

THE OBSERVER

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REGULATION GAINING EVERY DAY

The earnest thought of a community like Union county always brings results, and the past few months there has been serious consideration of the local option law and the proposition to handle the liquor selling under a strict regulation. Apparently there is preponderance of sentiment in favor of regulation. This has been arrived at by comparison of what was claimed for the local option law and what actually has transpired. Its failure to make good the claims made for it is so prominent that none can overlook it, and all admit that if this is what was those in charge of the campaign had to offer in support of local option it would be well to try something else.

There is disposition or intent to open the American saloon of former days with its gambling, prostitution and debauchery, for if such were the case good men would not be behind the movement for regulation. But there is a firm desire to try severe restriction as a means of better handling the liquor traffic. Substantial citizens, and there are many of them, believe that a system of regulation that will place responsible, clandestine and under-covering selling of intoxicants now in vogue. They believe that it is better to force things to the surface than it is to have them hidden underground still possessing the same dangerous effects, which is a feature of local option.

For that very reason it will be found that many voters in this valley will go to the polls Tuesday and vote for regulation with the full expectation that regulation will follow. And it must follow, if the people of union county place their confidence in licensed regulation and restriction, they shall not be deceived.

OFFICIAL RECORD AND PROMISES

To read the letters being issued by B. F. Wilson, candidate for county judge, one who was not familiar with this county might think extravagance was a part of the present administration, when as a matter of fact according to records more has been accomplished during the administration of Judge Henry to place, this county on a business basis than ever occurred in the same length of time in the county's history.

Mr. Wilson says he will do many things if elected, but we invite the taxpayer and voter to turn to the county records under Wilson when he was holding the office of county judge and see if he ever had the disposition when

he had an opportunity to do things. Note carefully, what condition the county was in when this man held the office of county judge. Heavy indebtedness, a paralyzed credit, poor highways, few bridges are monuments to Mr. Wilson as an official. Yet he asks the people to return him once more to this important position. Will the people do it? Just watch the election returns.

There is absolutely no reason why any Republican should not vote for Charles A. Barrett of Athena for joint senator from Union, Umatilla and Morrow counties. He is an honest, industrious citizen, a man who has had experience in the legislature, is careful in his acts of lawmaking and withal is a safe, sane, experienced man who has the interests of Eastern Oregon uppermost in his heart. Mr. Barrett was nominated after a hard fight and he won the nomination fairly. He was opposed to the assembly and had the courage to make a fight against it. Every assembly man should vote for him because he is entitled to the support and will be a satisfactory legislator.

Yes, everything is practically suspended until after election and then the Grande Ronde valley will begin doing business again with a vim that is customary here.

Here's hoping Oswald and George and all the boys will feel all right after the election and be willing to attend the inauguration of Governor Jay Bowerman.

Oswald West seems to have gotten lost in the shuffle for governor. At least his own party leaders have ceased to use vigor in their work for him.

WILSON'S RECORD.

(Continued from page one)

and that while the present warrants draw six per cent our great debt will only be drawing five per cent during the life of the bonds (present price 95c cash.)

Those who are not in favor of bonding, claim instead of being a saving the county is actually a loser, of the \$179,000. \$24,000 is not drawing interest but will immediately when taken up by the bonds. The interest on \$24,000 at five per cent for twenty years is \$24,000.

Again the interest on the \$17,000 is payable semi-annually.

Again not only does the interest have to be paid in cash but a sinking fund must be created to pay off these bonds. The money cannot be applied on our indebtedness until after the expiration of at least 10 years.

Thus a large sum of money which must be collected, taken from circulation and hoarded up. (This means a fund that a certain few can speculate with.) Had not the rate of interest been reduced the bonding proposition might be advanced on economic grounds, but within four years our present warrants will all be replaced with 6 per cent warrants, with no compounding of interest and as fast as the money can be received can be applied on our indebtedness.

Another point is the issuance of these bonds will not be permitted until the authority of the county court has been substantiated. This no doubt means additional expense to the county by way of litigation.

Again would not it have been proper

to have made this bonding proposition public and invited bids instead of accepting possibly the only proposition presented to the court. This bonding question bids fair to be quite an issue before it is finally completed.

WHEN MOB FORMED IN UNION

People Felt Keenly the Way the Court Managed Matters.

It is hard to realize this year of 1910 that a mob once formed at the county seat in Union county for the purpose of protecting property rights but that is what occurred according to authentic history. Read what The Observer said of the matter at the time and also note the court's final action in the important matter: (Extract from Editorial appearing in Observer of August 30, 1901.)

Mum is the Word.

The county offices and record rooms at Union were busy, if silent for weeks prior to the land sales. A Portland corporation had one of the men who had for years had access to the county records, either as official or trusted confidential of the officials, making out lists of the land to be sold. This list was made and sent to Portland, examined and from which convenient cards were made with the description and amount charged on each. These cards were sent back to Union in ample time for the opening of the sale, and were used by the men who bid in tracts for the Portland corporation.

It is impossible to think that while all this work was going on in the courthouse and among the public records, the county officials were ignorant of what was going on. In fact it is difficult to form any conclusion other than that our county officials were in the gigantic scheme to exploit the people at least to the extent of keeping mum. And why keep mum when they knew land sharks were scheming and working before their eyes, and in the office the county provides for the official to do business in for the people? Has the bad air of the court house rendered them totally oblivious to every moral obligation they owe to the people who employ them and pay them good fat salaries?

A man must be a moral idiot, with a cintilla of a conception of right, who would place the seal of silence on his lips, when he knew that sharks were completing before his eyes, by the use of public records of which he was the trusted custodian, plans whereby they could possess themselves at a trivial cost of valuable property belonging to their employers who had no knowledge or means of knowing that their life earnings, their homes were in jeopardy.

Had it not suited the political ambition of the county officials to warn the people of their danger, and advise them how the tangled records represented their property and that it was about to be auctioned off, in the various newspapers of the county, a few dollars in postal cards, at the county expense, filled with a statement from the record, would have saved many homes from being sold to sharks.

Mum was the word about the court house, the sharks were fully informed and the people left in ignorance until the sale had progressed several days, when an outraged public demanded and obtained a parley.

The clandestine manner by which the sale was concocted brings to mind another secret transaction that but for the timely exposure would have bonded Union County for about \$175,000, whereby the taxpayers of Union County would have been mulcted out of many thousands of dollars. The air is bad about the court house. Its musty fumes fosters bacteria that fatten and thrive off the people. First they opened their voracious jaws to bite off a good per cent on \$175,000 and later they attempted to gulp down farms, brick blocks, city lots, a theatre and a church parsonage.

(Editorial in Observer, August 30, 1901.)

Was It a Blunder?

Call, if you can ignore many ugly facts to the contrary, the action of the county officials in proceeding upon, practically no notice to the real persons to be effected thereby, the auction off the homes and landed property of the citizens of Union county, a blunder it has thus far been a most expensive affair to our people. Not counting time or attempting to put a money value on the worry caused by the proceedings to our people, the actual money spent in going to Union to prevent their homes and life earnings from passing from them into the hands of land sharks will foot up into thousands of dollars, paid by our people. The result of this great expenditure

thus far has resulted only to a parley a temporary cessation of the sale, and a more specific notice of its scope may be given to the people.

By waiving the thousands of dollars already spent by our people the last upon our people will in the future reach into a sum startling in its proportion. There is not a cottage home or cabin; not an acre of the 150,000 acres of tillable land owned or thought to be owned by the citizens of Union county but has a cloud cast upon its title. A cloud that will detract from its market, if not from its assessed value.

In the light of the present conditions of our county records it seems that secret tax liens have been permitted to hide, undiscoverable by record searchers and professional abstractors for 18 years, all at once come to the surface with startling effect. Where records do not show the actual status of land titles, there can be no certainty of title, and where the records have proven defective in one essential a distrust is thrown over all, and a cloud is placed upon all land titles. Such seems to be the present condition of all titles in this county.

The Observer has not examined critically, the records of Union county and does not believe they are as bad as it is claimed by some that they are, but from the present muddle finds reason to think, that there are some persons that can find things in the records that others cannot. However, this may be, the unfortunate condition remains that our public records are discredited. This want of confidence can but effect the market value of every town lot or acre of land in Union county.

All this anxiety, expense and widespread lack of confidence in land titles could have been avoided by our county officials, all of whom draw salaries from the people, doing as officials in other counties have done, and giving the people full and complete notice of the county's intention to sell the property and give to each timely warning of the predicament in which to secure liens and last legislature enactments had placed their property.

TAX SALES SUSPENDED 60 DAYS. County Court now does what it should have done at the first.

Land not sold may be redeemed. This action will, in all probabilities, result in justice being meted out to all, with possible exception of lands bid in by sharks who paid for it. (Appearing in Observer on Sep. 6, 1901.)

In the matter of the sale of lands and parcels heretofore sold for delinquent taxes.

It appearing to the court that in the construction of the law requiring the sale of lands and parcels heretofore sold for delinquent taxes that it would be equitable and just and in accordance with the spirit of the law to permit redemptions or purchase by the persons in possession of any tract or parcel as the owner thereof by paying the amount of the taxes and costs due thereon, and it also appearing to the court that during the progress of the sale now pending, the person in possession as owner of a number of tracts were required by competitive bidding to bid in excess of the amount taxes and costs due, and, it also appearing to the court that there are a large number of tracts bid for during said sale in which the amount of the bid has not been paid the sheriff, and it

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58 X C. A. BARRETT

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