

THE KU KLUX IN POLITICS

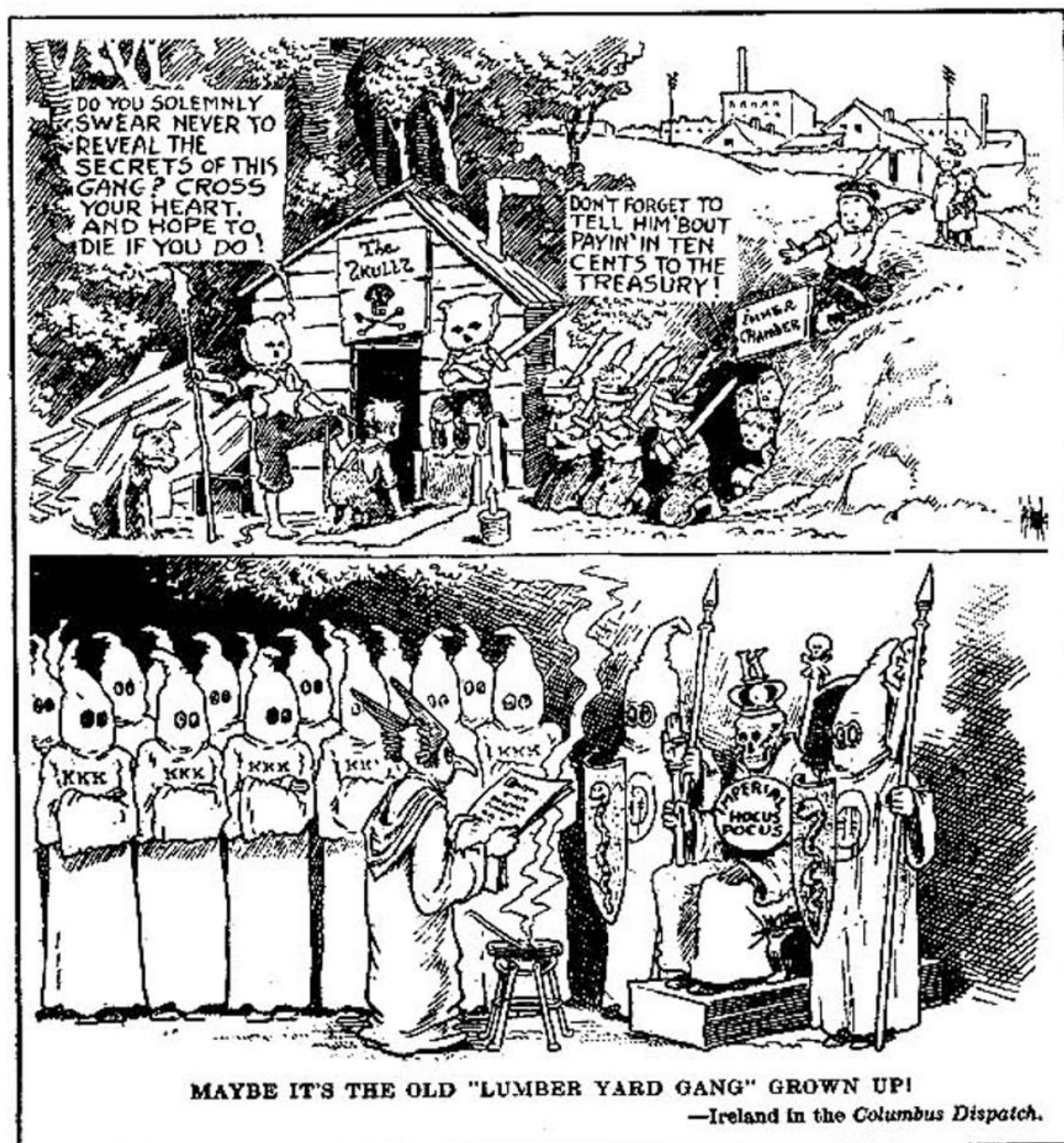
THE CLOSENESS OF THE OREGON VOTE in the Republican primary contest for the governorship, in which Governor Olcott narrowly won over State Senator Hull, focuses attention for the first time in months on the Ku Klux Klan and its entry into politics. For Senator Hull was openly backed by the hooded organization and a "Federation of Patriotic Societies," we are told by Oregon dispatches. In Texas, too, the Klan is reported to be active in politics. Senator Culberson, one of the veterans of the Senate, who has declared against the "K. K. K." as a menace to civil law and organized society, is opposed by Congressman Henry, who indorses and praises the secret body, while Judge Napier, of Wichita Falls, who promises to drive the Ku Klux Klan from Texas, is out after the governorship.

While no active political campaigns are reported from other States, we learn that a recent search of the office of the Grand Goblin of California, at Los Angeles, after one man had been killed and two shot in frustrating a Ku Klux raid, brought to light two automobile loads of documentary evidence of the Klan's connection with the raid; the home of the Mayor of Columbus, Ga., was bombed and the City Manager assaulted, altho the Klan declares that it is innocent in this instance. Among picturesque bits in the dispatches, we read that in Tulsa, Okla., a band of seven men, who said they were members of the Klan, forced a young man to marry a widow; near Hartford, Conn., there was held a ceremony in which some 1,500 white-robed members are said to have participated, and in New Albany, Ind., masked Klansmen donated \$25 toward a new church. Other recent and diversified activities in different sections of the country are reported from Kansas, where Governor Allen is investigating the charge that members of the National Guard are also members of the Klan; in Kansas City, Kans., where the Klan visited a hospital and left \$402 with the superintendent; in Sacramento, where a secret ceremony was reported in full by the *Sacramento Bee*; and in a New Jersey village, where forty members of the Klan conducted their own services, much to the surprize of the widow, over the grave of a member.



It is only in Texas and Oregon, however, writes Mark Sullivan, political correspondent of the *New York Evening Post*, that the Ku Klux Klan will be "a major political issue" in the State elections. The recent Oregon primary campaign was "the bitterest and closest political campaign in Oregon's history," according

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MAYBE IT'S THE OLD "LUMBER YARD GANG" GROWN UP!

—Ireland in the *Columbus Dispatch*.

to a Portland dispatch to the *New York World*, yet, this paper points out editorially, "Oregon has no negro problem." The anti-alien and religious questions, however, served the Klan's purposes, observes the *Buffalo Express*. In fact, the *Portland (Ore.) Telegram* charges that "a religious dust-storm obscured the real issues." As the *Baltimore American* tells us:

"On the one side was the 'Federation of Patriotic Societies,' under the acknowledged leadership of the Ku Klux Klan, and on the other side were arrayed the alien-born citizens and the negroes. The chief contest was on the gubernatorial nomination. In Multnomah County, which includes the city of Portland, the Federation of Patriotic Societies made a clean sweep in the local offices, including judicial nominations, and gave a plurality of 1,059 for the candidate for Governor. Hall was not nominated, but his vote is large enough to show the Ku Klux strength."

"The closeness of the vote ought to be a warning," agrees the *New York Evening World*. "If the Ku Klux Klan insists on entering politics, good citizens must show it the way out," declares the *Detroit Free Press*, for, as the *Brooklyn Eagle* views it, "if the movement were to become permanent, it would be the greatest sort of peril to the nation." "There is no excuse for the Klan," asserts the *Fresno Republican*, "for our Governmental structure places the responsibility for enforcement of law and the maintenance of order on certain authorized persons." "Good government can not be achieved by privately organized force," agrees the *Mikwaukee Journal*, and the *Los Angeles Times* reminds us that "a mob is a mob; it doesn't matter what secret pins or regalia it wears."

In fact, this is the tenor of all editorials which we have seen regarding the Ku Klux Klan, which the *Sacramento Bee* calls "infamous" and "un-American." "In a vicious and degrading campaign, Oregon has made a lamentable exhibition of itself," thinks the *New York World*. But hope for the future is held out by the *Buffalo Commercial*, which says:

"These so-called patriotic societies arouse public sentiment, and at times appear to sweep all before them. But there is nothing in the movement that is based upon right principles, hence it can not permanently enter the political field."

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