

# MEDFORD DAILY TRIBUNE

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### THE EDUCATION OF THE MOSSBACK.

To promote the good roads movement in the southwest, President B. F. Yoakum of the Rock Island and Frisco railroad system invited a number of the heads of farmers' unions in the states of Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Arkansas to be his guests on an automobile tour over the improved highways of New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Connecticut, and in order that they could intelligently understand what they saw he had the construction work explained to them by the highway officials of the states they visited. The tour, which lasted nearly two weeks, was concluded on Friday in New York city, and if the farmers were pleased, Mr. Yoakum was equally delighted with the work he had inaugurated, which he believes will not only help the farmers, but enormously increase the productive power of the states and incidentally the revenues of the lines he represents.

The general opinion of the visitors is summed up by one of their number as follows:

"The various states should have supervision of the good roads work, in order to secure uniformity of construction and continuity of service. The time must soon come when the federal government will make appropriations for interstate construction; for certainly the public highways of our country are far more useful and fully as important as the waterways for which millions of dollars are appropriated by congress each year. Economy in handling of products means as much to farmers as to any other business interest."

The Southern Pacific could follow Mr. Yoakum's plan with advantage to itself and to Oregon. Upon the development of the country depends its volume of business, and upon good roads largely depend this development. Good roads are almost unknown in Oregon and the opposition to them and to legislation for them comes from mossbacks who never saw them, know nothing of them and rarely if ever get outside the state to see what is doing in the rest of the world.

Mossbackism is nothing more nor less than concentrated narrowness, provincialism caused by isolation—the ultra-conservatism of ignorance. Give a mossback a trip around the world, the scales are brushed from his eyes, and he is no longer a mossback. Show the farmer of Oregon the fine roads of other states, and the diminished cost of getting his product to market as well as the increas-

ed value of his farm on account of its accessibility, and he will no longer oppose good roads.

In no way could the Southern Pacific develop Oregon faster than by giving excursions from the Willamette valley to the more progressive sections of the country. The excursions would teach the opposers of progress the first essentials of development, insure good highways and ultimately increase traffic for the railroad many times more than enough to justify the cost.

Of course all the defects that afflict the mossback could not be thus cured. Leopards cannot change their spots or swine get away from the trough. The Portland pig and the Salem hog would still retain their porcine proclivities, and the Portland Oregonian still yelp its reactionary snarl and back-bite the heels of progress; but the education of the mossback by means of travel would result in such an era of development that the members of the ancient and honorable pork family would be in a minority, growing beautifully less each year.



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