Cottage Grove Sentinel
A Weekly Newspaper With Plenty of Backbone

Bede & Smith.....Publishers
Elbert Bede.....Editor

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TAXING TIMBER.

Lane county is deeply interested in all proposals looking toward the taxation of timber. No section of the satte is more heavily timbered than that tributary to Cottage Grove. No county of the state has a greater amount of timber than Lane. This fact means, of course, that a large part of the county's tax money must come from timber.

The larger part of the timber is owned by a few persons. When a few persons own a large amount of property, it is often the case that the many, having the voting power to do so, endeavor to shift the burden of taxation upon the few.

Not even the timber owners will dispute that they should pay their fair share of taxes. They expect to do so, but often the few large property owners have a difficult time getting a square deal from the many owning comparatively small pieces of prpoerty. This is not a condition peculiar to Oregon. This condition is merely human nature expressing itself as it does everywhere else where similar conditions prevail.

In the mining towns of the great iron ranges of Minnesota little villages have fine city halls and fine school houses erected from the tax money taken from the mining companies. Similar conditions prevail elsewhere.

Timber is different from many other forms of property. It brings no returns to the owner until it is removed and when it is removed no taxable property is left. The timber companies do not wish to remove all their timber at once. Neither do the people want it all removed at once. This means that the owners must pay heavy taxes for years while getting no return from their property.

This condition makes a severance tax seem the plausible kind of a tax. No tax would be paid, its exponents tell us, until the owner got his money out of his property and with no taxes to pay until the property has been removed, the owner would have no particular reason to hurry in removing it.

It is apparent, however, that much thought should be given to the subject before we rush into a severance tax.

We have already stated that a large part of Lane county's taxes must come from its timber. If we take the timber from the tax rolls and substitute the severance tax, where will we be at? We may be in a worse fix than when we insisted that the Oregon & California grant lands go back to the government. We immediately removed the source of a large proportion of our taxes.

We would have no way of knowing how much timber was going to be cut during a year. We might get only a small proportion of the amount we get from a property tax. We are complaining now about the amount of our taxes. It behooves us to move carefully in regard to a severance tax lest we unwittingly double the amount the rest of who own no timber will have to pay.

Under any severance tax yet proposed the state is to get the larger part of the money—the latest proposal is three-fourths to the state and one-fourth to the county. Lane county, as one of the heaviest timbered counties of the state, would have to pay a state tax out of all proportion to what untimbered counties would have to pay.

Do we want that?

Untimbered counties have been for years getting returns from their lands far in excess of what we have been getting from our timbered lands. Now that our timber is about to be cut and we are about to get some returns from this land which has been producing little, do we want to divide with those counties who have been each year taking a fortune from their untimbered lands?

Why should three-fourths of the tax from any of Lane county's property go to the state when no state tax is laid against the products taken from the soil of untimbered counties?

Another point worthy of serious consideration is that timber has been for years paying a heavy tax—a tax which many claim has been in many years greater than the increase in the value of the property. If the severance tax is now to be laid against this timber, what arrangements are to be made to return to the owners the amount they have already paid in taxes?

It appears that Lane county should look askance at any proposal for a severance tax on timber unless a similar tax is placed upon all products taken from the soil and waters of the state, and should not get enthusiastic for one even then.

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In addition to the proposal for a severance tax, we have in Lane county the proposal to increase the taxes upon timber. If timber is not paying its share of tax, there is no reason why it should not be raised, but we must bear in mind that we have held down assessments upon other forms of property because we did not wish to pay more than our share of state taxes. Being a largely timbered county, an excessive tax on timber means an excess paid in state taxes, even though the state equalization board endeavors to equalize assessments between the counties.

The inference has been made that timber is taxed at only a small proportion of its real value. We do not doubt that such is the case, but an examination of the tax rolls will show mercantile establishments, manufacturing industries, professional equipment, real estate and other forms of property assessed at as low as one-fourth, one-fifth and even one-tenth of their real value. We doubt whether timber is getting any lower assessments than much other property of the county and state. A cruise of all the property of the state might be a good thing.

ENGLISH COMPULSORY.

The University of Oregon is going to compel the study of English upon the part of all students. That seems a wise thing to do. We find many studying foreign languages who can not write their own. We find woefully few entering college who can write a news story for a country newspaper and we find many who have graduated from college who would rather leave spelling for others to correct than take the trouble to go to the dictionary. There is a woeful lack of pride in the use of the English language and none realize more than those who are continually writing it how many mistakes are ignorantly made by those who really have a splendid command of the language. Mistakes in pronunciation are legion on the part of gifted public speakers; errors in spelling appear repeatedly in the great newspapers; grammatical errors are common in the books of noted writers. In the latter cases the errors not only get by the authors but also by the proofreaders, who often have a better command of the language than have the authors whose writings they proofread.

By all means English should be made a compulsory study.

DENBY AND DAUGHERTY.

We must admire the backbone and patience of President Coolidge and his evident unconcern about his own renomination when a question of right is concerned.

He could have won the plaudits of the multitude by playing horse the way many senators have been doing. He could have had the rabble shouting themselves hoarse with his praise had he been willing to sacrifice others for his own political gain, but he has preferred to play the game square and take the consequences.

Unquestionably Denby and Daugherty are weak men for cabinet positions. We believed, long before the Teapot Dome scandal, that Daugherty should have stepped down and out. Neither man, in our opinion, was big enough for the not personally told us so, but he has refused to rid his cabinet of weak men at a time when charges were made against them that had not been proved.

Undoubtedly he felt that it would be well for them to go but he would not be a party to declaring them guilty of crimes charged but not proved.

They probably were burden enough to him before. To back them now, when doing so means hurting himself in the eyes of the multitude, merely because he believes in playing the game square, takes a high quality of backbone and a high regard for the welfare of others. Would that we had many more like him in the councils of the government and fewer of those ready to throw the first stone when doing so means thousands of votes from the unthinking at home.

Denby has gone. Daugherty ought to go, we believe, but we are willing to let Coolidge select the hour for his going.

E. J. ADAMS FOR DELEGATE.

E. J. Adams, secretary to Senator Stanfield, former highway commissioner and former resident of this county, has announced his candidacy as delegate to the next republican convention. He was a delegate to the convention four years ago and at that time was largely responsible for getting inserted in the platform a plank pledging the party to a forest road program, as a result of which the sixty-seventh congress appropriated $21,500,000 for this purpose, $6,500,000 coming to Oregon.

Coming from the greatest timber belt in the world, Adams is qualified to suggest timber for a platform. Having served four years at Washington, he is in a better position than ever to commit the party to legislation looking toward the development of the Pacific northwest. He should get a substantial vote in his home county.

Eugene Register: Commissioner Sharp announces that hereafter the roads are to be maintained. Patrolmen are instructed to use district funds for maintenance instead of new construction, and the county machinery is to be dragged from its idleness in the shed and put to work. There is even hazy talk of saving out some maintenance money for next fall and winter. It appears that after all there is some merit in the recall as an institution. It is a pity somebody didn't launch a recall movement while we still had some roads left to maintain.

EDWIN D. HANDY, G. A. R. MEMBER, DIES AT ROSEBURG

Edwin D. Handy, for many years a resident of Cottage Grove, died Thursday last at the soldiers' home at Roseburg. The funeral was held here Sunday from the Christian church, Pastor J. E. Carlson officiating. Interment was in the A. F. & A. M.-I. O. O. F. cemetery. Members of the American Legion acted as pall bearers and members of the G. A. R. as honorary pallbearers.

Mr. Handy was born in Otsego county, N. Y., May 15, 1847, and was aged nearly 77 years. He was a member of Appomattox post, G. A. R., and for years active in its affairs. The wife and the following children survive: George E. and William H. Handy and Mrs. Eva Scott.

James Palmer Is Indicted.

James Palmer, the youth who on January 10 stabbed Ralph Lammers to death, has been indicted by the Lane county grand jury on a charge of murder in the second degree. He has pleaded not guilty.

FORD TRUCK AND TRACTOR SCHOOL HERE TOMORROW

The Ford truck and tractor school, now touring the state, will be here tomorrow. The entire day will be given to demonstrations of the latest equipment for Ford products. A free motion picture show will be given in the evening at the high school auditorium. Lectures will be given in connection with the motion pictures, the speakers being experts who have been in the employ of the Ford company for many years. The pictures and lectures will describe the many uses of Ford equipment and the operation and care of same.

INSTRUCTOR IN AGRICULTURE TAKING HIS OWN MEDICINE

E. J. Edwards, instructor of agriculture in the high school, believes that a doctor should take his own medicine. Carrying out his belief, he is now settled on a little place five miles south of the city on the Coast fork which is a part of the old "Uncle" Jim Shortridge place. It was purchased from E. W. Hinshaw. S. C. Lowry, manager of the J. C. Penney store, has moved into the Woolley house on Birch avenue vacated by Mr. Edwards.

Vandal Robs Mail Box.

Mount View, Feb. 25.—(Special.)—Some vandal seems to be robbing mail boxes in this section. A package was removed from W. D. Heath's box. The wrapping of the package was found the next day a short distance away but there was no sign of the contents.

Double Shift on Planers.

The Anderson & Middleton Lumber company has put a double shift on its planers at the Latham mill, requiring the employment of several extra men. This was found necessary in order to keep this department up with the operations in other departments.

Hospital Garments Shipped.

The Red Cross sent a shipment of hospital garments last week to ex-service men who are ill and awaiting their compensation. Mrs. Walter Fullmer cut the garments, the auxiliary of the American Legion did the sewing and the Red Cross expended $50 for the material.

Castor Car Hit by Train.

A Chevrolet car driven by Roy Castor was struck by a Southern Pacific train at the Main street crossing on Wednesday evening of last week. Mr. Castor heard the warning bell ringing and drove onto the tracks slowly. As he looked in one direction he was struck from the other side by a train switching on the sidetrack. Mr. Castor, who was alone in the car, escaped without injury but the car was badly damaged.