

OREGON CITY COURIER

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Official Paper for the Farmers Society of Equity of Clackamas Co M. J. BROWN, EDITOR

SHOULDN'T WE?

The government owns the post-office departments, and they are successful. The government owns the parcels post system and it is a splendid success. The government owns the postal banks and they are popular successes. The government has had a little country of its own down by the big canal, and its splendid success has made national comment. Any reason now why we should not take over the telephones and telegraphs? And then hadn't we better run the railroads? And shouldn't we own and control the sources of the common necessities?

TAFT.

I doubt if a president ever went into the White house with more confidence and left it with less than president Taft. He went in with the Republicans behind him unanimously. He went out with only Utah and Vermont left. He started wrong at the passage of the Payne tariff bill. He played golf while congress patched up a monstrousity that repudiated platform and promises and when the job was finished he signed it without a protest. Had Taft found a backbone and told congress he would veto the joke they were building he would be president today. But he laid down and let them put it over, and the people lost confidence in him from that day. Since then he has continued to favor the interests. Today he will go out of office and he will be forgotten in thirty days. The masses have nothing to remember him for. Taft is a big man, a brainy man and a thinker, but he has everlastingly done the wrong thing at the wrong time. He made himself unpopular, disliked and the American people gladly see him step down and out.

WILSON.

No man ever headed the government of our country with more confidence and respect back of him than Woodrow Wilson, and no president ever had a brighter chance to make good. When New Jersey became so rotten that it smelled to heaven, the political machine, as a forlorn chance, nominated Wilson, nominated him because the voters did not know him and he might get away with it. He did, and his first jump was to turn down the grafting bunch that found him—because he wouldn't stand the smell. They made him governor and he gave New Jersey such a cleaning as it never had and never will have again. They say he drove the mosquitoes out. Wilson's New Jersey record made him president. The people watched him and he looked good. Republicans and Democrats alike have confidence in his ability and judgment. There is no fear, no panic, no hard times over the shift in government. President Wilson has some big problems to get away with. Whether he can make the raffle remains to be seen, but it is a certainty that he will try for all that is in him. And here's to President Wilson. He rings true, he assays high, he looks good.

LET US TRY THIS.

There is a great unrest in Oregon over the present legislative system and its results. People are asking for a change, a remedy, and are casting about for a plan. The Courier receives any number of letters on this subject, some are printed, some are personal, some are crowded out. A half dozen men have personally said to the editor that they had been workers and voters for the present Oregon reforms, that so far as legislative results go they would prefer the

old convention system. Many others, and especially the farmers, openly favor the abolishment of both houses of the legislature and laws enacted by the people direct by means of the initiative. Others would have a commission form of law making. And so on. Now let us see. You will have to hunt some to find a representative man who would stand up where all can look at him and declare the Oregon system is a failure. They will all tell you that the system works well and redeems promises except as to state legislation, but there it is a cripple, and doesn't make good, isn't representative. Now the reason the legislature doesn't obey the voters' wishes is because almost every last man in the bunch is playing for his own particular locality—and trading the shirt off his back to land the goods. And if he can't land the goods his district will send a man to Salem who can. One county wants a normal. All the other counties are opposed to it. The representative from this county must hunt up those from other counties who want a college, insane asylum, poor house, bridge, fish hatchery, trade school, salary increases, armory soldiers' home or some other form of private benefit at public expense. Then the trading, back scratching and dickering commences, and the result is that such a majority of the members all want something it is easy to form a Legislative Exchange Bureau, where all get what they want where all can dodge responsibility, and where the taxpayers can foot the bills and can't protect themselves. For the recall would have to be invoked on a majority of the legislature to hit back on even one bill. Now would you abolish the legislature or would you take away from the legislature this trading stock of appropriation bills? Either would stop the horse-trading all right, but which would you try first? Do you remember that last summer W. S. U'Ren made the proposition to take from the legislature the power to introduce appropriation bills, let the governor alone introduce them, and to abolish the senate? Wished you had voted it now, don't you? If you could vote on it tomorrow you would vote on it wouldn't you? If the governor alone had this job, the governor alone would have the responsibility, and with the recall above his head you can bet your shoes there would not be thirty salary increase bills and over five million dollars in appropriations been jammed through this session. A governor who would not last any longer than a dew drop would in Death Valley. And with the senate abolished, responsibility would be right up to the house, and every man where you could see him and see what part he took in the game. What do you think of it? Take away the saw-mills and there would be no log rolling. Put the public crib beyond the reach of the individual legislators and the rascal from Lane wouldn't be trading a vote to the grafter from Multnomah so one could get a school appropriation and the other a bridge, and it would break up the big educational combine in Oregon. Think it over.

TAFT'S LAST BREAK.

If President Taft had hunted for one more act to wind up his administration as unpopular, he couldn't have found a better one than vetoing of the bill to prevent shipment of liquor into dry counties. He said that it was unconstitutional. Think this over a little. Unconstitutional to protect a state's own laws! That's a great version for common sense to assimilate. A national law prevents absinthe being shipped into this country from foreign countries. Isn't this just as unconstitutional as shipping liquor into a dry state? But a congress that reads the signs knew it would not do to put this over, and both houses made respect and history by passing the bill over the big man's veto, and it is law.

The Cardinal Quality

SOME MEN who are veritable dynamos of energy—industrious, capable, conscientious men and money-makers—fail to score success and thus cause wonderment among their fellows. With all these good qualities to their credit they fail because of the lack of one—THE SAVING HABIT. The man who saves from small earnings is on more advantageous ground than he who makes big money and saves none. Savings deposited in the Savings Department of this institution are added to by interest compounded twice a year.

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RUMBLINGS.

Abolishment of the legislature might leave us politically in "chaos and dark night," but are we much better off now?—Portland Journal.

Barret's road bill was passed by the legislature and is almost sure to become a victim of the referendum. Its greatest objectionable feature is that it does not conform to the grange ideas in that the people of the various counties will have nothing to say where the roads are to be built, but the kind of road, location and cost, are left to the county courts. The law will have but little effect in Multnomah county, but the paving trusts which dominated the passage of the bill are practically all located in Portland and Multnomah has a good many thousand votes that will support the other counties of the state. The state grange session in May will take the matter up in some manner and there is a good chance for the people to have something to say on the subject. It is only justice to say that senator Kellaher, Joseph and Dimick and Representative Gill stood with the people when the law was up for consideration.—Gresham Outlook.

Before the legislature adjourns let us call to mind a little controversy of last fall. An election was held, at which some forty measures were voted on, under the initiative and referendum. Everyone admits the number was too great, that voters could not master all the bills and mark them intelligently. But think of the legislature. Hundreds of bills have been pouring in the senate and the house. A pile of new bills is laid on the desk of each member every day. There is not a man living who could do justice to the task of sifting out these bills, deciding which are desirable and which are vicious, silly or superfluous. Weighing legislature against initiative does not the latter show up to the best advantage? Law making in the Oregon legislature is a haphazard matter, a gamble, a chance. No one knows what is going to come out of the session, or why this is done and that is forgotten. The task is too big for any men. The system is faulty.—Enterprise Record—Chieftain.

The greatest problem in Oregon at this time is how to transform the legislature from an organization of special agents and petty jugglers into a real lawmaking body for the people. It is a difficult problem but an important one and it is worthy of earnest consideration by thoughtful, patriotic citizens. Perhaps the solution will be what Senator Kellaher has predicted when he said that if the present session does not pass good laws it will hereafter be "goodbye" to the legislature. Nothing will hasten that event quicker than the attempt which is now apparent to circumvent the governor in his prerogative of the veto by extending the session. When for political reasons men seek to prevent the lawful operation of the safeguards provided for the good of the state by state law, they seek to be

true representatives of the people and sooner than that, the people will ask for the privilege of doing their voting direct. The voters of Oregon are fast getting in the mood to abolish the legislature, call for the making of laws by direct vote and limiting those laws to five in number at each election.—Pendleton East Oregonian.

DIMICK'S LAST FIGHT.

The Courier believes in giving any man full credit when he makes good, regardless of his policies or color of his hair, and Senator Dimick certainly did splendid service for Oregon when he made his midnight fight against passing the Thompson swamp bill over Governor West's veto and handing the state's property over to the looters.

The senator was sick in bed and so hoarse he could not speak, yet he left orders that if the bill should come up in the night to send for him, it came up, and Dimick, despite the doctor's orders, dressed and was driven to the capitol, and his appearance was like an apparition to the debaters. Those working for the passage of the bill over the veto knew Dimick had the goods, but they knew he was sick in bed. A special writer tells the rest of the story: "Except for the unusual stillness in the senate chamber while the debate was in progress, Dimick could not have been heard. Starting in little more than a whisper his straining voice grew sufficiently in power to enable all that he said to be understood as he drove his words home with intense earnestness. "First he sent to the desk a history of the famous swamp land certificate "No. 144," under which all the title sought to be confirmed in the Thompson bill derives, was through "Hen" Owens, the "Swamp Land Angel," showing how the Courts have stamped that certificate with fraud. Then he read a list of the owners of the land in question, which he had obtained from the records of Lake county. "The list made a telling indictment against the Thompson bill. "It showed that the owners of the land involved are not "poor settlers" who are being denied justice, but are large and wealthy land owners, many of them not residents of the State of Oregon. "He showed that the holders of the 12,000 acres are the Lake County Land and Livestock Company, 7225 acres; W. Z. Moss, 985 acres; The Warner Valley & Stock company, 974 acres, Warren C. Laird, 801 acres; Mrs. Ellen Kennedy 539 acres; Keefe family of San Francisco 739 acres; Dr. Gustave E. Bruer of Portland 280 acres; G. L. & J. A. Wilson of San Francisco 240 acres; W. H. Bradford, timber speculator, 160 acres; J. N. True, 313 acres; F. B. Wilson 160 acres, and miscellaneous, 131 acres. "We were told here two years ago that this bill was the relief for actual settlers," said Dimick. "I voted for it then, because I believed that it was true. But there is the list and it shows

that the actual owners of the most of the land are large corporations. "Why should this legislature confer title to these owners? We do not know how much of that land the state land board may be able to save for the common school fund. The land board can issue confirmatory deeds whenever it finds that the holders should have such deeds. "If you will read the brief of Governor Lord in the swamp land case you must be convinced that the title to this land is based and conceived in fraud. The legislature is no place to bring a lawsuit. "The senator from Lake in connection with another bill on this floor, said, 'The school fund needs the money, and needs it now.' Let him take these words back to the Warner Valley Land Company and the other owners of these lands, 'The school fund needs the money, and needs it now.' And the bill failed to pass over the Governor's veto.

The large appropriations made by the legislature for our two big state educational institutions are going to be widely discussed by the people during the next year or two, and a referendum of the university appropriation is already threatened by H. J. Parkinson, who secured the referendum petition which defeated the big university appropriation last year. As a counter move to this threat comes a vicious attack on the state agricultural college at Corvallis by a Eugene paper, accompanied by a threat that the O. A. C. appropriation should also be subjected to the referendum. These two schools have nothing to gain by antagonizing each other. Instead it is our belief that they ought to be consolidated and that one big state school, such as they have in Wisconsin, Illinois and a good many other states, is better than two rival institutions jealous of each other and overlapping very largely in their courses of study.—Woodburn Independent.

No man desiring, seeking and accepting an office has a right to ask for a raise of salary during his term. There is always the avenue of resignation for relief.—Portland Journal.

Stopped an Elopement.

Chief Shaw arrested John Davine and Alma Summerfield on the Portland passenger train Tuesday morning, thus preventing an elopement. The girl lives at Canby and the man is a brakeman on the S. P. Judge Beatie held the man in \$2,000 bail for a hearing Monday on a charge of contributing to the delinquency of a minor; Constable Frost took the girl to the Boys and Girls Aid Society.

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