

The Ontario Argus

GEO. K. AIKEN, Editor and Publisher.

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UNFAIR LEGISLATION

The retail merchants of Oregon are endangered of suffering from the spite of some legislator at Salem. This would-be lawgiver has introduced a measure, the purpose of which is to require that all stocks of merchandise be assessed at full one hundred percent of its value. The law also would require that the merchants thus to be taxed must pay the cost of having a state expert appraise their goods.

That such a law would practically ruin half the merchants in the state must be admitted. By its terms one Ontario firm would have its state taxes raised from three or four hundred dollars to that many thousands, wiping out entirely all of its earnings for a year. There would be no incentive for it longer to remain in business.

Now such a law might be just and equitable if it went all the way and required a farmer to give in his ranch land at its market value, his equipment at its original cost less depreciation, required banks to furnish the state information concerning moneys deposited by citizens, and placed on the tax rolls all the household furniture of every individual over and above the exempt \$300 worth.

If such were the case then perhaps the valuations for the various taxing districts would be so high that the reduction in the levies would recompense and equalize the actual sum to be paid by all citizens so that no hardship would be worked on any one.

But since the bill in question does not contemplate such a procedure it is entirely unfair to those who would thus be marked for penalty by the lawmaker who proposes this measure.

At the present time the law contemplates that money shall be taxed, and there is no basic reason in justice why it should not be. Yet a recent statement of the State Tax Commission shows that for taxing purposes Malheur county had only some \$23,000 within its borders on March 1, 1918.

Somehow no one seems to think it wrong to lie to an assessor, because, "everyone does it". Yet it is preposterous to say that only \$23,000 should be taxed in this county whose banks show deposits of over two millions. So long as the theory that taxation shall be based on property prevails, it should mean all property, not part of the property as at present. Why a man who invests his wealth in sheep, cattle, lands or stocks of merchandise should pay the costs of government while he who keeps his in banks to draw interest thereon does not, can not be defended on any logical ground. The only argument which is made against the taxation of money, bonds, mortgages, etc., is that such property is hard to find, and that since it can be hid, or transferred to other points, to tax it would drive capital out of the country.

No doubt this is a practical reason, but it is not justice. And since men who control money are responsible for this injustice by their actions, they bring government into disrepute with the majority of the people. They furnish the agitator with the argument that, "the capitalist does not pay his share of the taxes," and there is a lot of truth in that statement, which accounts for the fact that those who make it have many sympathetic auditors.

All that the average man wants is fair play. The men who are hiding property from the assessor are willing to yell every time a soap box orator makes a statement about tax-dodgers, but they keep on lying to the assessor.

Let the legislature, if it is going to equalize taxation go all the way, write a bill that will put all property, of all kinds on the same basis, and make its value dependent upon its ability to earn, in other words equivalent in a measure to the returns it gives its possessor, then there will be an approach at equalization in taxation.

CURING THE KNOCKER

A neighboring contemporary, not far distant, emits loud wails about the "knockers" in its community who are injuring their home town by deprecating its possibilities. The attack upon the undesirable citizens in its town are generalities. How they knock or what they knock, is discreetly kept from the public.

Of course every town has its quota,

large or small, depending on conditions, who are not satisfied, some of them would not be satisfied with Paradise itself. These are the chronic knockers.

But there is another class who are described as "knockers" who have specific grievances to air. Sometimes they are a positive asset to any community. They stir up the town to action along useful lines of endeavor. They jarr the self complacent individuals who having gotten in on the ground floor and grabbed all the best corners are content to sit and take their toll of every individual who comes into the community.

It is hard to deal with this kind of a "knocker", so some towns think. The best cure for him however is to get after the trouble about which he is knocking. Remove the cause, and you have removed the knocker. If the particular brand of knocker that is troubling our neighbor is just the chronic type, he should worry, for that type will, like the poor, be always with us.

THE HUN'S "DEMAND"

The German delegates to the peace conference are displaying the same superlative gall that was the downfall of their vaunted nation. Philip Scheidemann, one of the Hun envoys had the nerve recently to declare that:

"Having accepted President Wilson's 14 points Germany wishes to begin with the demand that the peace treaty be arrived at openly."

So far as the peace treaty goes about all that the German envoys will have to do is to jot their names on the dotted line when the allies show them the proper place. That's all for Herr Scheidemann, and his colleagues.

Between Ebert and Scheidemann, the former having declared that the German army "was not beaten" and the latter forming demands, one would get the idea that the Huns and not the allies were the victors in the struggle that ended November 11, 1918.

LET STATE HIRE TRAPPERS

One of the laws that should be amended by the present legislature is that which pays bounties for predatory animals. The present statute does not accomplish the desired results, and it puts a premium on the protection of the breeding animals.

What should be done is this: The state should co-operate with the Biological Survey of the Department of Agriculture and systematically set about to exterminate the pests. This is done by securing trained trappers and specialists in the use of poisons.

Using this method the State of Washington last year, for less money, destroyed more pests than were killed in Oregon, and the state received the price of the hides, which in Oregon went to the trapper. The price of the hides in Washington reached several thousand dollars, thus making the net cost to the state less than a fourth of what Oregon paid, and the number of animals exterminated was a fourth greater.

There is no county in Oregon which suffers more from the depredations of gophers than does Malheur county. The annual loss from these little animals runs into thousands of dollars, and the ranchers are the sufferers. The Owyhee Ditch company has recognized this fact and paid a bounty on them, likewise individual ranchers paid for animals caught on their property.

Since the national government recognizes the need for the extermination of such pests, and has specialists in their eradication who have shown ability to get results, it seems short sighted on the part of Oregon to maintain an antiquated system which does not accomplish the purpose. Oregon and Malheur county in particular should get behind a movement that would stop the present waste.

THE CHAUTAUQUA

Ontario has its annual winter Chautauqua this week. The attractions furnished this year by the Ellison-White company are superior to those of last winter, and that is sufficient indication of the character of entertainment in store for those who attend.

The Chautauqua movement is a godsend to communities where the opportunity of hearing high class lectures and musical numbers is limited.

The price of the entire course is relatively small and with the guarantee of the Ellison-White people whose reputation is a worthy one, the money invested in a season ticket will be well spent. Get your ticket now.

"AMERICAN IDEALS" NOTED LECTURE

Has Won Name and Fame for Mrs. A. C. Zehner of Texas.

Mrs. A. C. Zehner of Dallas, Tex., has often been called "the best lady speaker on the American platform." Certainly she is in greater demand than any other woman for lecture work. For years she has been speaking throughout the country on "American Ideals," and the demands upon



Mrs. A. C. Zehner.

her time are more than she can fill. She has the happy faculty of clear thinking and hard hitting. Her lecture at Chautauqua is one of the finest appeals for better citizenship you will ever hear.

NOTED HARPISAT AT CHAUTAUQUA FESTIVAL

Alice Genevieve Smith Comes on Opening Night.



Alice Genevieve Smith

Elsie Mae Gordon, reader and impersonator and Alice Genevieve Smith, harpist, comprise the Gordon-Smith Company opening attraction of the coming Chautauqua Festival. Both are recognized stars of the Lyceum and Chautauqua world and it is doubtful if there is a better company of two people on the platform.

Miss Smith, harpist, formerly with the Chicago Grand Opera Company and the Metropolitan, is one of our great harpists. She brings to the Chautauqua Festival one of the finest harps in the country. Her mastery of it is absolute. She infuses that singing quality of tone which so few harpists ever achieve.

DOCTOR YAMAMOTO AT CHAUTAUQUA

Noted Japanese Scholar, Author and Lecturer on Japanese-American Relations.

Dr. Yamamoto was educated in the universities of both Japan and the United States, has written several authoritative books on the relations of the two countries, and is perhaps better fitted than any other man on the platform to bring this vital subject to American audiences.

Few subjects are more important in the public mind at the present time than the one concerning our relations



Dr. Minosaku Toshi Yamamoto.

with Japan. And perhaps few subjects are less understood. It will be a pleasure at Chautauqua to hear Dr. Minosaku Toshi Yamamoto, Japanese scholar, author and lecturer, discuss these problems from an impartial standpoint.

TO THE DAIRYMEN

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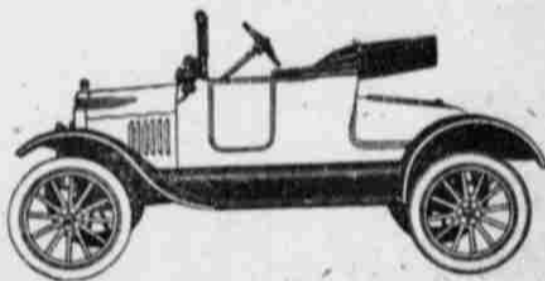
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Ford

THE UNIVERSAL CAR

It's no longer necessary to go into the details describing the practical merits of the Ford car—everybody knows all about "The Universal Car." How it goes and comes day after day and year after year at an operating expense so small that it's wonderful. This advertisement is to urge prospective buyers to place orders without delay as the war has produced conditions which may interfere with normal production. Buy a Ford car when you can get one. We'll take good care of your order—get your Ford to you soon as possible—and give the best in "after service" when required.

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REAL CHEWING PLUG
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How Could He Do It?

A certain well-to-do young business man called at a bank the other day and asked for a loan of \$500.00. The banker promptly took his personal note for the amount.

Why could he do this? Simply because as a young man he commenced doing business thru the bank. He had learned early in life that the bank could help him in many ways and the banker learned that this young man was a sticer and could be depended upon. In fact each had learned to stay by the other. Young men, there is a lesson in this for you. Start now doing your business thru a good bank like ours. Stay by us and we will stay by you.

First National Bank,
ONTARIO, OREGON.