

Letters From the People

[Communications sent to The Journal for publication in this department should be written on only one side of the paper, should not exceed 300 words in length and must be accompanied by the name and address of the sender. If the writer does not desire to have the name published he should so state.]

From an Old Friend of the Lanes. ¹⁹¹⁷

Albany, Or., March 27.—To the Editor of The Journal—I note in this morning's Oregonian this headline: "Name of 'Lane' Is Odious to Eugene."

I suppose, then, we must stop singing "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane," and, to conform to the present propaganda for paved roads, must change the meter and working to "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Paved Highway," or like terms.

At the same time, it will be popular up at Eugene to chant the refrain, "Down the Lane; Down the Lane."

As you say in today's Journal, Lane county was named after General Joseph Lane. In those early years, and even during the Civil war, Lane county, as well as Linn, was largely Democratic, and very naturally the name of Lane was very popular. I saw General Joseph Lane when he stepped off the batteau at the Willamette river landing at Oregon City, March 2, 1849, and I heard the congratulations of the gathered citizens over whom he was the next day to be territorial governor. I very much doubt if there is another person living that can recall the incident. My boyish memories of General Lane can never be effaced. Tall and commanding, his military bearing impressed me. His pleasing address captured me. It pleased even his political opponents. His prowess during the Rogue River war heightened his fame. No wonder he was several times elected to congress, the last time as a senator. I heard his speech at Forest Grove in the spring of 1855, when he and ex-Governor Gaines were in the contest for delegate in congress. During all these years I have remembered some of his sayings.

The stand he took during the Civil war, of course, I could not indorse. He was not the only southern sympathizer that sinned against Old Glory and was afterward forgiven. Some of our Oregon G. A. R. veterans met some of such at the Gettysburg semi-centennial, in July, 1913, and heartily shook hands and pledged a lasting peace. Years ago we bridged the "bloody chasm." The Spanish-American war united us more than any other previous effort.

And now when more than ever we need a united nation, it is, to say the least, decidedly out of place to revive the old antagonisms. For the sake of his grandfather, and because I am a staunch friend of Harry Lane, I cannot but feel hurt at the attempts to "call him down" from his honored position as a senator from our peerless Oregon. Perhaps he made a mistake in failing to vote to arm merchant vessels. Call it what you may, it wrought a mighty good, for that stand of the now immortal 11 became the means of arousing our nation to a greater patriotism, and the modifying of the 109-year-old senate rule of unlimited debate, opened to a better legislation. And also, President Wilson found out he could arm vessels without the action of congress, so why this continued outcry? The barking seems to be mainly from those who would hound Harry Lane off his post, so as to rush in a Republican senator. I hope he will stand them "at bay," and I am sure he will come out O. K. He has too many friends in Oregon for the name "Lane" ever to be wiped off the map of Oregon.

I cast my maiden vote for Lincoln in 1860, voted for Addison C. Gibbs, Oregon's war governor, in 1862, and again voted for Lincoln in 1864. From in December of that year to in July, 1866, I served as an officer in Company B, First Oregon volunteers.

McPherson post No. 5, G. A. R., of Albany, unanimously voted to stand by the president and serve in any capacity available to us, and we so informed President Wilson. "The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak."

CYRUS H. WALKER,

Post Commander.