

The Sentinel.

BY LEW. A. CATES.

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A FAVORED LOCALITY.

Cottage Grove, the progress of which The Sentinel attempts to briefly review, occupies a proud position among the towns of the Willamette valley. Its resources are unrivaled; all that is needed is the genius of the human mind to combine and utilize the means at hand. The field presents to the man of wealth opportunities for investment in lines which will tend to the further development of the country and which cannot fail to bring him large returns. The foresight and sagacity of the race is such as to be quick to grasp and turn the forces of nature to accomplish mercenary ends and cherished purposes. We are in the midst of great natural resources; we sit, as it were, on a seat of natural power, and cannot fail to become an important city. There is stamped upon our people the signet of enterprise and broad-gauged public spirit. We are moving steadily onward to wealth, material prosperity and advances of culture, with the courage of self-assertion, and we live contentedly and happily, love and labor on, smoothly as the bough sways in the morning breeze, in the stern realism of a creative and intensely practical life. We are progressing with a quiet determination, but with vigor and tenacity. We betray no sign of doubting or wavering, but have sublime faith in our future and are putting forth a resistless energy in an admirable manner. We are looking forward, like an eagle pluming his wings for a higher flight, to a nobler career and a prouder station.

Enterprise is planning new forms; labor a new impetus; brain and brawn are at work. Capitalists, bankers, merchants, traders and laborers, are among the hustlers for a greater Cottage Grove, and their past attainments is a guarantee of success in the future. The town is experiencing a healthy growth. It is building on a solid and enduring basis, and the visitor of today notes with some surprise the changes for the better that have been wrought during the past twelvemonth.

The homes of Cottage Grove seem to possess in an enlarged degree those comforts and blessings which render true homes the happiest places of earth. From the simple cottage to the home of wealth the vision rests upon indications of pride, comfort and contentment. Few of our people are "to the manor born," but come from many parts. Our representative citizenship are refined and cultured, and have a high social and business hospitality. Cottage Grove is becoming a city of homes. Born in obscurity, and for years unknown to the outside world, with no syndicate or other than home boomers to herald its manifold advantages, Cottage Grove has moved steadily onward and upward in importance, and today there is not a city of its size anywhere enjoying a more enviable reputation. With head aloft, she bids all to come and investigate her claims.

DEBT IS COURTED.

The Corvallis Gazette-Times is correct when it says no town or city ever made any stride forward worthy of mention until the people reached the point where they were ready for the city to go heavily into debt. Great improvements, the kind that count, cost very large sums of money, and cities that wait until the money is in hand to pay

for such improvements never make them.

Referring to the Corvallis mountain water system, which is not unlike that projected by Cottage Grove, that publication says it never could have been installed had not the people been willing to go heavily into debt. That system is paying interest on the money it cost, providing a fund for extensions and great improvement, and within the coming three years will furnish enough money to build an additional pipe line. It pays about \$16,000 a year clear profit. All improvements and extensions must be made within the coming three years. At the end of that time the money must be used to pay off the twenty-year bonds. Those bonds could be paid off in six or seven years if the holders would take the money, but they do not want it.

As a paying proposition, going into debt for needed improvements is about the greatest investment possible, continues the Gazette-Times. That this is true is evidenced in practically every city on the globe that is making effort to forge to the front. It is evidenced in Portland by the fact that the city pays in yearly interest on bonds a sum greater than that paid for any department except fire and police. Portland pays \$161,899 interest each year.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

In discussing the damage inflicted upon the business of the local merchant by the competition of the mail order house The Sentinel is inclined to believe that the home dealer would have no difficulty in holding his own except from the fact that the mail order house is invariably a most aggressive advertiser. Advertising is the power that enables the mail order people to divert the dollars of the farmer from the till of the country store into their own coffers.

They advertise much and well; they publish full descriptions of their goods; they show them in cuts; they invariably print the exact prices. How else could they get business? It is by heavy advertising that they succeed. To spend \$100,000 to \$500,000 a year in various forms of advertising is no uncommon thing with these houses. Their annual catalogues, heavy volumes in themselves, are sent out by the cart load. They reach almost every postmaster in the country by their circulars and letters; they communicate with the rural free delivery carriers; they expend effort, time and money in getting the addresses of persons in every neighborhood and hamlet in the entire country; they advertise by sending circulars, letters, pamphlets, catalogues, pictures and papers to every home where there is a possibility of selling five cents' worth of goods. Moreover, they employ talented men in their correspondence department. One manager with often a number of assistants devotes his entire time to the kicks and complaints of dissatisfied customers. Genial and pleasant letters are written, regrets for mistakes, assurances that the house will make it right and a strong statement that such a valued customer will always get immediate attention.

The mail order house endeavors to get into direct personal connection with every possible customer. The local merchant might benefit by a like course. Let him study the methods of the mail order houses and meet them on their own grounds—fight them with their own weapons. If the local merchant should circularize as carefully, if he would show up the methods, character of goods, the expense of freight, etc., as strongly and persistently as the mail order houses endeavor to undermine his trade, he might find a very different result in a short time.

In the death of United States Senator McLaurin of Mississippi that state suffers an irreparable loss, and the people a true friend. He was a man of deeds, not words; one whose purpose was unswayable when his conscience dictated that his position was right. He had enemies by the score in his own

party, but the McLaurins, of which there are still several, were an unconquerable power.

EDUCATION AT HOME.

While Cottage Grove is fast forging forward along educational lines, the board and teachers continually striving to better obtaining conditions, has it ever occurred to you that the home—the quiet precincts of the home—is, after all, the great educational center?

Words, deeds and examples are the seed sown in children that make men and women. Harvard, Yale, our own educational institutions, the colleges and universities of every commonwealth in the union are doing a noble work, but without home training and home education all ends unsatisfactorily. Ignorant homes produce bad boys and bad girls, and bad boys and bad girls make bad men and bad women. From the well ordered homes throughout the length and breadth of this broad land of religious and civil liberty great and good statesmen and pious and learned divines are controlling church and state, causing both to ride supremely on in triumph. The home where the father grows and the mother scolds, and where the children snap, furnishes attendance for the gambling dens, the houses of ill fame and other disreputable resorts, which are followed by disgrace, degradation and death. The girls? The daily press tells the story.

The Sentinel, strongly advocating the betterment of our educational institutions wherever possible, still more strongly urges home education. Books are not the only requisite to an education. Far be it from so.

STATESMEN OF TODAY.

One of The Sentinel's contemporaries relates how a minister of its community deplores the lack of honesty and stability of character in the statesmen of the present day. He took the members of the United States senate to task, which is quite a popular fad these days, and declared that they were a disreputable assemblage from start to finish. There has been so much criticism of public men in the past few years and such a determined effort to discredit everybody of prominence in public life that the observations of the good preacher were accepted as a matter of course. It is comparatively easy to destroy confidence in public men. If every speaker who appears on the lecture platform, either in chautauqua or under the auspices of some bureau, takes exception to the "American house of lords," and when newspapers galore are constantly carping and finding fault, it is not to be wondered that there is a sentiment abroad in the land that would delight in seeing the members of the senate severely chastised. Of course a whole lot of people would not like to hurl stones themselves, but they would hold the garments of those less timid and relish the castigation greatly.

The facts are the United States senate was never so largely a popular branch of the law making machinery of the government as now. But it has been responsive to public demands all these years. Twenty years ago when there was no clamor for such an enactment, that staunch old leader of the senate and one of the most abused men in public life at the time—John Sherman—drafted the anti-trust law under the provisions of which every attempt to suppress corporations trying to thwart competition and throttle trade have been tried. Some years later the sturdy patriots who composed the majority of the senate stood like a solid wall to prevent the monetary system of the country from being captured by the free silver advocates who dominated the house of representatives. In the face of public clamor these men vindicated the wisdom of the law and saved the country from positive disaster. A few years later without any apparent public demand there was drafted by a member of the senate a measure that enabled the suppression of favoritism by railways in granting rebates, led to the fine of \$29,000,000 against the Standard

Oil Co., drove the Paul Mortons out of the cabinet, made it a crime for railways to pool in order to stifle competition and led to the imposition of fines aggregating millions against corporations doing business in restraint of trade because of rebates and other favors afforded them. Stephen B. Elkins was the author of that measure and he did not take to the chautauqua platform to proclaim his virtues from the housetops. The pure food laws and a long line of wholesome legislative measures have been placed upon the statute books in advance of similar legislatures. Before Iowa had an anti-pass law the senate of the United States had passed such a measure.

It is well that history is kept straight. It is wrong to bear false witness against men in high places as well as against one's neighbor. The good minister to whom we have referred could make some comparisons between the men now actively in the public service with those who dominated affairs in Biblical times and the members of the senate and others in public life would not suffer any when the test was applied. Without discrediting religion, because the Almighty had to make use of some very weak vessels in an early day, as he does even yet, but it is a fact that King David could not have been elected to office in the United States. The newspapers would have pointed out that Uriah incident so that no political party would have dared nominate him for any office. Solomon, with all of his wisdom, would have made poor headway for a seat in the United States senate. Jacob, who by fraud and deception, swindled his hungry brother out of his birthright, if running for office in this country would have to face that crime at every cross roads when he attempted to make a speech. We are not attempting to show that these men were not afterwards forgiven by high heaven for their moral lapses, but the men are not so generous when candidates come up for office. If there is a weak place in a man's armor it is shot full of holes. England, as great and powerful as she is has had but few rulers that could have been elected to a high office in this country. While this general onslaught is on and men in high places are targets of all manner of criticism if not actual slander it is well to consider these things.

A NATIONAL ISSUE.

Uncle Sam's ability to give us all a farm is one of the national traditions. But the sense of ownership is not as clearly defined as it ought to be. If a citizen owns land in his private right and places it in the hands of an agent, the statements from time to time are scanned with close interest. How many are there who thus examines the annual reports of the secretary of the interior as far as it touches the public lands still owned by the people of the whole country and offering them opportunities to acquire property on terms that are substantially a gift. The public lands are not what they used to be in quantity, but the aggregate is still large and new methods of conserving them increase their value and availability. According to Secretary Ballinger's report about to be submitted to congress, the national government owned over 1,000,000,000 acres of land in 1860 and that was before the purchase of Alaska, comprising 368,000,000 acres. Now the billion acres of land of 1860 has decreased to 731,000,000 and this, outside of Indian reservations, is chiefly composed of mountain lands or arid or semi-arid plains.

But this remainder, rightly handled for the benefit of all the people, can be made an estate of enduring richness. Nor is the amount small, for Alaska alone would give an average of four acres to every man, woman and child. Within a few years another element has entered into the case, and this is included in the general term, "conservation." What Secretary Ballinger has to say on this point deserves the earnest attention of the people of the United States and the intelligent action of congress without needless

delay. It is proposed to classify the lands according to their value for agriculture, mining, generation of power or other industries, and to lease some instead of parting with them outright. This idea has been applied in setting apart the national forest reservations and much discussed in connection with coal and other mineral areas. All Americans have personal interest in this truly national issue.

The management of a town nowadays is purely a business proposition, and should be so considered not only by the municipal administration but by every citizen of Cottage Grove. Property values depend upon the character of a town and the prosperity of every resident whether or not he owns property is just as directly and vitally concerned. Adequate school facilities, paved streets and a sewerage and water system for instance, are every one of them business propositions to be acted upon, of course, in a business like way with regard for natural limitations but without undue apprehension is assuming a reasonable amount of financial liability. The first requisite is a disposition to get together, to have due regard for all interests and all the time to keep busy, to work as a team in the promotion of the individual and the mutual welfare of the town.

For some time it has been quite the proper thing to lambaste the railways and to legislate along lines calculated to lower rates and make the transmission of freight more prompt, but no reformer in any party has ever had the bravery to tackle the express octopus. Express companies charge prices that are almost prohibitive on articles of any weight and people seem to rather enjoy the exorbitant rates that are in vogue. It is this feature that commends the parcels post to many people. Nothing would more thoroughly curb the rapacity of the express companies as to come in competition with the government in the carrying of parcels. When the Wells-Fargo Express Co. is able to declare a dividend of 300 per cent something is wrong. If the railways would get such exorbitant dividends every legislator in the country would be after them.

In entering upon another twelvemonth The Sentinel desires to express its appreciation of the patronage bestowed upon it by the public-spirited people of Cottage Grove and surrounding country during the four months of its existence, at the same time hoping and trusting that it will continue to receive favors in accordance with its merits. The Sentinel wants to become a potent factor in the development and upbuilding of this section, and will exert its best endeavors to that end.

The Oregon Agricultural College students have organized a Press club, the purpose of which is to promote the study and practice of journalism. Judging from the club's recent journalistic productions there is abundant room for an organization of its character.

When a load of gravel was dumped on Fifth street Tuesday, a representative rushed breathlessly up to Alderman Kime, who stood hard by, to learn if paving was about to begin. Disappointed.

Cottage Grove wants an opera house costing not less than \$20,000.

Very often, when the oldest girl of the family marries, the house is left to jog along without any boss.

The new year will be ushered in tonight under the direct supervision of the Big Noise Committee.

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