

Medford Daily Tribune

A LIVE PAPER IN A LIVE TOWN.

Published every evening except Sunday.
MEDFORD PUBLISHING COMPANY
GEORGE PUTNAM, Editor and Manager.

Admitted as Second-Class Matter in the Postoffice at Medford, Oregon.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

One month, by mail or carrier...\$0.50 One year, by mail...\$5.00

THE OLWELL RECALL.

It is extremely unfortunate that the recall petition against Councilman John D. Olwell has been resurrected and filed with the recorder. The petition is invalid, and the only result that will materialize will be ill will and a further separating into factions elements that for the common good should be harmonious.

The recall petition was drawn up by prohibitionists and generally signed by them as a protest against Councilman Olwell's vote to renew the Hotel Nash liquor license. This was early in July. Nothing had been heard of the petition for weeks, and the signers themselves had supposed the petition dropped until its sudden appearance now, two months later.

It is the general opinion even among signers of the Olwell recall that its entrance at this late day is a play to inject the prohibition fight into the water problem, and to force the prohibition strength back of the effort being made to secure the acceptance of the Wasson canyon proposition by the city council.

The first protest made in the council against Mr. Olwell was made by an ardent champion of Wasson canyon water, and it so happens that his followers in the council in the effort to make the city dry are the same as those on record for tying the city up to Wasson canyon. Consequently an adroit political move is to claim that the opposition to Wasson canyon is the same as the opposition to the dry town, and thus swing the prohibition strength back of Wasson canyon. Councilman Olwell is not on record as favoring Wasson canyon, and the vote of another councilman is needed to cinch the contract with Mr. Hanley. Hence the resurrection of the recall petition to create the needed vacancy and secure the appointment of a Wasson canyon advocate in Mr. Olwell's place. This is the street view of the case, and at least a plausible one.

The scheme, though a shrewd one, will not work, for prohibitionists are not as a rule advocates of Wasson canyon water. Indeed a majority of those in favor of closing the saloons of the city are also in favor of procuring as a substitute for booze an abundance of pure water, and not the purchase of an insufficient supply, such as that furnished by Wasson canyon.

The recall petition is ineffective because the recall law provides that "there may be required 25 per cent, but not more, of the number of electors who voted in his district at the preceding election for justice of the supreme court, to file their petition demanding his recall by the people." As the state election for justice of the supreme court did not recognize the ward boundaries as precincts, it is impossible to segregate the votes and determine who in North Medford precinct and who in South Medford precinct voted from the First ward, whose boundaries include portions of each precinct.

No, the water problem has nothing to do with the prohibition question, and the sooner citizens forget the wet and dry town fight, and the less it is allowed to interfere with other matters, the better. The issue is in the courts, and the decision will be binding and settle the question. A town divided against itself can make no progress, and if this constant squabble continues, that will be Medford's fate, for only unity of action builds a city.

What seems incomprehensible is the determined effort made to force Wasson canyon upon the city, even if a councilman has to be removed to do it. A member of the water committee asserts that no other proposition other than Wasson canyon has had a fair consideration by the committee, and more extraordinary still, the engineer proclaims in favor of it over other propositions before making the necessary examination and report upon water sources, which is presumed to decide the matter.

What Papers Say

REPUBLICANS WARNED.

(East Portland People's Press)

If this paper, by principles, sympathy and personal favor, was not bound to the success of the Taft-Sherman ticket, it would be telling things about the management of the republican campaign in this state that would cause a riot. For the good of the party this paper is refraining from using data it has, and for the good of the party this paper is not giving publicity to actions that should eternally condemn the men responsible.

But the People's Press, in its mild, kind, homely, Christian way, would like to suggest to the warring factions of the Oregon republican party that unless it is desirable that Colonel Bryan of Nebraska receive the electoral vote of Oregon, a change of heart and a change of program must come and come quickly.

There are four or five or six or a dozen different Taft leaders in this state, all alike in their ambition and all alike in their greed.

give a tinker's damn for Taft, but only care about grabbing a few ripe melons and a few political plums.

Every clique is fighting every other clique, and every bunch of the disgruntled is making votes for Bryan every day. Oregon will go republican if given half a chance, but Oregon voters are not hide-bound partisans, and Oregon voters will quickly repudiate, condemn and defeat the pseudo leaders who jangle and bicker and fight over petty personal differences.

Right now is a good time to forget it, a little later will be too late; months ago this paper said it would be Bryan or Roosevelt, and this paper sees no reason to change its forecast however much it would like to see Mr. Taft Oregon's choice.

No work has been done for the national ticket in Oregon. The socialists are doing more work on the streets of Portland every night than the Republicans are in a month. Foolish cartoons, virgular orgies, fights and innumerable editorials from the blind party press are doing their share to disorganize and alienate the honest voters who still hope for the success of the party ticket, who will no longer bear the burden of odium thrust upon them by the appointed, self-interesting, and self-seeking politicians.

EMPTY CLAPTRAP

(Oregon Journal)

Senator Fulton, Judge M. C. George, Harvey W. Scott and other enemies of of Statement No. 1 have presented only one argument against it that is even plausible. That argument is that the federal constitution imposes upon the legislators the duty of choosing the United States senator, that each individual legislator must exercise his own private judgment in making this choice and that it is therefore unconstitutional for him to pledge himself in advance to allow the people to choose for him. According to these gentlemen who advance this argument, the legislator must exercise his own judgment, unfettered by any previous promise or pledge whatsoever, uninfluenced by any consideration save the relative fitness of the several senatorial candidates.

The Journal has shown many times the folly and absurdity of this reasoning, but for the sake of argument, let us for a moment assume that it is correct. Messrs. Fulton, George and Scott are urging the people of Oregon to return to the system that prevailed before the adoption of the direct primary law and Statement No. 1, when, it is asserted, legislators went to Salem "unpledged" and proceeded to "choose" the senator in strict accordance with the constitution of the United States. What utter balderdash! Under the old system, nine-tenths of the legislators had no freedom of choice whatsoever. Months before they went to Salem, and in many cases even before their nomination, they either promised their votes to some senatorial candidate or pledged themselves to vote in accordance with the orders of some party boss. Nobody knows this better than C. W. Fulton and Harvey W. Scott. For six months before the convening of the legislature of 1908, Fulton was busy persuading members to pledge themselves to vote for him for senator. At least one-third of the legislators surrendered all "freedom of choice" long before they went to Salem and pledged themselves absolutely to vote for Fulton, no matter who else might appear as a candidate.

In that same session all but four or five of the Multnomah delegation were mere puppets, the creatures of Jack Matthews, then republican boss of this county. To all intents and purposes their votes were cast by Matthews and they had no more "freedom of choice" than so many driven cattle. When Harvey Scott entered the running, these votes were delivered to him without a pretense of consulting the individual preferences of the members of the delegation. In like manner Scott bargained with Bourne for the votes which the latter owned and controlled and the bargain was duly carried out when the roll was called on the last night of the session. How much "freedom of choice" was exercised by these poor marionettes who moved only when a boss pulled at the string?

It is an amazing thing that men who have thus participated in and profited by the trafficking of legislators' votes can now come forward and urge the people to return to a system so rotten and corrupt. The pretense that the system is the only constitutional method of electing United States senators is an empty sophistry, put forward for the purpose of cheating the people out of their rights. We wonder at the effrontery of those who present such a plea.

THE CRATER LAKE ROAD

(Portland Telegram)

That proposed Crater Lake road is an ambitious project, more ambitious than any that has been suggested in the line of good road construction, except that discussed a few years ago, in which the building of a highway from the California line to Portland was contemplated. The latter project was somewhat ahead of the times. It was in every way commendable; and doubtless will one day become the fact, when the wealth and population of western Oregon will warrant the undertaking. But the Crater Lake road is feasible, and of ready accomplishment with the co-operation of the counties most immediately interested, the state of Oregon and the general government.

There really ought to be no great difficulty in securing this co-operation. The government is not slow to manifest an interest in what will provide readier access to its northern parks. State pride should impel Oregon to do its share. And the direct material benefit in the counties which this splendid highway would traverse should be a sufficient inducement to secure the utmost aid which those counties can give.

A splendid highway 130 miles long, penetrating a section of country that cannot be excelled in all the United States for its scenic beauty, would prove a possession of which any state in the Union might be proud. Except what is now planned in the state of California, there would be no highway so famous in all the country. The fame of it would be established from our ocean to the other. It behooves the people of Oregon to recognize the fact that the wonder sights of the state comprise a magnificent asset; an asset of that sort to which California owes more than one-half of her wealth and population. The advantage of utilizing that asset by the construction of such roads as that under discussion would not be altogether one of dollars and cents; yet the dollars and cents return would more than compensate for the investment.

The need in Oregon is to take a decisive step in this good roads business; and at the earliest time possible accomplish something that will have value as an object lesson. This Crater Lake road is a splendid opportunity, and if properly improved, as it seems likely to be, will give to the good roads movement in the state an impulse of the greatest value. Oregon energy in this direction should be stimulated by what our neighbors on the south are doing. In California good roads has come to be so great a factor in community building as any that has ever contributed to the fame and to the welfare of the commonwealth.

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