

North Shore News-Letter

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EDITORIALS

RAVINE AVENUE IMPROVEMENT

We personally much regret that the property owners on Ravine Avenue should find it necessary or deem it necessary in justice to themselves to throw the question into the courts. As to the merits of this particular case it does not become us to discuss. We would expose ourselves to the charge of being personally biased by selfish motives. On the contrary we would rather be wronged to a moderate extent in the matter of the little expense than not have the street paved this season. And yet again, it is not, so much the question whether the street shall be improved this summer or next, as the question of seeing at the earliest possible moment the beginning of a beautiful park at the foot of the street.

We have given no little study to the question of city parks during the last twenty years. We have come to understand, to some extent at least, the vast influence of parks on the health and happiness of the inhabitants, especially on the rising generation.

But returning to the main question; there is a vital principle of equity in the whole subject of improvement of streets by special assessments. Theoretically the assumption is that the owners of property abutting on the street should pay for the improvement because it enhances the value of their property. But there have been instances innumerable where abutting property was assessed out of existence; that is, the assessment was more than the value of the property. How such an improvement can benefit the property owner passes our comprehension. Even more, there are often instances where the so-called improvement was such to the general public, but a positive damage to some one or more owners on that street. In either of these instances should not the general public pay part of the cost of the improvement? Such is both the law and the custom in some States. The Commissioners, as officers appointed for the purpose, assess a certain part of the cost to the general public and spread the balance as now among the abutting property owners.

Unfortunately, Highland Park did not commence that way, and now those who have paid for the improvements on the streets in front of their property will naturally think it a hardship if they are called to help others. But a little reflection, and we shall see that the streets first improved in Highland Park are now nearly vacant. If we mistake not a move is on foot to repave the street, first improved by macadam in the city. If we are correct then they

too would receive help. The whole town have helped to wear out their street.

We may as well put it down to begin with, that there rarely ever is a strictly equitable special assessment spread.

WORKING FOR A SHORT BALLOT.

Some weeks ago we called attention to an organized movement called the "Short Ballot Association" having for its mission the simplifying and shortening of the ballot. The National Municipal League is cooperating with the Short Ballot Association to accomplish this purpose. In advocacy of the short ballot system the association argues as follows:

"The dangerously great power of politicians in our country is not due to any peculiar civic indifference of the people, but rests on the fact that we are living under a form of democracy that is so unworkable as to constitute in practice a pseudo-democracy. It is unworkable because, first, it submits to popular election offices which are too unimportant to attract (or deserve) public attention; second, it submits to popular election so many offices at one time that many of them are inevitably crowded out from proper public attention; third, it submits to public election so many offices at one time that the business of making up the elaborate ticket necessary in every election makes the political machine an indispensable instrument in electoral action.

"Many officers are elected, therefore, without adequate public scrutiny and owe their election not to the people, but to the makers of party ticket, who thus acquire an influence that is capable of great abuse.

"The short ballot principle is, first, that only those offices should be elective which are important enough to attract (and deserve) public examination; second, that very few offices should be filled by election at one time, so as to permit adequate and unconfused public examination of the candidates.

"Obedience to these fundamental principles explains the comparative success of democratic government in the cities of Great Britain and other foreign democracies, as well as in Galveston, Des Moines and other American cities that are governed by commissions."

GREEDY CAPITALISTS.

Whoever stands, or whoever falls, or whatever befalls; one thing is certain. The long drawn investigation of Secretary Ballinger's course in matters of consideration of the public utilities is stir-

ring up an interest in, and a knowledge of our natural resources such as all previous efforts combined had not accomplished.

The whole question of conservation is too recent for the mass of people to have become familiar with all the interrelations of the great forces and factors that go to make our national wealth. We question whether any very large proportion of the people have carefully studied these interrelations. The forests, even if they do not effect the quantity and manner of rain fall, do certainly injuriously effect the flow of water from the soil into the riverlets, into the brooks, into the streams, into the rivers. If the flow is rapid the soil is washed away, especially on hill sides. The rivers in turn are filled up with silt impeding navigation. This in turn affects internal commerce unfavorably. Water power is consequently often rendered so uneven as to greatly diminish its value, and so we find lumber interests, agriculture, internal navigation and commerce, water power and manufacturing all closely interwoven in the question of conservation.

What wonder then that there is a grasping by the great capitalists of the all land whether forested or not, all the water power, all the coal mines and other mineral matter wealth.

A PIONEER OF PEACE.

Elihu Burritt, whose centenary was observed last week in New Britain, Connecticut, was tersely described in an address by Mr. James Brown Scott, Solicitor-General of the State Department, as "a blacksmith by trade, a student by instinct, a scholar by attainment, a benefactor and philanthropist by profession." It is not because he was "the learned blacksmith" that his memory is so worthy of honor, but because he was a man of high ideals for which he worked in practical ways. It was most peculiarly fitting that the memorial exercises should largely consist of special sessions of the New England Arbitration and Peace Conference, the members of which came in a body from Hartford for the purpose. Seventy years ago international peace seemed a dream of the future, but to-day no one can call extreme, unreasonable, or impossible Burritt's proposal, which, as outlined by Mr. Scott, was simply the establishment of a congress of nations to give the law and the court to nations to interpret the law codified or created by the congress of nations, whereby international controversies might peaceably be settled by the principles of justice without resort to force. These ideas Elihu Burritt urged before five universal peace congresses, the first held in 1842. He has been rightly called an international man, a citizen of the world in the best sense. New Britain honored him with school parades and a procession of floats representing scenes in life and historical events in the fight for international peace; and there was an international tribute at his grave. Exercises were also held at the little chapel which Elihu Burritt built with his own hands that men of all creeds might have a place in which to worship without cost. Blacksmith, linguist, editor, author, storekeeper, advocate of peace, hater of slavery, promoter of religion, Government official—his life was busy, useful, and unselfish. Our Outlook.

POLITICAL PARTISANSHIP

One cannot follow day by day the congressional investigation of Secretary Ballinger's past methods in relation to public utilities without feeling indignation at the bold spirit of partisanship so frequently in evidence. Rarely have we ever watched a congressional investigation with more interest than we have watched this.

With our long and deep seated interest in forestry and all the other kindred lines of public utilities, we recognized from the first how natural it would be for us to be prejudiced. Hence we put ourselves carefully on guard knowing full well that nothing is ever gained in the long run by unfairness. But during these now many days and even weeks of investigation, whenever a division has been called the rate of the investigating committee has been with now and then an individual exception along strict party lines. We can hardly conceive of this being purely and strictly a matter of honest individual opinion. What the general public want to know and should know and have, is the facts and an ultimate decision strictly in accordance with facts. What honest man's soul would not groan with righteous indignation of a jury holding the life of the accused as well as the protection of the public in their bonds should note guilty or innocent according to their party or their church practices? But according to present outlook the record will work harm rather than benefit to the Secretary of the Interior, if not indeed to the President.

Rules for Dealing With the Fly Nuisance.

Keep the flies away from the sick especially those ill with contagious disease. Kill every fly that strays into the sick room. His body is covered with disease germs.

Do not allow decaying material of any sort to accumulate on or near your premises.

All refuse which tends in any way to fermentation, such as bedding, straw, paper, waste, and vegetable matter, should be disposed of or covered with lime or kerosene oil.

Screen all food, whether in the house or exposed for sale.

Keep all receptacles for garbage carefully covered and the cans cleaned or sprinkled with oil or lime.

Keep all stable manure in vault or pit, screened or sprinkled with lime, oil or other cheap preparation, such as are sold by a number of reliable manufacturers.

See that your sewerage system is in good order; that it does not leak, is up-to-date and not exposed to flies.

Pour kerosene into the drains.

Burn or bury all table refuse.

Screen all windows and doors, especially in the kitchen and dining room.

If you see flies, you may be sure that their breeding place is in nearby filth. It may be behind the door, under the table or in the curpidor.

If there is no dirt and filth there will be no flies.

If there is a nuisance in the neighborhood write at once to the Health Department.

ALMOST TO FAR

"Very good repartee—very good—but perhaps a little strong."

The speaker was a prominent actor. He resumed:

"It reminds me of a dialogue at the Lambs club between a New England poet and a Scot.

"Bah!" said the Scot, hearing that the poet had a press agent. "Bah," you Americans are possessed with an itch for notoriety.

"The poet tossed back 'his long look fiercely.

"Well," he cried, 'an itch for notoriety is better than a notoriety for'—"Bah," with a 'Tut, tut, gentlemen!' said the actor, "I ended this unseemly wrangle it went to far."

COMPTROLLER TO GET INFORMATION ON CREDIT

Reports to Show Standing of Individuals and Firms—Help for Bank Examiners.

Washington, May 18.—Information on credit, which will be of great value to the district examiners, hence will be a feature in the office of the comptroller of the currency, according to plans outlined by Comptroller Lawrence O. Murray, head of the bureau. From the information the examiners may obtain data on the financial standing of individuals, firms and corporations, so far as their borrowing privileges with national banks are concerned. Reports conveying information of this character are to be made to the comptroller's office semiannually, after the meetings held at those periods by the district examiners. They are to show general conditions in the districts, the number of examinations of banks that have been made, a list of those requiring examination oftener than twice a year, lists of defalcations, "financiers of questionable methods" of the "outside or foreign paper" borrowers whose headquarters or places of business are outside of the district covered by the reports, doubtful or questionable paper in which of firms or directors or persons or firms are interested and large or extended lists of credit.



Comptroller Murray.

The semiannual district meetings, which are to be an innovation, are to be held early in July this year. At these gatherings Mr. Murray proposes that chairman and individual examiners prepare papers for presentation and discussion.

LAKE MOHONK PEACE TALKS

Conference on International Arbitration Attracts Prominent Men to the New York Town.

Mohonk Lake, N. Y., May 18.—On the invitation of Albert K. Smiley, its under, the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration is holding its sixteenth annual meeting here, and the sessions have attracted a large number of distinguished men who are experts in international economics. The conference opened this morning with welcoming remarks by Mr. Smiley and an address by President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia university, presiding officer of the meeting. Dr. B. F. Trueblood then reviewed the year's progress in arbitration.

Other speakers of the day were Prof. John B. Clark of Columbia, Robert L. O'Brien, editor of the Boston Transcript; Edgar E. Clark of the Interstate Commerce commission, and Rev. Arthur J. Brown of New York. Tonight's session will be "international," the speakers on the program being the Swedish, Belgian and Swiss ministers. Very Rev. W. Moore Ede, Jean of Worcester, England; Sir William Mulock, chief justice of Ontario; President Schurman of Cornell and Prof. Paul S. Reinsch of the University of Wisconsin.

The conference will adjourn Friday evening.

PROBATION OFFICERS MEET

Convention in St. Louis to Discuss Problems Arising From New System of Dealing With Criminals.

St. Louis, May 18.—One of the most important of the conventions held in connection with the National Conference of Charities and Corrections began here today. It is that of the National Probation Officers' association, an organization composed of judges of juvenile criminal courts, probation officers and members of various state probation commissions. At this convention, which will last several days, there will be discussion of the problems arising out of the new system of dealing with criminals and other offenders, and among the speakers are Judge Ben B. Lindsey of Denver, Judge G. S. Addams of Cleveland, Judge E. E. Porterfield of Kansas City, Judge H. S. Hulbert of Detroit, Judge G. H. Williams of St. Louis, Homer Folks of New York, Bernard Flexner of Louisville and others.

Highland Park Items continued from 1st. and Pages.

MRS. M'MULLIN HONOR

Highland Park Society Heads St. Margaret's Alt

Mrs. Frank R. McMullin, a society woman of Highland Park, has been elected president of St. Margaret's Alumnae. Many Chicagoans have been elected.

Mrs. Paul Smith was hostess on Wednesday.

Mr. and Mrs. G. M. Sewall were Highland Park visitors Sunday.

Mr. John Fay, formerly president of the A. C. Milling Co. has purchased a lot in Mount Pleasant subdivision and will erect there during the summer.

Miss Katherine McCauley is in Cincinnati.

Mrs. Walter Carr of Prospect gave a very delightful bridge Tuesday.

Attorney Charles Whitney County's foremost citizen, who most critical condition in Los Angeles, his son, Ray, having been named Thursday to his bedside says "He has a chance."

Mr. C. G. Rosenow will move store owned by A. W. Fletcher, occupied by J. Heketsweiler and ant.

Mrs. Charles Snyder of Centerville, entertained at cards last Wednesday afternoon.

Mrs. D. M. Erskine of Park was hostess at a tea last Tuesday noon.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. William a daughter, Saturday, May 20.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Sibley moved to Chicago for the summer.

Mr. C. P. Sullivan of Park avenue has been seriously ill for the past is slowly improving.

Mr. and Mrs. Palmer A. Moore of Maple avenue, leave the city for their farm near Chesapeake, where they will spend the summer.

Mrs. Tillman of Prospect avenue plans to leave soon with a party for a trip in Europe.

Mrs. Samuel Parliament Sheridan road, expects to leave June first for a summer abroad.

Miss Elizabeth Morrison, of avenue, left last week with Miss Edith Morrison, for an visit in Maryland and Virginia.

WANT HIGHWOOD LAY DOWN ITS HOOD.

Movement Afoot Where Hoped to Reduce Expenses of Municipality by Closing Village Again

A plan with many supporters the city of Highwood reduce city government to a village of is being broached in the North Shore.

Ever since the city of Highwood "dry" it has been regarded as a town and the fact that the city is getting further in debt causes surprise to residents towns along the North Shore. Many persons regard the culmination of a political and social fight, which has been in Highwood since the saloons were closed.

A petition that is being circulated by William Benson and John former police magistrate, is signed by many residents. The reason given for the change is that the expense of a city government is too high there is no income from saloons. The city has been incorporated 15 years.

There are scores of residents