

## PROPOSED NEW CHARTER FULL OF HOLES

### Strong Play Made to Cover Up Errors of Former Officials.

### PUNISHMENT FOR PRINTERS

### Confession of Past Mismanagement.—City Has \$50,000 Floating Indebtedness.

#### A New Charter Needed.

There can be little doubt that there is great opportunity for a betterment of governmental conditions in Oregon City. There is no doubt but that the present Charter can be greatly improved upon. But of what use would it be to adopt a new Charter containing greater evils than the present one, or even containing errors as glaring as at present?

At the present time the city is three years behind in paying its bills. The city is running its business by the issue of warrants, which draw six per cent interest, and at the present time there are about \$50,000 of these warrants afloat, or about three years of the revenues of the city represented. With the city three years behind in its running expenses you naturally wonder what's the trouble? It is not for the Enterprise to say what is the trouble, but on the eve of the voting on a new Charter its editor feels called upon to point out the fact that there is trouble.

#### The Way Bills Pile Up.

Whence this indebtedness? asks many a man. What kind of business management is it which permits the city's finances to get into such a shape and all the time the public kept in the dark as to conditions and outcome? And not a few are wondering why the facts have not been proclaimed from the housetop rather than the present plan of covering up past shortcomings of one nature and another by the subterfuge of a new Charter which shall provide for the glowing over of past errors in the taking up of these floating bills and substituting a fixed debt?

#### The New Charter Bad.

But the new Charter starts out badly. It starts out with an effort to cover up—at least with an opportunity to cover up if Council so desires. In the past, with a necessity to publish certain things we see the public fooled into the anticipation of their revenues for three years ahead, yet this new Charter would make it possible to carry on all sorts of improvements without even making their acts public in the newspapers. At least Council could so fix things that it may "hide its light under a bushel" if it wishes, and the public shall not be made the wiser unless the papers of the city see fit to print the news free gratis.

In their plea for the passage of the Charter, the committee of four concedes that the floating debt of the city—the debt made by anticipating the city's revenues—has grown to \$50,000. Think of it! The city has gone on buying more than it could pay for from year to year—and much of the time contrary to law—until now its anticipation of revenues is \$50,000, or three years' revenues. But little is said of this matter as an excuse for the adoption of a new Charter, however, though this is the prime cause for the new Charter. What do you think of the management of the city in the past which permits of such things?

Not that the present city government is responsible for this state of affairs, for it is not responsible for all of it and it may not be responsible for any of it; it would take a careful revision of the city's finances for years back to determine who are really responsible. And we are not certain that an expenditure for an expert accountant might not be a wise one. But the city's finances are in that condition, and your present city officials see it and wish to in some way make an improvement in affairs. In this they are to be commended, and very naturally they prefer to bring about this change without a scandal, but it remains for the people to say whether they will foot this shortage in the finances of the

city at this time without more definite information as to how it came about, or whether they will first have the accounting and then determine on the remedy.

Understand this statement rightly—the present city government is not responsible for all of this trouble, and perhaps not for any of it. The fact that they are trying to set things right does not indicate that they are in the wrong, but simply that they see the need of a change. But as we said before, it is up to the people to determine whether they wish to kiss that \$50,000 goodbye and let it go at that or have an investigation and see who is to blame before they fix up their finances.

So much for the financial condition of Oregon City, and now to the new Charter proposed:

#### Knifing the Publisher.

There is no known method by which men who are dishonest can be headed off from mauling the city on occasion. But as a means of protecting the individuals personally it has been provided that before any extensive street, sidewalk or sewer improvements can be made publication in one or more newspapers must be had. In this way the public at large is made aware of what is going on and if some certain individual happened to be away from home and did not receive his personal notice friends of his were certain to see the publication and were thus enabled to bring to his notice the change and the cost likely to fall on him. And this method has been approved by cities from one end of the land to the other, and in many states the rights of the people are safeguarded by a State law making such publication necessary.

But strife between the editors of the two Oregon City papers in the past had reduced the charges for such publication in the papers in this city to less than the cost of composition. When the present management took charge of the Enterprise it found it had a contract to fill out which entailed a loss on the paper during such period of publication. Not wishing to sustain continued loss the publishers of Oregon City agreed to bury the hatchet and charge a reasonable rate for such services.

As a result the rate for such publication was raised to 35 cents an inch each insertion. At that the City Fathers raised a mournful howl and at once inserted a clause in the new Charter permitting them to post certain things on the City Hall door and call that publication, using the papers if they could beat them down to a low price—perhaps a losing price. Let us compare the rate here with that in other States: In Ohio all such publications must be printed in two papers, of opposite politics, and the rate is \$1.33 1-3 for first and 66 2-3 cents for second insertion. This makes a net rate for each of two publications of \$1 per inch. In Pennsylvania, Michigan, and other States we could name the rate is as high or higher, while in a half dozen others it is about 65 per cent of that figure. In Oregon City the rate, when put on a profitable basis, is 35 cents, or 35 per cent of what it is in the majority of the States in the Union. Still, the City Fathers, having anticipated the revenues of the city for three years, and having piled up a floating debt of \$50,000, must begin its retrenchment by compelling the newspapers to print at a loss or else it will post its notices on a door that no one sees once a month.

#### WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT AS A MOVE FOR RETRENCHMENT?

Not Fair With the Public. But that is only half the tale. In all cases where an individual, corporation or firm is compelled to pay for the publication in question it

#### MUST BE PRINTED IN A NEWS-

PAPER and the firm, individual, or corporation may not resort to the bulletin board. Why? Do the City Fathers wish to tell us they have no interest in saving others from the "robbery of the press"? Do the City Fathers wish the public to understand that they are simply safeguarding the city's interests in so far as they have to pay the bills, but that when it comes to a question of the other fellow's ox being gored they are not scared at the sight of blood?

Further, when the city is seeking for bids, or wishes publicity for the purpose of getting the widest circulation possible for its news, it provides for the publication in a newspaper. But when it wishes an ordinance to go into effect, or when it wishes to improve a street, build a sewer or have a sidewalk repaired, and it might desire to save objections and a dispute, it can post on its little bill board, away back where not one in a thousand will see it, and its all right. Funny, isn't it? Where the city is doing something that all are certain to approve, it must publish in a newspaper; where it is doing something that might stir up a few hard kickers, it can publish on its little closet door!

"Great guns and little Roosevelt bears" but ain't that like taking candy from the baby!

The editor called Mayor Caulfield's attention to the proposition, and he said:

"I don't think it possible that we will ever have a majority in Council who will abuse this privilege. We are not likely to elect a Council, a majority of whom are incompetent or dishonest."

The city is now three years behind on its warrants for expenses of the city, and with a floating indebtedness of \$50,000. Is that from incompetency, or dishonesty, or both? There's something wrong, that's sure, and what has happened in the past may happen again. Now, if you give Council an agency for secrecy what can you expect in the next decade?

Don't imagine that it is necessary that you have a majority in Council who are dishonest or incompetent in order that harm may be done. It is not the belief of the editor that you have had at any time a majority in Council who have been incompetent or dishonest; but you can see what has been done if you will look.

The plea that the "papers may form a combination" is very lame. So may the lawyers. Is there any provision as against them? So may the grocers, the manufacturers, the bankers, the workmen; where is the provision to head them off? There is only one class of men whom these City Fathers have decided to discipline, and that is the newspaper men. And why? Because the papers, who had been duped into printing at a loss for years decided that the foolishness of the past should cease and that for the future there should be a profit or no work. And at that the rate is but 35 per cent of what rules in a majority of the States in the Union.

#### OH YOU NAUGHTY NEWSPAPER MEN!

And throughout the East the legislature makes it compulsory, in the interest of the man of small means who must pave and build sidewalks and sewers that the light of publication shall be turned on to the acts of the City Fathers and the contractors who work under them, before he can be made to take up the burden that Council sees fit to impose. And we believe any fair minded man who will give this matter careful consideration will agree to the proposition.

#### Two Bites at the Cherry.

The second proposition, which is very bad—in fact it is pernicious—comes in the provision for street and sewer improvement. Read the provision:

Section 109. If, upon completion of any improvement of a street or construction of a sewer, it is found that the sum assessed therefor is insufficient to defray the cost thereof, and the amount charged to any lot or part thereof or tract of land is less than the benefits accruing thereto, the Council must ascertain the deficit and by ordinance reassess the land so benefited in excess of the original assessment. When the assessment for said deficit is so levied, the recorder must enter the same in the docket of city liens, in the column reserved for that purpose in the original entry, with the date thereof, and such deficit shall thereafter be a lien upon such lot or part thereof or parcel of land, in like manner, and with like effect as in case of the sum originally assessed,

and shall also be payable and may be collected in like manner and with like effect as the original assessment.

The evil of this provision does not show on the surface. Suppose you have a Council in which there are a few men who wish a certain improvement because it will greatly benefit them. They have the power to "fix" the appraisers and likewise in a measure the assessments. They know that it will take \$10,000 to make the improvement. They know, too, that if they start out with a proposition to spend \$10,000 other property owners who do not want the improvement at that figure will object, and will have power sufficient to make their objection stick. So they decide to play a smooth game and give it out that it will cost \$5,000. At that figure the improvement is voted through and work is begun. Then, when the \$5,000 has been spent and the improvement is not completed a re-assessment is ordered to complete the work.

According to the views advanced by Mayor Caulfield such a thing is not likely to occur. But for answer we must affirm that such things have occurred, and few readers but can bring to mind incidents in city government on a par with this example.

Some one says, the man who wishes can object at the increase the same as at the first. But after he has spent \$100 and sees the work half done he must go on even if he cannot afford it, or if he would not have started in had he known the outcome.

You say again, he can appeal to the

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#### WHERE ARE THE FACTS?

Editor Enterprise: In your issue of October 25 you refer to the Canby tragedy. You say that the saloon is not responsible for the death of young Kinzel. That it came because of a disregard for law. That is true, but who disregarded the law? Was it not the saloonkeeper? How do you separate the saloonkeeper from the saloon? You cannot do it and the law does not do it.

It is easy for minors to get liquor in Oregon City. The marvel is that there has not been several tragedies like that in Canby right here in this city. On Labor Day I saw four boys in their teens go into a saloon in this city, and when they came out their actions plainly said that they had been drinking. On a Sunday night less than a month ago two men and a young boy reeled up the Seventh street steps so drunk that they could hardly navigate. On Thursday of last week I saw a neighbor boy so drunk that he could barely walk. I want to see it made as nearly as can be impossible for any minor to enter a saloon in Oregon City for the purpose of getting liquor, hence I am in favor of the enactment of the Excise ordinance.

Whose business is it to enforce the law? Is it not the business of the city Attorneys, Recorders, marshals, sheriffs, judges and so on? Were they not elected or appointed for this purpose? And are they not paid to attend to this business? Why should the men of the churches be held responsible for seeing that the law is enforced any more than any other class of citizens? Why is it not the business of the editor of the Enterprise as much as that of any churchman in the city to see that the law is enforced? Why should the church men be held particularly responsible for seeing that the liquor laws are enforced any more than the

laws against forgery or horse stealing?

It is a fact apparently unknown to the Enterprise that the churches of Oregon are—with the help of many citizens outside the churches—very rapidly putting the saloon where it belongs. That is, out of business altogether. Perhaps the church camp is divided against itself in Oregon City. Perhaps it is not more divided than in any other city in Oregon. Perhaps the saloonkeepers are laughing in their sleeves. They are laughing on the wrong side of their faces in Corvallis, Eugene, Albany, McMinnville and a number of smaller places in Oregon. SQUARE DEAL.

Ordinarily the editor of the Enterprise would publish the above without reference to it from his own pen, but in this case the contributor makes a personal criticism of the editor, which opens the way for his reply.

In the first place the Enterprise did not say that the saloons were not responsible for young Kinzel's death; it said the saloon business; that's a different proposition.

"Square Deal" tells of seeing four boys in their teens go into a saloon and later their actions showed they had been drinking. Why didn't he pinch the saloonist if he had the evidence necessary to a conviction? Further on he says it is the editor's business to do such acts; why did he fail?

If Square Deal wants to put the saloons out of business, as he indicates, why does he talk of licensing them and advocate the Excise law? Why not come out and say what he wants and get it if he can and not hide behind the corner and throw stones?

Square Deal says it is easy for minors to get liquor in Oregon City. If he has the evidence why don't he push the case? If the editor was on a jury and there was conclusive evidence of that fact he would vote to give the saloonist the full limit of the law. It is easy to make a charge but not always so easy to convict.—Ed.

## IT WOULD GIVE MAYOR POWER OF CZAR.

### PROPOSED EXCISE LAW HAS PROVISIONS THAT PROMISE EVIL TO ALL.

### ALL UP TO ONE MAN

#### If He is a Saloonist Temperance Element at His Mercy—Unlimited Opportunity for Graft.

There has been much discussion pro and con of an ordinance providing for an Excise Board in Oregon City to have in charge the saloons, drug store and other places for the sale of intoxicants, etc.

Principal among the things said in favor of this proposed law is that it has been put in force in diverse places and that it is a great success.

"The proof of the pudding is in chewing the string," is an old proverb, but there are some things that the very nature of them place the brand of Cain on them without waiting to prove them. Let us examine together this proposed excise law.

The very first vital clause of the ordinance paves the way for very grave evil if taken advantage of. It provides that the board is to consist of five members, the Mayor and four others. Next it says that the Mayor shall appoint the other members to sit with him. Think of it! Appoint the members to comprise the new board with him! Not four members elected by the people to constitute a board without his personal influence, but four members to sit with him and he and his four, five in all, are the board.

What more pernicious proposition than to allow one man such power! It matters not whether he is a temperance man or not, the principle is as bad in one case as another. Suppose for the sake of an argument the Mayor proves to be a saloon man. We know of several towns where the Mayor himself runs the town wide open because he happens to favor the saloon. But here, the Mayor would have four others of his appointment, and of his kind, to back him up, and what could the people do? If he happened to be a temperance man his efforts would perhaps prove as drastic in the other extreme, and that might please a few fanatical temperance people, but we believe only a few. Have the temperance people of Oregon City, who are fair-minded people, stopped to consider that feature of the ordinance?

Temperance people as a class are fair minded people. A few fanatics make a bit of noise but even they often do not mean as badly as they talk. But as a whole we feel free to bank on temperance people.

And right here we want to say that any reference we may make to the Mayor and his powers, and perhaps abuses, have no reference to the present Mayor personally, or to any Mayor who has ever served, personally. They are simply abstract statements and have no personal reference.

Now that you have thought of this feature of the ordinance you are not

so positive but that there might evil come of its enforcement; is that not true? But what of that which is to follow?

"The Mayor may remove any member of the board at any time, and appoint another person to fill out the unexpired term; but on removing any member of the board the Mayor shall make a written report to the Council setting forth his reasons for such removal, and the same shall be filed in the Recorder's office."

Great guns and little fishes! The power of the Czar is not greater. The man who wrote that ought to at once go into hiding for if the Czar of Russia ever hears of him he is likely to send over and steal him. He can tell those Russians a few things and not use any capital letters to do it.

"The Mayor may remove any member of the board at any time." A man may go to a meeting of the board on Monday night and when he gets up and makes a speech against a pet resolution of the Mayor he may be removed then and there, before the question can come to vote, and a successor may be appointed, or if it may look too raw to do so at that time an adjournment can be taken to some other night. That is the possibility of his power, and to say no sane man would do such a thing is easy; but things equally as drastic have been done and there are men in Oregon City today who would do that thing if it was made necessary to carry a point. And that statement is not in any sense personal, or for personal application.

And in voting this ordinance the temperance people want to remember that it may be a short time only until the saloon men are in the saddle. Six years ago the temperance people of a city in Ohio by a hard struggle, and with the aid of both Republicans and Democrats alike, won an election; but at the next election, with both candidates the same, the saloon man was elected by a majority four times that given the temperance man two years before. And the saloon man kept his seat for two terms and was only defeated by a combination of circumstances at a recent election. And the city in question has two church worshippers to Oregon City's one.

As one who believes in law and order the warning is sounded—don't prescribe something you don't want to take a few years later yourself. Section three in this new ordinance provides for a penal bond in the sum of \$5000 pledging the saloon keeper to at all times be good, and for a slip he must pay \$5000. Where is there a provision for the punishment of a petty crime in the sum of \$5000 in any other instance? Why single out the saloonist? It is not a question of his committing a crime or doing damages in the sum of \$5000; the ordinance provides that if he does commit a petty breach he shall forfeit his \$5000.

Every man is admittedly innocent of any crime before the law until proven guilty. There is not a lawyer in the city but will concede this. Yet lawyers, knowing the unrighteousness of their act, write into this ordinance that every Oregon City saloonist is guilty, or willing to be guilty, and if he wants to satisfy this "righteous" excise board he must put up a bond of \$5000 to prove to them that he will curb his natural propensities to evil and be good—at least when any one is watching.

There is no code of the saloonist that permits him to do evil. The bet-

ter class of saloonists wish to obey the law and deprecate the fact that they are thrown under suspicion by the acts of those not so inclined. Yet here comes a bunch of lawyers, whose code does permit of their committing a wrong, and the whole fraternity will back him up in it, and they wish a bond of \$5000 of the saloonist so he may not dare to do wrong.

Let us prove that contention: A lawyer can break every law against lobbying, and his fellow lawyers may know it, and one and all so far as we ever knew, would defend it and excuse the crime on the plea that the lawyer was the counsellor in the case. We could name to you an United States Senator who receives \$7500 from his country to represent it and \$50,000 from a big bunch of corporations to lobby for them and he puts in most of his time for the corporations, and yet every lawyer in the universe, almost, will defend him in it.

Don't you think that clause in the proposed ordinance a trifle strenuous?

The saloonist must advertise his wants in a newspaper, and cannot use the city's bulletin board on the barn door. The men who are drawing ordinances are willing the saloonist be robbed by the editors and publishers. Just blue pencil this!

Section five provides that having published his notice as provided by law, no objections having been made to the saloon, "all other provisions of law having been complied with, such license may be granted or denied." Think of it! The man is encouraged in spending his money, gets necessary number of signers for a saloon, there are no objections filed to it, and then—he may be denied. There is nothing against the man or his character, for all that has been looked into, no remonstrance or complaint—simply the board don't like the color of his hair or the elevation of his nose.

That Michigan professor who wants to crown Roosevelt King should come to Oregon City; he'll find congenial company.

What farce is this Excise Board! What do the people who drafted it think runs through the heads of Oregon City people? Board appointed by the Mayor; he may remove on instant notice; his board may call a man before it and when he has made good he is told to "SKIDDO!" There is but one oversight so far that we have noticed—the board should have provided that the applicant shave and take a bath before he appear before so august a body.

Section six provides that a man must have been good for a year prior to receiving license. Suppose that the saloonist should wish for a hearing as to their moral character before a board that could show a clean bill for a year. Wouldn't that prove as fair a proposition, to have those who sit in judgment show a clean record for a year? We fear that there would be few men eligible to membership, and we are certain no such a man could be elected to the position of Mayor.

The saloon business is becoming a fine haired proposition indeed. No one can have a license who has not been good for a year. Men may sin Saturday night, be forgiven Sunday morning and commune at church before dinner, but if a man wants to keep a saloon he must have been good

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