to the examiner of the case. This would save many an inventor a fifteen-dollar patent fee, and a fruitless search for a market for his patent. Other features of the department would be a patent court composed of specially qualified judges, and field offices established in industrial centers, which would contain complete classified sets of patents for the use of inventors and attorneys.

The importance of the patent office as an institution is more fully realized abroad than in this country. In England and in France, the comptroller of patents is a very important official; while under the old German government the patent office head was next in rank to the chancellor.

Before patent protection was instituted in the seventeenth century, inventors guarded their discoveries with jealous secrecy, and often their inventions died with them. Not until protection was assured to inventors did industry make rapid progress, and now so closely is industry related to patent procedure that if a nation's patent system becomes corrupted or otherwise unsound the very foundations of its industry are shaken.

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of the Scottish hills, the bagpipe. The sight of Spanish mountaineers dancing to the skirling pipes is interesting certainly, but it is far less pleasing than the graceful dances of southern Spain.

Questions and Answers

Q. Who has charge of selling government war material and other surplus supplies? T. G. A. The purchasing, storage and traffic division of the war department has charge of the selling of all army materials which are no longer needed. Sales and auctions will take place in various army stations throughout the country. For details concerning sales write to the Director of Sales, Division of Purchasing, Storage and Traffic, Munitions Building, Washington, D. C.

Q. Where is the 322nd Field Signal Battalion? When is it coming home? D. N. A. The 322nd Field Signal Battalion is attached to the third army in Germany with headquarters at Coblenz, Army Postoffice 927. This unit has not yet been assigned for convey to the United States.

Q. How may I subscribe to The Congressional Record? D. F. A. Subscriptions for the Record may be sent to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. The price is \$1.50 per month or \$5 for a long session. Single copies may be purchased at three cents for copies of twenty-four or less pages, one cent extra for every six pages additional.

Q. How many American Indians were in the United States combatant service during the war? B. N. L. A. More than 10,000 of these original Americans fought in the recent war and proved themselves excellent soldiers and sailors; in fact the record of the Indian agency which the interior department, the agency administering the Indian bureau, is very proud.

Q. Before the present war, what was the greatest famine ever known? G. C. A. The greatest number of deaths

known to have resulted from famine occurred in India in 1896, when the loss was placed at 1,450,000. A famine occurred in Ireland in 1847, with deaths numbering 1,029,000.

FORMER BENTON BANKER RETURNS FOR A VISIT
Special to The Daily Tribune.
Fort Benton, May 27.—Harvey Phelps, formerly with the Stockmens National Bank of this place, now manager of the Stockmens State bank at Browning, is in town for a few days. Mr. Phelps and his wife came from Browning by automobile, over the Glacier Park trail. He reports business conditions and stock-raising interests in a prosperous condition about Browning.

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