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THE FORUM

La Grande, Ore., Dec. 10.—(To the Editor of the Observer)—There is one aspect of the charter amendment question which I believe has not been adequately emphasized and which is far and away more important than the amount of money involved in two paving contracts, payment of which all parties concerned are now trying to avoid. I refer to the personal and property rights of the individual citizen, admitting of course, the essential justice of the right of eminent domain as generally exercised by the government whether national, state or municipal.

A knowledge of the facts will convince anyone that La Grande has in the past under the old form of government by council and mayor, been no exception to the general statement that American cities are the worst governed in the civilized world. We have some six miles of pavement and I do not know of a single foot of it that is first class—even the so-called "Standard." Nor of the second and third class which we have do I know of a square yard which is worth the price charged for it, taking as a basis the work of the Warren Construction Company in my home town in the East, even making due allowance for difference in cost of labor and materials east and west.

If the old council which passed, not to say shoved through precipitately, the various contracts under which the work was done had remained and were still in control of the city's affairs; and if the majority of the property owners concerned were still as supine and docile as most of them were at that time, I venture the guess that we would still have the Warren Construction Company with us; and hard surface pavement of dubious quality and exorbitant price would be under construction in the remote backalleys and suburbs of our charming city. Their labor of love reminds one strongly of Will Carlton's lightning-rod agent who crowned each separate hay-cock belonging to the old farmer, to rescue it "from Heaven's consuming fire,"—at so much per foot, quantity and the consent of the owner, quite immaterial.

I consider it cause for congratulation that men like Mr. Oliver and a few others with something of the old spirit of "76" put up a fight, and did their best to rid us of further imposition. At that time, to put it in graphic oriental phraseology, "my soul was squeezed" to observe the paving com-

pany "sitting on the heads" of the luckless inhabitants; and I recall then, telling a number of my acquaintances, including some city officials that the citizens were not receiving the quality of pavement they were entitled to receive for the price charged.

Now the cry of selfishness is raised against the property owners who had the good sense to protest and were steam rolled by the council. Their natural reply to this accusation is,—"Why didn't you, too, protest. How can you escape the logical responsibility for the acts of the councilmen whom you elected and whose high handed procedure you never raised a finger to curb. The principal is surely liable for the acts of his accredited agent."

And yet, were it to be so,—were the city at large to be liable without recourse, the voter at the coming election would find himself in a dilemma: If he should vote yes, he would help confiscate the property of some of his fellow citizens who had the pavement thrust upon them against their united protest. If he should vote, no, it would be unjust to many taxpayers, some of whom never had had a chance to protest the aggressions of the paving company.

Then, too, even a poor pavement is worth something, whether desired or not and the spirit of generous fair play would suggest a compromise. I believe that a compromise between the city and the property owners affords the only just settlement, provided the paving company can recover.

Mr. Oliver believes the company cannot recover and he stands willing he tells me to defend for the city any suit it may bring and guarantee the city against loss of costs. In view of the record of the company in La Grande, it seems to me only a merited and salutary lesson to it if it fails to recover.

And now the city, so far from accepting Mr. Oliver's offer, desires to assume additional powers with the acknowledged purpose of nullifying the efforts of those who admittedly stood up for their rights in opposition to the Warren Construction Company. I believe the American sense of fair play will lead our citizens, to vote against the conferring of these additional powers, to be so employed.

If taxation without representation be tyranny, what shall we say of taxation through misrepresentation!

Apart from the reassessment paragraph and that which does away with

the personal service of notifications, I would favor the new charter, as it stands I shall vote no.

Sincerely,
H. L. UNDERWOOD.

ARTICLE ENDORSED.

Writer Reminds Voters that Defects Were Cited at the Outset.

La Grande, Dec. 11.—(To the Editor)—I am glad to note that this time people are aware of and taking a general interest in the provisions of the new charter or amended charter as some call it. Two years ago I think I was the only person that called public attention to the defects of the charter then voted on. If the people had been awake to their rights then as they are now much trouble would have been saved. In regard to the charter to be voted on next Monday I desire to say that the article in Thursday's paper, signed by L. P. Day and others about covers my views. I have been a taxpayer and street improvement payer for years but will not vote such autocratic power to the city commission even if I should thereby gain \$18.00 or any other sum. I think there are other and better ways to remedy our charter defects.

J. H. BLUMENSTEIN.

SEVERAL SIGN ARTICLE.

Group of Businessmen Express Their Recommendations About Charter

La Grande, Dec. 11.—(To the Editor and voters of the city of La Grande)—The sole question to be decided in voting on the proposed charter amendment next Monday is this, "Who shall pay for the street improvements made on North Second street and on South Fourth street?" Shall we, as general taxpayers pay for them, or shall the property owners, who either asked the city to make those improvements, or sat quietly by while they were being made, pay for them? Shall we pay for these improvements out of our pockets, or shall they pay for them? If we, the general taxpayers, must pay for them, it means that we shall have to dig up about \$65,000 out of our own pockets. This means the sum of \$18.00 on each \$1000 of our assessments. How does this strike you?

Lower taxes under such conditions as these are absolutely impossible. Therefore vote "Yes" on the charter, and protect your own pocketbooks.

We are paying for our own street improvements. We ask that other people pay for theirs.

We shall therefore vote "Yes" on the charter amendment. And we urge all voters who want lower city taxes to do likewise:

S. C. Zuber
J. C. Henry
Fred Holmes
C. D. Emahiser
F. L. Meyers
H. E. Coolidge
J. G. Snodgrass
A. B. Cherry
C. D. Putman
H. F. French
C. H. Scranton
C. S. Dunn
Mac Wood
S. F. Andrew
W. H. Casey
C. W. Van Fleet
W. A. Jones
Hal Bohnenkamp
Chase M. Bohnenkamp
J. H. Child
C. L. Mackey
Mrs. J. W. White

"LET ALL PAY PART"

Mrs. King Raises Point Regarding Fourth Street Pavement.

La Grande, Dec. 11.—(To the editor)—Before me lies a sheet gotten out by the "taxpayers protective committee," with 10 reasons why we should vote "yes" on the charter amendment, and as I am interested, would like to say why I will vote no. First, I am called upon to pay for street improvement for the benefit and use of "other persons," I do not live directly on Fourth street, but am assessed just the same, and am glad it is paved, for all the "persons" in this end of town have the use of it although they are not obliged to pay for any improvement on it. Why should they not help pay for use of it? And right here I ask, if we pay for Fourth street improvements—and it is ours, shall we close it up for our own use exclusively and compel other people to have their own streets paved? All nonsense. The autos as well as foot passengers are getting much good travel out of it. Article six on this slip says "we asked for the improvements." I want to say for one, and also for a number, the majority I believe, that we not only did not ask for them, but absolutely proved we did not want them, by trying to be heard in the council through our lawyer, and more than once, too. If the price to be paid was within reason, it would be different. Sometimes we are willing to pay for an article what it is worth if it is forced upon us by an unscrupulous agent to get rid of him, and keep the peace, but this is a big graft, taking homes from those who can ill afford to lose them—the hard work of years—and who were very well suited with the street as it was, and did not care whether those who sported autos rode by their doors or went some other street. I pay taxes, and have property where some day these commissioners may use their power to "create an improvement district," and make me pay for what they think is an improvement to my property and I am wise to that scheme, for the property on South Fourth street will not be worth the price of improvement assessed to it. We'll sell for that, who'll buy? Fur-

thermore, if this Amendment to the charter was what it should be it would not need a "Protective committee" to look after its interest, and what right have you to influence my vote. I am not a lawyer (plainly seen) but I am a taxpayer.

L. IRENE KING.

Not to Run for State Senate.

Roseburg, Or., Dec. 9.—Senator Katherine Clarke will not be a candidate for re-election to the state senate, according to her public statement. She was elected to fill a vacancy and served in the last legislature, the only woman senator in the body.

Trustee's Sale.

Notice is hereby given to all whom it may concern that the undersigned, late administrator of the estate of Edmon Garn, deceased, will sell at public auction at the late residence of Edmon Garn in northeast 1-4 of Section 30 township 1 S. R. 39 E. W. M. near Imbler, Union County, Oregon, on Saturday, December 18th, 1915, at 10 o'clock a. m., certain personal property belonging to the heirs, consisting of farming implements, horses, cows, pigs, hay and household goods and furniture. Terms: Cash in hand on all articles less than ten dollars—and terms for articles bringing more than that sum, with approved security.

Dated this 7th day of December, 1915.

J. M. GARN, Trustee for Heirs.
Adv. 12-8-10t.

Want Ads.

YEARS AGO the crier announced the auction sale, then came the hand bills and their "hit or miss" results—today the effective way is the Want Ads—they hit the mark. That's what counts.

FOUND—First-class fur between La Grand and Perry. Owner can have same by calling at Observer.—Adv. 12-4t.

FOR SALE—Good Jonathan apples. Phone Black 3702. Ad—12-7-6tp.

FOR RENT—Two nicely furnished housekeeping rooms with bath, 1512 Adams. Phone Black 3901.—Two blocks from center of town Adv. 12-9-tf.

FOR RENT—Furnished house for winter.—Phone Red 1482, 12-9-3tp.

FOR SALE—Wood. Phone Black 1642.—Adv. 12-6-12t.

FOR SALE—Good White sewing machine at a bargain; first-class condition. Call Red 22.—Adv. 11-23-tf.

FOR SALE—Cheap, a lot of good second-hand overcoats.—Wilson Bros., New Foley Building.—Adv. 12-2-8t.

FOR SALE—One of the most desirable residence lots in town. Call at Newlin Book & Stationery Co.—Adv. 11-27-tf.

TAKEN UP—Bay two-year-old filly, branded Z on left shoulder.—St. Louis Barn.—Adv. 12-1-10t.

LOST—One bay mare nine years old, branded G Bar on left shoulder with suckling mare colt. Also one brown mare five years old branded J H S connected on left shoulder with suckling horse colt. Reward. Return to L. E. Standley.—Adv. 12-1-10t p



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Men's work shirts 40c
Men's work shirts, wool \$1.25, to \$1.45
Men's heavy underwear 39c
Union suits 95c to \$1.75
Cotton gloves and socks and handkerchiefs 5c, 10c, 15c
Cotton gloves and socks wool 20c, 35c
Overalls, Union 50c, 75c, 85c, \$1.00
Suit cases, trunks and bags \$1.25, \$1.50, \$2.00, \$3.00
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