

**The Ontario Argus**  
County Official Paper.

An Independent Newspaper

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**OREGON'S TAX-EAT-UP**

Oregon is sick. It must be, for so many folks say so. If it was feeling fairly fit, it would soon be ill by the power of suggestion; for every candidate for office, the tax investigation commission, and practically all the newspapers are uniting in their declarations that Oregon is in a bad way.

It is unusual too, that they are all apparently agreed, that the trouble with Oregon is that it is suffering from tax-eat-up. The diagnosis is perfect, all of the specialists, for a wonder, are agreed. Even the general practitioners of street corner fame are in agreement with the specialists, as to the disease; but it is the treatment that is the cause of dispute. It is too much to expect to have agreement both as to the cause of the trouble and the cure; but it is worth while to note the harmony of opinion concerning one phase. That is important. It is something to have a place to start from.

Chief among the specialists who have been called in to prescribe for the Oregon tax-eat-up, is the tax investigation commission appointed by the governor of the legislature. This commission blames the people, that is, all of us, for the trouble. The cost of government has increased because the people have not had the courage to say no to the various faddists who have singly and in groups asked for their particular hobby.

The commission tells us that taking the general increase in living costs, that the various institutions are carefully managed and that the cost per individual in each of them is not out of line.

To the construction of roads, and the improvements in educational advantages the commission ascribed most of the increase in the cost of state and local government; and all of these increases have been authorized by direct vote of the people through the initiative and the referendum.

Beside this, it is the people as a whole, on whom rests the burden of guilt for the increase in the bonded indebtedness of the various taxing districts, state, county, city and school districts. These bonds are now calling for payment, and they draw interest. That is one of the things that contributes to the tax-eat-up. Out of every dollar that is levied in Oregon a big portion goes to the holders of various kinds of bonds.

Here in Malheur county where the evidence of indebtedness represents, beside the usual capital requirements for roads, bridges, school houses and other governmental activities, irrigation and drainage bonds this element becomes very material indeed.

The Argus ventures the belief that if no new capital investments were made in Malheur county for ten years, and a special tax of six per cent was levied for the retirement of present indebtedness the taxing units of the county would only then be on a cash basis.

The facts are, that generally speaking, the taxing districts of the state are in the hands of the bond holders. The Malheur county government is in better condition than the cities or the school districts, or the irrigation and drainage districts.

While this condition exists in Oregon the people may get a little consolation from the fact that it is also true in Washington and Idaho, and in practically every state in the Union. On the theory that misery likes company, it may help to know this, but it will not work as a cure for us to know the other fellow is sick too.

Like many individuals the cities and towns and every taxing unit has gone too far with its credit. The cure must be secured through two sources; reduced expenses; and revenue secured from those now escaping their responsibility. The public must ask less of the governmental agencies to accomplish the former, and the income tax appears to be the only way of reaching the latter end. In this connection it is worth while to note that Oregon is not the only state in which the income tax is being advocated; Washington and Idaho both have this means of revenue raising under consideration. It is bound to come.

**GRABBING THE RANGE**

To an outsider, the revelations of the public meeting in Boise last Saturday in which Crawford Moore, Scott Anderson, et al, and Fred Gooding, J. E. Clinton, Homer Fenn and Hugh Strodt debated the merits of H. R. No. 77, were enlightening and interesting, if not edifying.

It looks as though the gang had split and that when one bunch did not get what they thought was a fair share of the swag had "holered."

The exhibition furnished, and the self condemning statements made by both sides, should prove a warning to the general public that eternal vigilance is the price of a square deal in such matters.

The opportunity presented to Messrs. Gooding et al, to secure the rights of the Northern Pacific to 250,000 acres of land in Northern Idaho and trade it for a similar amount in Southern Idaho no doubt squares with the requirement of the law; it may be perfectly ethical, but it certainly is bad public policy for the government to permit such a deal to be put over. Perhaps it is no part of the department's business to look back of the record to see how these men secured the lieu rights, but it should do that very thing.

It was by the purchase of Northern Pacific lands while that company was in difficulties that the Weyerhaeuser Timber company secured its strangle hold on the timber of Idaho and Washington; and it now through the Northern Pacific a group of men should secure a monopoly on the grazing lands of Idaho, the people of all the west, for all time, will pay a terrible price for that fatal grant which the government made the Northern Pacific in an effort to get a railroad from Saint Paul to Puget Sound.

**AN INTERNATIONAL FARCE**

The reported engagement of 16 year old Mathilda McCormick to Max Osey the 57 year old stable proprietor of Switzerland may not be another of those entangling foreign alliances of which Americans were warned, but it is a disgrace, the responsibility for which must be assumed by the girl's parents.

Mrs. McCormick came back to America a few months ago and announced that she had a new religion, some psycho-bunkum that gave her power to know what her family was doing wherever they were, and that she was going to devote her time and new found talent to spreading its blessing among her friends. Maybe this new brand of bunkum was the real thing, but if that mother knew her daughter was spending her time hanging around livery stables, she might better have forgotten about her "religion," and put more stress on her slipper, properly applied. The poor little kid, without the parental direction of her father, and apparently none from her mother, deserves a lot of sympathy that she is not getting. She is not to be blamed, but the mother is, and her father, too, if he could furnish enough manhood to be the real head of his house.

**THE TOURIST BUREAU**

Sidney B. Vincent gave Ontario business men the first real idea they have had of the work of the tourist bureau, and the impression was most favorable toward the continuance of the effort.

Surprising indeed was one particular statement, namely, that of every ten tourists who come to Oregon, four are in search of homes and new locations. It is in this phase of the effort that Ontario and Malheur county are interested. Even though few of these home-seekers locate here, if they locate in Oregon and build up the state they do two things: They are building up towns which make a market for the products of this region, they are creating additional wealth on which will fall a portion of the tax burden of the state. That is one of the logical methods of solving the tax burden, by increasing the number who participate in the payment.

No matter how one views the decision of the Public Service Commission regarding the telephone case in Portland, yet every admirer of the Oregonian must regret that, that dignified and conservative publication departs from the rules of logic and resorts to Scripps-McRae sophistries to make a case against the commission. Of course the commission exceeded its sphere when it threw its dignity to the winds and became petulant and critical of the public.

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**FOR SALE**—Typewriter in good shape. Cheap. Ford Garage.

**OFTEN TOLD STORIES OF PIONEER DECLARED MYTHICAL**

Some times when stories get going about men, they are hard to stop, especially when even a semblance of an incident gives color to the yarn. Such is the case of Eli Burgette Johnson of whose passing the Argus recorded last week, and at the same time told the story that had oft been repeated, and which we believed was true of his life in the stirring days of the interior country.

This week we were told by his son Clarence Johnson that the incident related last week of how a horse was shot under him was incorrect. The facts were that his son was leading the horse and was 30 yards ahead of Johnson when the horse was shot by a neighbor. Also, we were told that he never worked for Pete French, the big cattle baron of the early days around whose life many a tale of the interior was spun, but often rode the range with French's men in the round-up, gathering in his cattle with that of the French outfit.

From a complete biography of Mr. Johnson furnished by his son Clarence, we glean these facts which are somewhat at variance with that given us last week.

He was born in Iowa October 11, 1853, crossed the plains with his parents to southern Oregon in 1861, and later moved to Northern California where he remained until 1887. While in California he engaged in business and also worked for the old Nelson cattle company. In 1878 he was married to Miss Fanny M. Chandler, and to them ten children were born and who with their mother survive him.

In 1887 the family moved to Harney county and homesteaded on the shores of Malheur lake. Later he moved to Burns and went into the merchandise business which he conducted until 1895, when he moved with his family to Caldwell, later going to Baker where he remained but a short time, returning to Caldwell where he sold his business and moved to Ontario in 1901, where he has since made his home.

**ADRIAN NEWS**

Despite the fact that it was snowing hard, Clarence Elliot and Clark Enos explored little brown Butte. They were searching for coyotes but merely found the traps.

Mrs. Geo. Reed was the guest of Mrs. at Connelly Monday.

Tom McGiveren who now lives near Parma, was in Adrian greeting old time friends, Wednesday.

Mrs. Susie Pomeroy has gone to Wilder to visit her daughter, Mrs. Earl Caverhill, who expects to be away some of the time taking treatments in Boise.

Carl Schweizer and Theodore Grover, students from the Kingman Colony High school, were in Adrian Friday, buying supplies for the play which is to be given Feb. 25.

Little Ella Reed has been absent from school the past two days on account of a bad cold.

About five o'clock Thursday evening the tenant house of Mr. Edwards caught fire and burned down. Web Otis had been living in the house for the past few months. He and Rob. Wade were in it at the time it burned. It is thought the fire was caused from a piece of paper on the roof. Mr. Otis has now rented a house belonging to Peter Christiansen.

Geo. Smith of Portland was a business visitor in Adrian Friday.

Various farmers from over the community are hauling grain to Adrian and loading it in cars for shipment. Messrs. Dale and O. Ashcraft were shopping in Adrian Saturday.

**KINGMAN KOLONY**

Miss Eulalia Shafer, attending High school at Roswell, spent the week end with her parents in the Kolony. She was accompanied by Miss Bennett, also a student at the Roswell High school.

Miss Margaret Smith, extension worker, and Mr. Wellman, county club leader, were in the Kolony Friday of last week. Miss Smith addressing a number of interested mothers as well as the High school students on child nutrition. Mr. Wellman made a number of calls in the interest of the club work for this season.

An excellent Washington day program was given by the school on the afternoon of Feb. 22.

Leslie and Oscar Schafer are hauling rock for repair work on the crossing on his drainage canal at the Elliot place.

Mrs. Martin Mrs. Maurice L. Judd and Robt. S. Overstreet were Ontario visitors last Saturday, attending the meeting of club leaders.

Miss Gladys Johnson was an over night guest at the Conrad Martin home Saturday of last week.

Geo. Reed left last week for Echo, Nevada, where he was called as a witness in a law suit.

Friday March 3rd, is the regular P. T. H. meeting. This meeting closes the membership campaign which has been in progress during the winter.

Misses Margaret Covell, Lang, Sayre and Shay, teachers in the Nyssa school "hiked" to Kingman Colony Wednesday of last week, spending the day with Mrs. Maurice L. Judd, and attending the Washington day program at the Kolony school.

Miss Margaret Smith and Harry Wellman were guests at the Conrad Martin home Saturday.

The Misses Lella and Eva Everett Miss Gladys Reece and Miss Cochran and Vergil Reece came down from Ontario Saturday to attend the High school play given Saturday night.

The play "The Sparking Cup" given by the High school Saturday night, was largely attended. Each member of the cast handled their part well, and those who spent so much time in making the play a success are to be congratulated on their success. The net receipts were something over \$40.

Another evening entertainment which promises to be a treat is that to be given by the Roswell dramatic club on the evening of March 11th, instead of the 10th as announced last week. The Roswell young people need no introduction in this community. They will present the opera "Pinafore" at Kolony school. Admission 25c and 15c. Under the auspices of the P. T. A.

Pupils of the grades who were neither absent nor tardy during the month of February are: James McGinnis, Leonard Smith, Harold Elliot, Lloyd McEwen, Helen Powell, Glenn McGinnis, Eddie Powell, Kenneth Bach, James McEwen, Cora Elliot, John McGinnis.

S. C. WHITE LEGHORN Day old chicks, \$18.00 per 100; hatching eggs \$8.00 per 100; or \$1.50 per setting. A. B. Cain, Ontario Phone 206-W.

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