

THE OBSERVER

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Address all communications to THE OBSERVER, 1710 Sixth Street.

FOR THE SOVEREIGN VOTER.

Last week we were printing ballots for the primary election. Running day and night, thank you, with only time to grab a sandwich now and then and doing a little loud talking in the way of approval or disapproval of things that went on.

By the way the Oregon ballot is some job. When you consider a single ballot in the quiet of the election booth, it may not appeal to you as much of an instrument, but take it from us, the laws that surround and govern the printing of election ballots have caused some earnest study on the part of poorly paid legislators.

The idea of a square deal to all who may run prevails in the law, and with that intent the printer is turned loose on the official copy with a law book in each hand. He stands in the midst of various colored piles of paper stock and reads until he is black in the face the names of this man and that man who wishes to be elected. Then he comes to a check mark which means "rotate."

You don't know what rotate means?

Its construction properly construed means to stop the press and unlock the form. Put the first man's name at the bottom of the list of his opponents. This may happen in the middle of a precinct run and it may not but it happens just twelve times in the Republican ballot and eight times in the Democratic ballot. The Progressives did not have enough names to rotate, which may account for a kindly feeling in most print shops toward the Bull Moosers.

After the change is made the feeder mounts the stand and the little two revolution pony press clicks away until enough ballots have been printed for Starkey or Medical Springs or some other precinct. Then another stop and the precinct with names of the constable, justice of the peace and county central committee-man must be changed. Again the law is consulted and again the official copy is consulted. This continues until 20,000 ballots and samples have been printed. Each night about midnight the force has held a caucus while eating Arbuckle's sandwiches and have announced without equivocation that any man whoever

stood on a press stand could mold an election law that would give a clearer understanding of things than the one now written in the Oregon statutes. But that's the way of printers and everyone connected with a newspaper. If we just had a chance we would make this world over in the way it should be.

Anyway the ballots will be on tap for the sheriff to distribute on schedule time and there is the most weary set of printers and press feeders around the Observer office than for many moons. Everyone connected with the job agrees that all day and all night work is hard on the nerves, disposition and the vocabulary.

THE PROSPEROUS GRANDE RONDE.

When carload after carload of automobiles were unloaded in La Grande during the past month many expressed themselves that the country was going broke over gasoline vehicles.

On every hand the wail went up, and there really seemed to be some ground for the thought. But this was cleared away this week when La Grande's two banks issued their statements showing a large gain in deposits despite the fact that thousands upon thousands of dollars had been sent to Detroit for cars.

There is nothing quite so refreshing as a bank statement when it shows a community advancing, and there is nothing quite so depressing as one showing a community's decline.

The rich Grande Ronde valley permits its people to live like princes and yet the earnings accumulate. Where is there another community that gives so good an account of itself one year after another as the Grande Ronde?

The good fellowship existing between La Grande and Union was further intensified by the Elks home talent show's recent visit to the neighboring city. The presentation of the play brought Union and La Grande on closer relations, and while the Elks lodge was not a participant as a lodge the movement was fathered by the local lodge. The report that the lodge shared in the proceeds of the play was a slight mistake, for the share the players received went to pay the expense of the trip and if there is anything left the Elks band will receive the benefits.

WHAT GREAT BRITAIN IS DOING

(New York World) Great Britain has finally put 150,000 men into France and is holding the line from the sea to Soissons, except for eighteen miles of Belgian trenches. To that extent she is now saving the prodigally spent blood of France.

And it is no mean feat for the "weary titan" to have accomplished. Great Britain has blundered as usual. She has kept men in England to guard against invasion, of which there was no possibility. She has wasted coal ferrying troops to Egypt, where they were not needed, and wasted lives and prestige by the Gallipoli experiment and by "small packets" in the Tigris Valley, where Townsend has finally been forced to surrender to the Turks. But all these stupid and bungling manoeuvres may have their value as training. At last Great Britain is ready for war; and perhaps most ready in her conquest of racial pride, in her willingness to let France direct the war on land.

Why It Pays To Buy Shoes At West's!

If we could talk personally to every man and every woman who reads this advertisement—tell them how we carefully examine every line of shoes before they are placed in the store; how we search for weaknesses and defects and discard every pair that we believe would in anyway prove unworthy when placed to the test of actual use—they would realize why they could not afford to buy their shoes elsewhere.

A pair of shoes may appear all right at the store, but when put into actual service, may turn out to be bad eggs. If you buy your shoes from us you take no risk. Every pair of shoes in the store is made of solid leather—the styles are the season's best, and the wear is guaranteed satisfactory. Be sure to come when in need of shoes. Your satisfaction is assured in every instance.

Our Brands of Solid Leather Shoes for Spring Wear



Men's Nettletons. "Cost you more by the pair but less by the year." A line of men's shoes that stand in the lead of all the best brands manufactured. When you buy "Nettletons" you buy the best. Styles in tan and black, broad toe or English toe. Priced \$6.50 to \$7.00.

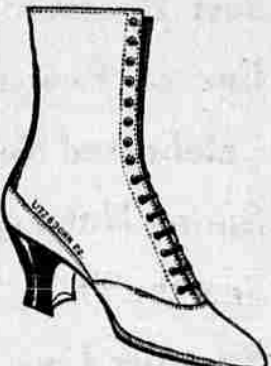
Men's J. E. Tilt Shoes. Sold to the man who wants a quality shoe but likes to pay about \$4.00 or \$5.00—You'll be surprised at the great amount of style, fine workmanship, and smoothness of leather used in J. E. Tilt shoes—All leathers, all styles, all sizes in large stock. Priced \$4.00 to \$6.00.

Men's Beacons. At \$3.50 meet every requirement of the man looking for a low priced shoe. Our present stock comprises a large assortment of styles—button and lace styles, English and broad toe, also the greatest value in work shoes. If \$3.50 is your price buy Beacons. Priced \$3.50.

Boys' Pat Cogan. Shoes out-wear all others because they contain the best of solid leather. The counters and inner-soles are fully guaranteed. Fit your boys with "Pat Cogan Boys' Shoes" and their shoe troubles will end. The best you can get for the money. Priced \$2.50 to \$3.50.

Children's Rompers. There's plenty of good hard wear for youths in Rompers, with plenty of snap and style thrown in. For school wear or for dress wear; they can't be equalled—plenty of styles to select from in patents, kids and calf leathers. Priced \$1.00 up.

Women's Pringree and Utz and Dunn. The greatest lines of women's and misses' shoes manufactured today. Go to the big cities and you'll find the biggest stores selling them. Come to La Grande and you'll find them at West's. New styles and leathers now on display. Priced \$3.00 to \$6.00.



Agents for "Bergman" Loggers, "ask the man who wears them." He will have no other make. Priced \$8.00 and \$8.50.

W. W. West & Co. THE QUALITY STORE

We carry a full line of Arch supports, bunion reducers, corn removers, etc.—If your feet trouble you consult our shoe man.

THE FORUM

La Grande, May 15.—(To the Editor)—Good roads and the bond issue include the question of taxation, but as a good many people believe that government should be run in the interest of property owners, and that the person or corporation assessed is the party who actually pays the tax. I wish to state that such an assumption is entirely opposite to the facts.

In a Democracy the government is run in the interest of the people, because they pay all the taxes, direct or indirect, regardless of who owns the paper title to property. Property owner and taxpayer are not synonymous terms. The persons or corporations to whom taxes are assessed may pay the money into the public treasury, but they merely use their taxing power in the second degree to levy and collect from others through the instrumentalities of business. This assumption that property owners are the real and only tax-payers revives the world old controversy between Democracy and plutocracy. In the Oregon system, Democracy seems to have the lead, and the cost of government has apparently increased. It was claimed in the past, when attempts were made to establish free schools that it was an outrage to tax a rich bachelor to educate another man's children, and the same protest is being made now by certain property interests that they are the victims of high taxes for which they receive no benefit.

A railway company, a land owner, a merchant, or any person or corporation paying heavy taxes merely shifts the burden to the public, and hence the people pay the tax indirectly and are entitled to the benefits in schools, asylums, protection from criminals, extension of scientific knowledge, construction of roads and other public institutions.

A direct tax is the most burdensome and the hardest to collect. A tax against each individual would be impossible, and would lead to revolution. The more indirect the tax the better the people are satisfied. People don't protest much about paying the bonds of a railway company that they have no interest in, get no use out of without additional payments, but they will protest about paying bonds to build their own roads of which the use thereof is free. It is the matter of direct taxation that hurts.

The new method of running the state government seems to cost more per capita and wealth than the old spoils system, but it don't. The tax we paid under the old system was indirect and we didn't notice it. Money flows through the arteries of commerce like the waters of a river system flows from its sources to its

mouth, and it is the duty of government to tap the flow of liquid capital at any point where it is easiest diverted. Labor is the source of all wealth and the taxing power is generally shifted one or two degrees so a direct tax against labor is avoided.

Now we will see why taxes are necessary and for what they are expended and in doing so we must deal in generalities and round numbers. The 1915 legislature appropriated \$6,310,000 for state purposes, \$3,667,000 went towards state educational, eleemosynary and penal institutions; \$927,000 was for special interests of the people, and \$1,726,000 was for general purposes. Of the wards of the state the children received nearly \$2,000,000 the defectives and criminals nearly \$1,700,000. Of the appropriations for special interests agriculture received \$555,000, labor and industry \$260,000 and commercial \$112,000. The balance \$1,726,000 for general purposes was state and administrative departments and militia \$1,236,000 and roads \$490,000. If these last expenses are divided proportionately between the wards and the other people of the state the wards will receive the benefit of \$5,040,000, the farmers \$750,000, industrialists \$350,000 and commercial \$170,000.

The judicial department receives \$487,000 while the legislature spent only \$83,000 and yet the legislative branch gets all the blame. Administrative boards and commissions are berated the worst of all the tax eating contingent, and yet if twenty-one of these boards were abolished it would cause a saving of 22 1/2 cents on the \$1000 valuation, but the farming, industrial and commercial interests would lose \$660,000 worth of service and administrative ability. Union county could hardly afford it for the saving of \$4500.

Besides the \$2,000,000 spent by the state on education the counties spend nearly twice as much, so that the cost of education is fully one third of the entire revenues of the state and counties.

It appears that the people of Union county have not been fully advised or the propaganda of the good roads movement have not given the subject publicity through the newspapers or otherwise as to the scope and extent of the national, state and county highways so I will relate the story of the National highway proposition.

The Lincoln highway is to belt the continent in probably two or more places. The counties are to be the primary units in the construction of these proposed national highways. Then the states are to connect the roads between counties where the distance and scarcity of population makes it too expensive for the county to build. Following this the nation takes up the work and connects the state roads in places like the Nevada desert or the bad lands of Wyoming or other places where distance or lo-

cation makes it too much for the state to build.

These national highways are not only intended for the public convenience and benefit but they will become, in case of war or disaster of any kind means of transportation for quick communication should other means of travel be cut off.

A picture was in our local paper recently showing President Wilson digging a hole for the planting of a tree on the Lincoln highway to become a living monument to the dedication of the National way which will not only be a memorial to Lincoln but will dedicate to posterity one of the greatest achievements of American enterprise.

It behooves each county to build its initial unit so the state and nation can make the connections.

The counties bordering on the Columbia gorge have already built their units and many counties in the Willamette valley and it is desirable for the counties in Eastern Oregon to get their units done and also the counties in the south so the state can be belted east and west and north and south.

The state has already appropriated a half million dollars to connect up the gaps in the National or Lincoln highway.

Doesn't it seem absurd that we can spend such vast sums of money on state wards and special interests and still oppose the expenditure of \$40,000 per year on roads that are for the benefit of everybody. On the present tax valuations in Union county it will cost on an average \$2.00 per annum on each \$1,000 valuation.

Remember all you people who are entitled to vote that each and all of you, and the Chinaman, foreigner and minor within your border will help to pay this tax. Of course it will be assessed against property but what of that, I have tried to show that everybody contributes to the public revenues if he renders any valuable service in the community.

We have the use of the roads, we have the use of the money, we find employment for a great number of our people, the money will go into circulation so that it is virtually a loan to each taxpayer at a low rate of interest which he can pay back in the enhanced value of property and the reduced cost of getting products to market. Add to this the joy and satisfaction of traveling where everything moves along like clock work, the beauty of work well done, and the knowledge that we are proud of our achievements.

One of the objections of the opposition is that all of these public enterprises are permeated with "graft" inefficiency and a willful waste of the peoples money. Well, that isn't the fault of the money or the public enterprise but is the fault of the management or the people themselves. If they cannot manage their own affairs they better use some of the money they pay for guardians over the insane and

have a guardian for themselves. If all those who derive a direct benefit from the sale of bonds and the building of permanent roads vote for the measure on the ballot it ought to pass almost unanimously not taking into account the benefit to posterity. J. B. STODDARD.

Manufacturers Meet Today. New York, May 15.—The twenty-first annual convention of the National Association of Manufacturers, was begun at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel here today. The convention will be addressed by speakers of national prominence upon industrial security and the Association's activities in the promotion of Export Trade, Patent Reform Immigration, Accident Prevention, Fire Prevention, Industrial Education and other important issues.

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