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G. K. Aiken, Managing Editor
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NOT SO IN OREGON

A number of Argus readers have asked for its views on the progress of road work in this state and a comparison of the efficiency of the Oregon Highway commission with that of the Idaho commission.

To be even approximately accurate such a comparison could only be made after careful study and a comprehensive knowledge of the varying factors which enter into the road programs of the two states.

There is this to be said, however, of the Oregon commission and the work it has done: It is getting results. There are now nearly 800 miles of hard surfaced highways in Oregon; of which more than half is paved with bitulithic or concrete. It may further be added that many more miles will be completed this summer and that it is possible that by fall there will be an excellent road all the way from Nyssa to Seaside, a distance of 600 miles, that there will be an excellent highway from Portland to the California line; beside hundreds of other miles of good roads along the John Day and other state highways.

And this is not all. This great good road work is being carried on with comparatively slight contributions directly from the taxpayers. For example: the highway from Cairo to Nyssa cost nearly \$80,000, yet of this sum the people of Malheur county paid only \$15,000 all told. Was there ever a road built in this section for which the people paid so small a proportion? And when, might it be asked did we ever have such a road in the county?

Again the paved road from Ontario to the Snake River bridge was paved at no cost at all from the pockets of the taxpayers here.

The road from Vale to Cow Valley will cost nearly \$200,000 when completed, yet the county has contributed less than a fourth of that amount. And we are getting roads, too. That is one thing to take into account, for it is something that we have not hitherto possessed.

Over in Idaho the charge is made that the engineering costs have run from 22 to 25 per cent. That is not the case in Oregon for the statutes limit the engineering cost to ten per cent, and this figure has not been reached. The highest engineering cost has been 9.3 per

cent, which includes many preliminary surveys on which construction will be done this year, so that the engineering cost this year will be about 8 per cent, a figure that is reasonable. In the matter of contracts Oregon's record is one to be proud of. It has built roads as cheaply, if not cheaper, than any of its neighboring states. The records show that to be the case, and best of all we are getting the roads.

The Argus believes in the Oregon Highway commission and in its engineering staff and is thoroughly convinced that its work justifies that faith.

The cost of the highway system in Oregon is being borne as it should be borne, not by the general property owners but by those who use the roads, the auto owners. The road program is financing itself from the licenses obtained and cannot be charged with any portion of the tax levy, or at least with so small an amount that it is negligible.

It is true that we have local road taxes for county roads. The amount is specified by statute. The county courts are compelled to levy these sums, but they should not be confused with the state highway program. When seeking criticism of the tax levies the taxpayer must look beyond the highway program for it is not there.

THE DRIVE ON TAXES

Everywhere there is a drive on high taxation. Over in Idaho for the past few weeks the Boise Statesman has been training its guns on the operations of the State Highway Commission and demanding that that body curtail its operations even at the expense of declining federal aid.

In fact one of the heaviest weapons that the Statesman uses is accusation that federal aid is bait to secure action which the people themselves would not take otherwise. In other words the Statesman believes the federal aid system is wrong, that it is debilitating; initiative destroying and generally an undesirable principle to follow in public matters.

Granted that this is true generally speaking, especially when viewed as a state matter; never-the-less it is hardly sound reasoning when it is remembered that the project under consideration is nationwide in scope, and that if Idaho is to keep pace with the other commonwealths in the matter of road building it might just as well take the government money as not.

If Idaho does not take the government money allotted to it, there is no doubt that some of the neighboring states will not be bashful about accepting Idaho's share. We could use it to advantage here in Oregon.

While the Statesman is justified in its demand for lower taxes, yet these taxes are the result of the demand on the part of the people for service from the state which were unthought of years ago. Therefore the only logical position to take is to demand the elimination of superfluous offices and functions, and not the elimination of the good roads program.

REASON FOR OPTIMISM

There are reasons for being optimistic these days. Business is better than it was and it is going to get better than it is. Of this there is no doubt.

R. N. Stanfield, Senator-Elect from Oregon who was in Ontario Monday is authority for the statement that even the wool men have reason to be optimistic. If the wool men can be optimistic, then certainly the men engaged in other lines of endeavor in this region may wear a rainbow smile.

Mr. Stanfield believes that the coming wool crop will be sold, but not at figures which prevailed during the war. He declares that the wool from last year's clip is practically all marketed and points to the fact that more wool sold in January than in the eight preceding months as an indication of the upward trend of the wool market.

Daily the gospel of optimism is replacing the lamentations of gloom that flooded the country. This in itself is an indication of conditions to come, for there are many men who are firmly of the belief that this is all that is needed to restore good times. Even if one disagrees entirely with that statement, yet it must be admitted that it is one of the most potent factors.

A YEAR ROUND BUSINESS

It would require reams of paper to tell in detail the benefits which the Farmer's Short Course Week made available to the ranchers of Malheur County last week. It is to be regretted that the condition of the roads were such that the number who had an opportunity to take advantage of those benefits was not larger. However there is no use of vain regrets. Those who lost most

are those who might have been present but were not.

The best message that the lecturers brought to the farmers, as we view it from what we heard, was that the business of farming must be placed on a twelve month, not a six month basis.

It may be that some of our rancher friends viewed the speakers as theorists, and to a degree no doubt they were; but it is also true that all of them demonstrated a knowledge of the application of theory to practice that commanded the respect of the many practical farmers who were present.

Every farmer with whom we talked who attended the meetings was more than pleased with the information gained. All said that the course was worth while. All who expressed their opinions asked that the course be repeated, and all who were present but a part of the time regretted the sessions they missed.

We do not know what stronger endorsement one could ask for the success of a gathering than the approval of those who attended. They alone are in position to judge. The man who stayed away certainly is in no position to make a fair statement concerning the merits of the programs.

SEARCH FOR OIL AND GAS

(By W. T. Bartlett)

After we have learned that oil and gas have been deposited in porous sands under the surface of the ground, with layers of air-tight shales above and below them, the first thing to consider in the search for oil and gas fields is to determine whether the strata which show up on the surface (or out-crop) are of the proper age to cover oil-bearing sands below.

The study of geology has made it possible for an expert to classify these sedimentary layers, and to determine in what age or era they were laid down. In this work the fossilized remains of shells and plants found in these layers are of great value in determining what each layer is, and geologists become as familiar with them as a farmer does with different breeds of cattle, or different kinds of trees. If the surface layers are of the same age as layers in other oil fields, the geology is favorable, and the next consideration is to study the structure, or the manner in which these layers have been bent or folded for the migration and storage of oil and gas.

Structure

This is done by measuring the dip or slope of these layers where they come to the surface or are exposed on hill-sides, railroad cuts, canal banks, or river banks. If certain layers come to the surface with a slant of ten degrees in several places over a mile or more of land, the layers below it probably slope at the same degree, and in this way it is possible to map out and chart these under-ground layers almost as accurately as if they were exposed on top of the ground. In this way drilling sites are selected where the oil and gas comes nearest to the surface and is stored in the greatest quantity.

Other indications of oil are studied, such as flows of natural gas, seeps of oil, or colors of oil in springs or water wells. A geologist cannot tell how much oil or gas can be struck, nor at what depth, until after a field has been developed, but under favorable conditions he can give valuable advice as to the best place to drill and where not to drill. The larger oil companies of the country constantly keep several high-salaried geologists in their employ.

The United States Geological Survey and most of the State governments employ high class geologists who assist legitimate companies by reporting on the Geology and Structure of prospective oil fields.

Note—In my next article I will attempt to show why oil development work attempted in this district years ago was not done in the most scientific or business-like manner.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the County Court of the State of Oregon, for Malheur County
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF W. E. HULERY, DECEASED.

Notice is hereby given that on December 22, 1920, an order of the above entitled Court was made appointing the undersigned, J. J. Dillard, administrator of the estate of W. E. Hulery, deceased. All persons having claims against the above entitled estate will present the same, duly verified as by law required to the said administrator at his place of business in the City of Ontario, Oregon, within six months from the date of the last publication of this notice.

J. J. DILLARD,

Administrator.

First publication, Dec. 30, 1920.
Last publication, Jan. 27, 1921.

SUMMONS
In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon, For the County of Malheur
Sylvia E. Morgan, Plaintiff.
vs.
Guy P. Morgan, Defendant.
To Guy P. Morgan, the above named Defendant:
IN THE NAME OF THE STATE OF OREGON:

You are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit on or before the expiration of six weeks from the date of the first publication of this summons, the same being the last day of the time prescribed by order of the court directing service of summons in said suit to be made upon you by publication; and if you fail so to answer, for want thereof, the plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief demanded in the said complaint, to-wit:

For a decree of said court granting the plaintiff a divorce from you, and awarding plaintiff the custody of Mildred Lucile Morgan, the minor child of plaintiff and defendant, and granting plaintiff an undivided one-third interest in your land in Malheur County, Oregon, described as the E. 1/4 of S.E. 1/4 of Sec. 14, and W. 1/4 of S.W. 1/4 of Sec. 13, in Twp. 17 S. R. 46 E. W. M., and awarding plaintiff reasonable alimony, suit money and attorneys fees out of your property, and for all other relief demanded in said complaint.

You are further notified that this summons is served upon you by publication in pursuance of an order of the Hon. Dalton Biggs, Judge of said Court; which order was made and entered in said cause on Feb. 2, 1921, and directed that this summons be published once each week for six successive weeks in the "Ontario Argus." The date of the first publication of this summons is Feb. 17, 1921, and the last publication is on March 31, 1921.

W. W. WOOD,

Attorney for Plaintiff.

My residence and post office address is at Ontario, Oregon.

WANTED—A man to ride ditch for Payette-Oregon Slope Irrigation District for season 1921. Send bid and references to J. L. Brown, Payette, Idaho. The board reserves the right to accept any one of the bids made or reject all. J. L. Brown, Pres.

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