

The True Democrat

ELRIE ROBINSON,
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Editors.

Official Journal of the Parish of West Feliciana, the Towns of Bayou Sara and St. Francisville, and of the School Board.

We also own and publish the Feliciana Record, a weekly newspaper for the town of Jackson, La. Advertisers will do well to get joint rates for both papers.

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OBSTACLES TO THE SPLIT-LOG DRAG.

"The split-log drag has contributed more toward the economic maintenance of public highways than any implement of modern usage. It does not require special acts of legislature, bond issues nor expensive educational campaigns to make it available as usually precedes construction work. A drag can be built or purchased for twenty dollars and is easily operated by any one who can drive a team. We need more drags in this state," says a recent bulletin of the Farmers' Union, a national organization. The trouble with the split-log drag is that it is too cheap. If it cost as much as a road machine, police juries would be found gravely deliberating on its merits, raising funds to buy one, and planning snug little salaries for the men to run it. But since one can be made for considerably less than twenty dollars, requires no special equipment of horse- or man-power to run it, its merits are ignored by the easy-going Southerner.

The above, though true, is an idle sneer. The real reason, the deep, underlying cause of the split-log drag's failure to get next to the farming community in general, is because it requires co-operation. Yes, co-operation and constant vigilance. And both of these the happy-go-lucky have not. It will do small good if Farmer A drags his share of the road, if Farmers B and C and D, etc., fail to drag theirs; or if all these farmers by some wondrous chance do drag at the same time, then it will be of equally unsatisfactory result if they do not drag their respective bits of road at the proper time, as well as in unison. The work-the-roads-in-August idea must be uprooted before the split-log drag can accomplish anything.

THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH.

Possibly Baton Rouge has failed at some time in the past to celebrate Washington's birthday by a parade of the local fire companies. In fact, we dimly recall such a lapse as having occurred at least once, but it was accompanied by more or less lurid discussion of the pty of such an evigency. This year the time-honored annual celebration was omitted without the sound of dirge or the public appearance of tears, though Baton Rouge without its February Twenty-second looks strange indeed. The old order changeth. With the expenditure of much effort and force on its monthly market days, perhaps strength was lacking to push the celebration through. From a utilitarian standpoint there can be no doubt of the relative value of the two public observances. To-day, the practicalities of life are very pressing, and the market days will do far more towards the development of business and industrial and agricultural education of the people than would the firemen's pageant.

Both have their uses, however. The people need holidays, and in happier days to come, we trust that Baton Rouge will resume its yearly memorial of the birth of the immortal George.

In a private letter from Dr. Oscar Dowling, president of the State Board of Health, he compliments The True Democrat for refusing the advertising of a man, claiming to be an optometrist who was without proper credentials. The public cannot be too careful in permitting the practice upon their eyes by these traveling opticians, unless properly known and recommended. A local physician says that the public would be more careful of such indiscriminate patronage, if it were only realized that the ordinary practitioner sends his patients to an oculist for troubles of the eye, for two reasons, first because he does not have enough practice of the sort to render him expert, and second because the necessary instruments and appliances are too expensive for limited use. How then can it be expected that these itinerants are properly equipped, either by training or with the proper appliances, for the work that they undertake to do? Were they properly equipped, they would not need to travel, but could have city offices done in new art mahogany.

Ignoring the obvious jokes, there is a heroic quality shown by Sarah Bernhardt in submitting to have her right leg amputated, at her advanced age, rather than lie idle for five months.

WHY, INDEED?

"Why do we stay away from school on Washington's birthday? I go to school on Grandpa's birthday," said a little West Felicitanian. Was there ever a more naive and eloquent tribute to the importance of a grandfather?

Some of the rest of us for another reason are asking why should there be no school on Washington's birthday? Is the running at large of the school children a fitting observance of this noble anniversary? Could not the occasion be more appropriately and profitably celebrated by a school program than by the loss of a day's lessons? When it is considered how important each day of school is to the average child, whose school days are admitted to be too short in most cases, it is astonishing that there should be any holidays, except those required for religious observance. As it is in some communities of this State, including the city of New Orleans, the children had holiday from Saturday, Feb. 6, through Ash Wednesday—five days, then two days of school, then three more days out of school. This was surely three days too much. It justifies the suspicion that schools are not operated primarily for the benefit of the child, but for the convenience of the teachers.

THE DIGNITY OF TRADES.

An exchange remarks that there are more young men in the penitentiary learning trades than there are those similarly engaged outside, and that the latter are educated for the more "gentlemanly" employments: the law, medicine, and the office rather than the mill. While such is the case it is not nearly so bad as formerly, because "the trades" are offering young men much better careers, and afford greater demands for brains and education than in the past. There can be no doubt that good will follow the modern trend to educate the farmer, and to show that though there is much manual labor connected with farming that nowhere else is both knowledge and experience so necessary as in this great calling. As the farmer is seen in his true light as the most important factor in the world's economics, so do other occupations where hands must be used in close alliance with brains, rise in importance. Young men of the future will seek the trades more frequently, and thus decrease the liability of having to learn one behind prison doors. They will depend less on their wits, and be freer to follow their natural inclinations and tastes in the choice of their life-work, undeterred by false standards of gentility.

A writer in a Northwestern periodical writes some verse about "Natchez on the Hill," purporting to be a Southerner, who says:
"Once again I cuddle close within my father's arm
And single out the Southern Cross,
and watch the fireflies swarm."
It would take a good deal of "singling out" to find the Southern Cross in the heavens of these latitudes, and Natchez is rather high and dry for fireflies in any great number. Such verse does not carry conviction as being truly Southern.

It is related of the two women who are members of the Arizona legislature, that the Senator lady does not object to the use of tobacco in the Senate chamber by her compeers, while the Representative lady does object. The facts illustrate well how erroneous it is to presume exactly what women will do concerning any given premise. They are quite as diverse in their opinions as men, possibly more so.

The question is asked more frequently: "Why should a four-bit office be filled with expensive primaries, followed by an election just as expensive?" In the effort to deprive Governors of their appointive powers, the people are forced into heavy expense to fill vacancies. Is it worth it? To elect a ward magistrate it is wise to expend more than the full term of office would bring the successful candidate? Some penny whistles cost entirely too much.

The New Orleans Item sneers at the American women, who stumble over the one-legged beggar in their way in order to rush help to the Belgians. It is noteworthy that there should be no one-legged beggars in the way. If these charity-at-home people would practice what they preach, they would have the needy of every description properly cared for—and out of sight.

A New Orleans debater against woman-suffrage cited the Scriptures in proof that female judges would cause nations to retrograde.
"The female Deborah judged Israel for forty years," he said, "and three years after she died what happened? Israel was delivered into the hands of the Gideonites."
"She was dead," came a voice from the audience.

Jim Bailey will run for secretary of state. There is no doubt that Mr. Bailey is fully persuaded of his own versatility as a candidate.

DESERVED COMPLIMENT.

Under the above caption appear the following paragraphs in the editorial columns of the Baton Rouge State-Times. Needless to say these expressions by a good judge of newspaper matters are very gratifying to us. Our brother editor says:

"As the result of a questionnaire conducted by a western university, The St. Francisville True Democrat was selected as one of the first weekly publications in the United States.

"The selection is well justified. The True Democrat, in both quality and typographical arrangement, deserves to rank among the best weekly papers of the country. It is one of the papers of the state to whose appearance on our exchange table on Saturday night we look forward with pleasure. Its editorials are well thought out and well written, and in a news way it covers thoroughly its little town and surrounding territory.

"Mr. and Mrs. Robinson well deserve the tribute paid them by the selection. The product they issue justifies it being placed among the best country weeklies in America."

Miss Christabel Pankhurst admits in a recent interview that English suffragettes have gained less for their cause by militant methods than their American sisters have by milder means. It is the old fable over again of the sunbeams making the traveler take off his cloak when the wind made him only cling more closely to it.

Ex-Governor Heard gets Federal plum," we read. Glory be, but these are the wild celery days for the lame ducks! Blanchard is now the only living ex-governor of Louisiana out of captivity to a Federal job.—N. O. Item. They guessed right on Wilson.

Were all the sugar required by the United States grown from its own soil the consumers of the country at present would be saving at least half a cent a pound on their purchases of sugar.

An exchange speaks of a candidate that it favors as "taking like wildfire." Substitute the word "foxfire," always remembering that this shiny substance is nothing but dead wood after all.

AS TO JURY SERVICE.

(Lake Charles American-Press.)
The Alexandria Town Talk recently said:

"The man who reads his parish newspaper and knows what is going on throughout the parish, will make a better juror than the ignoramus who never picks up a paper, and who is not informed on the things that are transpiring around him. Even if the prospective juror has read an account of the murder in the newspapers, if he has any mind at all, he can agree to abide by the evidence that is presented by the court to the jury and cast from his mind anything that might have appeared in the papers. If a fellow says that he cannot do this, and that he will be biased by the newspaper account of the tragedy, well, then that juror, in our opinion, would not make a good juror, even if he had not read the paper."

The juror who has read nothing about a case, who is not accustomed to weigh the pros and cons of any matter submitted to him is the most likely to be governed by his prejudices. Lawyers make the mistake of assuming that the man who reads is likely to be prejudiced by what he reads, ignoring the fact that reputable newspapers never present stories of an occurrence as being absolute truth, and exclude all little-tattle, exaggerations and irrelevant rumors. The man who does not read, on the other hand, has a mind at the mercy of gossip and street rumors, which expand every mole-hill of fact into a mountain of imagination. A little nearer approach to the English practice of selecting a jury would render going outside of the regular panel unnecessary in most cases.

LOUISIANA.

(Ella Bentley Arthur in "Louisiana.")
If molten sunlight were my ink,
And if my pen, a star,
'Twere in my power then, I think,
To write you as you are;
To mirror all your magic ways
In loveliness of words
Contrived from matchless nights and days
And songs of mocking birds.

Queen-mother of the royal cane
Whose rich, productive soil
Rewards with fertile fruit and grain
The lightest touch of toil;
Ah, surely Nature sought to bless
The grey old world she knew,
When prodigal of loveliness
She paused to fashion you.

As if her splendid dreams had merged
Into a splendid whole
To typify the love that surged
In her voluptuous soil.

If sunlight were my ink—my pen
A warm and living star,
'Twere only in my power then
To write you as you are!

EARLY IRISH POTATOES DO WELL IN LOUISIANA AND BRING GOOD PRICES.

From press dispatches, it appears that a large acreage in Irish potatoes will be planted this season. This is well; for the Irish potato is a standard and popular truck and food crop, and the indications are that the early crop will command good prices this season. It is the early crop that we are especially interested in, and in this our soil and climate in Louisiana give us an advantage.

The leading early varieties are the Triumph—a red potato—popular on the market, and the Irish Cobbler—a white potato—not so popular, but equally as early as the Triumph and more prolific. A good fertilizer formula for potatoes is equal parts of cotton seed meal and acid phosphate, and 1-3 German kainit, 500 to 1000 pounds of mixture per acre.

An additional value of the potato as a truck crop, is that it fits into any rotation system admirably, whether truck or field crops. It means two or more crops on the same land in the same year. For example, a fall crop of Irish potatoes may follow the spring crop, with a renovating cow pea crop intervening. A crop of sweet potatoes may follow the spring crop of Irish potatoes. Likewise, a fall crop of cabbage, cauliflower, turnips, etc.

In field crops late corn and peas or even cotton, may follow spring potatoes, for these should be out of the way by the first to the middle of May.

Again, if the spring potato crop has been properly and liberally fertilized, additional fertilizer need not be given the succeeding crop or crops.

The plan herein outlined means rotation, intensification, clean culture and continuous occupancy of the soil—an important consideration in our mild climate and under our humid conditions.

Both the L. S. U. classes and the allied City Public School classes in school garden work have just planted their Irish potato crops. They have observed the principles and practices herein laid down and the fight is on for a maximum of Scab-free, quality potatoes and soil free from infection of this serious, imported potato disease.

May all who are planting potatoes join the crusade against Scab infection of both the potato and the soil.—Prof. J. G. Lee, Department of Forestry and Horticulture, Louisiana State University.

CO-OPERATIVE SEED SELECTION.

The best test that one can give seeds, after observing due precautions over what must be bought, is to test them in the field. One should try a number of varieties of corn and cotton, for instance, in a limited area, and select from one or two varieties the best stalks for further trial, until each farmer has determined approximately the strain of field crop that will give him the largest yield of the best quality. Then there should be one or two men in every community who will give especial attention to the further development of that variety by observing strictly scientific principles in intensifying good characters and eliminating undesirable ones. One or two illustrations of the possibilities of improving plants will emphasize this.

Less than seventy-five years ago, the tomato was not recognized as a vegetable. In three-quarters of a century the "love apple," about an inch in diameter and considered worthless except as an ornament, has been modified by careful selection and breeding into one of the most highly prized vegetables now cultivated and it is adaptable to every climate that has as much as two and a half to three months of favorable growing weather.

The forerunner of the Irish potato was a poisonous plant of the nightshade family during the Colonial history of the United States. In a very short time it was transformed by selection and care to a highly prized vegetable, and there are at present several hundred varieties of widely different characters, adaptable to every section of the world that has any agriculture at all.

Only a few years ago, oats could not be raised in the South, but we have found strains that are resistant to the grain rust, and of which we are now producing larger yields than they do in the North when we have the right kind of seed, give them right kind of care and proper cultivation.

Illustrations might be multiplied, but these will emphasize the fact that plants respond to the efforts of mankind to modify their characters, to improve the quality of the produce and increase their productiveness. What a few men have done in making such strides in the improvement of plants may be accomplished in a small degree by almost any farmer by a little labor wisely directed.

The State Experiment Station at Baton Rouge, in co-operation with the Federal government, maintains a seed laboratory for making purity and germination tests of seeds for the farmer without charge, but field tests should be carried on by every farmer.—W. R. Dodson, Director of Experiment Stations, Louisiana State University.

One's good opinion of one's self should be maintained in silence.

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Salesman Wanted to look after our interest in West Feliciana and adjacent counties. Salary or commission. Address, Lincoln Oil Co., Cleveland, O.

FOR SALE—One thoroughbred Irish setter, three months old. W. K. Douglas, Wilcox P. O., La.

FOR SALE—Pure Barred Rock Eggs, setting of 15 for \$1.00. Mrs. A. Hadden.

WANTED—Lespedeza seed and hay, yellow yams, cabbage and other produce. List with me. I will get you more. C. M. BROOKS, 212 Laurel St., Baton Rouge, La.

FOR SALE—Red Rust Proof Seed Oats, Pea Vine and Lespedeza Hay and seed. JAS. P. BOWMAN.

FOR SALE—A few fine Duroc-Jersey pigs. PARKER STOCK FARM. tf

NOTICE.
Automobiles will not be permitted in the Rosedown field.
JAS. P. BOWMAN. tf

ORIGIN OF COL. GOETHALS' NAME.

"What's in a name?" A good deal, it appears, when we read in Scribner's Magazine about the origin of Colonel Goethals' name. Joseph Bucklin Bishop, who was for nine years Secretary of the Isthmian Canal Commission, tells us that one of Colonel Goethals' ancestors, Honorius, left Italy under the banner of the Duke of Burgundy. In a fight with Saracens, Honorius received a blow on the neck which would have proved fatal but for the fine quality of his armor. The incident won him the title of Boni Coli; and when he was given certain lands in the north of France now forming Holland and Belgium, his nickname was translated into the native tongue, as Goet Hals—"good neck," or "stiff neck."
The descendant of Honorius has amply proved his right to the title of "stiff neck," in the sense of firmness. Yet Mr. Bishop says that the Colonel is not a martinet, and no complaint of militarism has ever been made under his rule at Panama, though "strict obedience to orders" has always been enforced.

Willie—Paw, why is the way of the transgressor hard?
Paw—Because so many people have tramped on it, my son.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

The garden should be near the house so as to make the gathering of vegetables convenient.

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CORN CLUB WORK IN LOUISIANA.

An average of 45.7 bushels of corn per acre was produced by the members of the Louisiana Boys' Corn Club in 1914. The average cost per bushel was 38.2 cents. This average is about ten bushels per acre lower than that of 1913 which is due to unfavorable weather conditions during the summer months. The highest yield by a corn club boy in the state was made by Master Walter Willis of Rapides parish who produced 117 bushels, at a cost of twenty cents per bushel. Other boys making more than one hundred bushels were Mallard Beasley, Catahoula parish, 112.16, at a cost of 23.3 cents per bushel; Tullie Hatcher, of East Feliciana parish, 111.7 bushels at a cost of 32.9 cents per bushel; and Willie Wardlaw of Red River parish, 109.98 bushels at a cost of 18.6 cents per bushel.

Mr. Manley—Well, my dear, I've had my life insured for \$5,000.

Mrs. Manley—How very sensible of you! Now I shan't have to keep telling you to be so careful every place you go.—Pathfinder.

There are weeds in the work of nearly every one; the extent of the harvest depends on how the weeds are kept out.

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