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MR. BENSON'S RESIGNATION

WHETHER general or local considerations shall control in state highway work is the main issue raised by the resignation of Commissioner Benson. There are other differences of opinion in matters of general policy set forth, but the most important one involves the question of the use of state funds in the improvement of roads, which now are and will continue to be for some years of purely local service.

The importance of the controversy is added to in view of the fact that there are not enough state funds in prospect or resources enough to improve the many miles of inter-county roads already incorporated in the state system.

It should also be considered that the chief source of revenue for state roads is the motor vehicle owner, whose operations are state wide. Justice to him demands that the money should be expended on those roads which serve the greater population before being diverted to local projects.

By his resignation Commissioner Benson has brought to a head a tendency in the state highway commission to drift away from the safe moorage of state wide interest to the shoals of local influence which will in the end lead to wreck. He has forcibly called to public attention a condition which should be corrected.

Among men who are of sufficient capacity to be on the state highway commission it is natural there should be differences of opinion, but these differences should not extend to the fundamental differentiation of state from local interest. The details of construction furnish a field in which there may rightly be a divergence of view point but there should be no compromise when it comes to distinguishing between what will serve the greatest number of people.

In his opposition to giving priority to the construction of the Eugene-Florence road over the Pacific highway and other main trunk lines Commissioner Benson is in the right. He could not do otherwise than resign and thus preserve the consistency of his record.

As a member of the commission from its organization, Mr. Benson has rendered a valuable service to the state. He was in an ideal position to do so by reason of his freedom from business interest and the influences which follow in its wake. To a sound judgment and broad vision he added the power of being impersonal.

While the commission has made mistakes—no one will admit these more quickly than Mr. Benson—it has accomplished much.

Its work has been placed on substantial foundation and has advanced beyond the creative period. It has become largely a matter of detail and routine. The only danger to be feared henceforth is a yielding to the constant solicitation of local interests which attends all public bodies.

When the Oregon "mist" falls without audible patter on the wet asphalt, when the touch of the air from outdoors is like a caress, when

windows are opened to equalize the temperatures within and without and when the grass is still green and the roses are still opening, Portland is enjoying "typical winter weather."

THREE OPINIONS

HERE are three opinions expressed after the labor conference at Washington Tuesday:

Herbert Hoover: "The industrial depression is largely due to the decline in the export trade."

Samuel Gompers: "Unemployment is largely on the increase, due, in part, to the closing of factories by employers, who hope, by creating a shortage of jobs, to induce the workers to return for lower wages."

The National Industrial Board, representing the big employers: "There are plenty of jobs to be had by working at a reduced wage."

Smaller exports, as Mr. Hoover indicates, mean fewer articles to be made and less for workers to do. Larger exports mean more articles to be made and more things for workers to do. Europe, which is too near bankruptcy to buy much, too poverty stricken to pay for much and too politically demoralized to go seriously about rebuilding on the site of her war ruins, is not taking our manufactured and farm products to the extent that she would were conditions different. If America were in the League of Nations the settlement of Europe would be enormously advanced, our exports would increase and our workers have more jobs.

To Mr. Gompers' charge that unemployment is in part due to the closing down of factories in order to force workers to accept lower wages, the National Industrial Board, representing big employers, practically pleads guilty by saying there are plenty of jobs if workers will take lower wages.

By closing their mills the owners create both a scarcity of jobs and a scarcity of manufactured products. One scarcity will tend to beat down wages and the other tend to hold up prices of factory output. By making this winter one of unemployment and privation, manufacturers may intend to strike a heavy blow in the effort to cut wages.

The forces now at play in this country in the economic adjustment are very determined and very powerful.

The mistake is that many big employers will fail to see that living wages and a fair chance for workers is the true policy, the sane policy and the safe policy. The nation's business will be bigger and in volume, the merchant's sales be increased totals, and the whole business structure be on sounder foundation only when the working masses receive wage enough to have something to buy with.

It may be that Mr. Benson in his fixity of purpose and intense personal conviction as to the best state highway policy has not used the necessary diplomacy and tact to harmonize his associates with his views. But he has done a work for which Oregon need build him no other monument.

HARNEY'S VOTE

THE vote in Harney county on the bird reserve bill was 137, for and 1314 against.

The principle of home rule is sound. Those who cast their lot in Harney county, Oregon, or any other county, have a right to live out their lives in their own way except as to the limitations necessary in the organization of the state.

There was a wide division of sentiment over the reserve bill. There were claims and counter claims respecting the proposal and its effect in Harney county in case of adoption.

Harney county at present is handicapped as to communication with the rest of the state. The railroad map has to a large extent cut that district off from the rest of Oregon. Communication between Burns and Boise is a great deal closer than communication between Burns and Portland.

Every added square foot of producing land increases Harney county's chances of securing a transportation line that will enable its people to reach or communicate with, points in Oregon. The power to produce and market their products is a very precious thing to the people out there, and that fact makes it very easy to understand why voters there were overwhelming in their desire to beat a bill which they felt deprived them to a certain extent of their producing resources.

The defeat of the bill was an observance of the same policy of the freest and fullest possible exercise of home rule. The people of Harney county have a very deep appreciation of the action of the rest of the state.

The nearest approach in human form to the slinking, sneaking, cowardly and repulsive nature of the hyena is the motorist who runs down a pedestrian, and, leaving his victim prostrate, hurries on without offer of assistance.

HOW ABOUT THE DREAMERS?

WHAT is all this cheap talk from cynics and politicians about our having had too much idealism before the war, during the war and since the war? Really,

have we had too much, or have we had too little?

Ask the question sincerely, and let the answer come sincerely.

Recall a few of the things that have gone on in the world, that are still going on, and think on which side of these issues idealism is always found.

Does idealism favor war, greed, immorality, suffering, selfishness? Scarcely. Isn't it rather the people who are not idealists who favor these things, or at least are non-resistant or receptive to them?

Are our charitable organizations, churches, Sunday schools, and rescue societies outgrowths of too much idealism? Scarcely. Isn't it rather the lack of idealism which makes more organizations of this kind necessary?

Idealism is a pure quality in itself. We cannot mix it with something else and call it practical idealism. The latter is a mere hollow term which self-serving men employ as a subterfuge.

The sermon on the Mount was the vision of a magnificent idealist put in words. The Ten Commandments came from the soul of a great dreamer.

Make no mistake about our dreamers and idealists. They have been found in the vanguard of every age which has come out of the darkness. Always it has been the dreamers and idealists who have climbed the mountains and reit the lamps of faith.

A HOME LOAN BANK

THE proposal by Senator Kenyon of a federal home loan bank to relieve the housing shortage prevalent throughout the United States, is worthy of deep consideration. He proposes that the bank be established to work along the same lines as the farm loan system—to provide the capital for home building and purchase through long time low interest loans by the government.

The senator announces that there is a shortage of 1,000,000 houses in the United States and that 20,000,000 people are living under conditions that do not provide sanitary safeguards. The marriage rate far exceeds the rate of home building. The country is becoming a nation of tenants.

The stagnation of building operations is, of course, due in part to the cost of labor and materials. But on the other hand, thousands of people do not own homes because they haven't at hand the capital to purchase or erect them. Marriages of young men of small income are frequent, and they turn to apartments, flats and rooms for shelter. The home idea is abandoned or looked to as a future eventuality.

The result is a demand for rooms and apartments and a stagnation of building. Were the capital at hand on long time at low interest, unquestionably there would be tens of thousands to take advantage of the opportunity to own a home, and to become a substantial part of the citizenry of our cities.

MR. BENSON

SIMON BENSON has been an indefatigable worker for the advancement of the Oregon road system.

His enthusiasm was an inspiration to men throughout the state, and undoubtedly was a powerful influence in leading the people to expenditures far beyond anything deemed possible a few years ago.

Men will agree that his purpose was to serve accordingly, as he saw the light. None will believe that he had other interest than to create a road system that would be the best and, in the making, to provide roads that would be most enduring and best located.

His was a service without personal interest. He was constantly beyond the reach of private and local influence. His whole thought was all the state and not a mere part of the state. It was a service inspired by love of his state and by hope to give it distinction for its highway map.

Movements must have leaders. Great undertakings must have men of strong will and extended vision. There will be few if any to dispute that it was an excellent thing for Oregon that Mr. Benson answered the call and served his state so long as a highway commissioner.

British legal lights have ruled that "damn" is not swearing, and that it is just a "vocal sigh." Still, when the neighbors' cats hold high revelry on the backyard fence at about 2 o'clock in the morning, the usual resort to that word seems more than a mere "vocal sigh."

COMING TO OREGON

IT WILL be a privilege for Oregon to entertain the National Grange next year.

It is assumed that Portland will be the Oregon city chosen by the Grange executive committee for the national meeting. Whether Portland or not, there will be a hospitable welcome for the visitors.

corn crop is the largest in the history of the country, and the quality good. Wheat and other products from the farm are in large volume. The hope of business and the basis of permanent prosperity is annually projected into American life by the farmers of the country. No people who can come to Oregon for a great convention reflect more perfectly the stability and the enduring spirit of the republic.

The Grange is one of the progressive organizations of farmers. It has led numerous movements, including the farm loan system and the parcel post, for the improvement of farm life. The delegations that may come to the national meeting will have for credentials a long and useful endeavor in behalf of agriculture, the basic industry and the fundamental hope of America.

Oregon will honor herself in entertaining the National Grange, and the National Grange will honor Oregon in holding one of its great gatherings in this state.

WHO LEADER OF DEMOCRATS?

By Carl Smith, Washington Staff Correspondent of The Journal

Washington, Nov. 18.—How does the election leave the leadership of the Democratic party? That is a question being discussed with more or less interest in view of the defeat of Cox, the retirement of Wilson from the White House and the recent silence of Bryan.

Officially the party will have no leader, except in the halls of congress. What is meant is, who will be most relied upon by the Democratic masses for counsel and for critical comment on the Harding administration as its policies develop?

If President Wilson were in full strength there would be no serious question of anyone else, but it is not expected that he will be in position to participate actively in political affairs or that he will be disposed to do so. He will be in a sense a detached figure, standing above the turmoil, who will be looked to with interest and confidence by a large part of the citizenry at the tense stage of any situation that may arise.

In the judgment of most observers, Bryan is out of the picture of the course he pursued in the campaign. He followed prohibition to the exclusion of practically everything else, and manifested the least interest in the success or defeat of his party. He has shown personal following and what he says is always arousing interest, but he hardly will be in position to speak as a party oracle.

The position of Governor Cox still lies in the future. He has also gained the personal following which may or may not depend in strength upon the future. He may be able to impress himself upon the public above anyone else, and some think he will, to such an extent that he will remain as the logical leader for another campaign when the lines may be drawn very differently from those of 1920. Others think Cox will fade as the campaign recedes from memory.

Another figure in the major group is William G. McAdoo, not only because of the large support he received for the nomination last July, but because of his intimate knowledge of government problems. No one within the party—not even the president—has more instant attention when he speaks on financial questions and related problems of taxation and railroads, and these are questions in which the public is likely to be keenly interested in the next few years. When these questions bob up, the opinion of McAdoo is likely to be sought first of all.

In congress the outstanding spokesman will be Senator Oscar W. Underwood, minority leader in the senate, whose name is impressed upon the public as a revenue law, whose ability and tact are both beyond question. A large part of the battlefield in shaping issues under the new administration will be in the senate, where legislation goes through the process of deliberate debate and final molding. Events are shaping themselves to give Underwood a heavy share in the public attention with Glass, Hitchcock and Robinson as his chief aides.

Bainbridge Colby, who will soon retire as secretary of state, John W. Davis, who is preparing to resume law practice in New York when he quits as ambassador to Great Britain, and Homer S. Cummings, former chairman of the national committee, whose speech as temporary chairman at the San Francisco convention is historic, are others whose names will undoubtedly be regarded and considered.

Whether any one leader will stand out at the end of one or two years cannot with certainty be foretold; but if there is to be a leader, he will surely be one of those here mentioned.

Letters From the People

(Communications sent to The Journal for publication should be clearly marked, or only one side of the paper, should not exceed 300 words in length, and must be signed by the writer, whose name and address in full must accompany the contribution.)

VICTIMS OF PROPAGANDA

Cherryville, Nov. 15.—To the Editor of The Journal.—It is written that when the heavenly messengers announced the coming of Christ to the plain of Judea they sang the glad refrain, "Peace on earth and good will to men," meaning, doubtless, all men of all nations. At this sublime moment it is written, "The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." In the fullness of time Christ began to teach this sublime doctrine, and at one time was given a great ovation upon entering Jerusalem, by the Jewish people. Afterward, when he rebuked the scribes and Pharisees, the holy men of that day, and overtures of the money changers in the temple, the people were startled by the priests, and the people's minds were poisoned until they hounded him to death, although he had done them no harm, but only taught the blameless life. This cruel death elevation in the minds of all mankind since then; but alas! we have never practiced his sublime teaching.

Coming down to recent times, our president realized that the awful war that was destroying millions of lives and billions of money was the opportune time to once more teach about peace on earth and good will to all men. Ably assisted by master minds in America and Europe he laid the foundations for a league of nations. For a time all the great and good people everywhere rejoiced at the sentiment. But alas for the imperfections of human material! An element of envy and partisanship began to creep in, and President Wilson, who had been lauded, was furiously attacked by a poisonous propaganda, and the unthinking multitude, who read little and think less, were poisoned by the



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COMMENT AND NEWS IN BRIEF

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Whether debt is a blessing or burden depends upon the indebtedness.

Now if the League of Nations will declare internal peace we'll get down to business.

"President-elect on last lap of his valiant" a newspaper advises. Thought Mrs. Harding was alone.

If the price of cereals gets higher than the cost of meat maybe we'll get some of the latter in our breakfast sausage.

MORE OR LESS PERSONAL

Random Observations About Town

J. C. Cooper of McMinnville, president of the Western Walnut association, is busy these days. "Portland has its share of nuts," said Mr. Cooper, "and they do not all grow on trees; but that is the kind I am interested in. We have grown from all over the valley on hand. Among the out-of-town men who are in Portland to talk at our meeting are Professor C. I. Lewis of Salem, Charles Trunk of Dundee, John Spurgeon of Clark County, Washington, Knight of Salem, Professor D. F. Fisher of the United States department of agriculture, H. C. Atwell of Forest Grove, W. T. Brixy of McMinnville, Ferd Greer of Hillsboro, R. A. Boon of Eugene and Ben F. Morris of Eugene. Did you know that the Willamette valley is the only place in the United States where filberts can be grown commercially?"

Roy Ritner, late of the Red Cross in France and bonanza wheat rancher of Umatilla county, is here to see the fine

Olden Oregon

History of a Pioneer Newspaper, the Oregon Free Press.

Among the early publications was the Oregon Free Press, a small weekly conducted by George L. Curry, subsequently governor of the territory. Curry, who had been the first editor of the Oregon Spectator, had run counter to the policy of the Spectator management. After his dismissal as editor of the Spectator, Curry started the Free Press, in which he could print his personal sentiments. The life of his publication was short—from April to December, 1848. It was printed on a home-made press. The display type was carved out of wood by hand.

Curious Bits of Information

Gleaned From Curious Places

The mystery of how rats carry eggs has never been answered, says the Scientific American. The famous American naturalist, John Burroughs, admitted that he didn't know, save for stories he had heard. The fact that rats do get away with many hens' eggs is proved by the finding of whole, uncracked eggs under barn floors, in partitions and other hiding places. Various theories have been advanced. Some say that rats carry the eggs between their chin and forehead. Others say they carry the eggs between folds of the skin under the chin. The general theory is that rats work in gangs when carrying eggs.

Uncle Jeff Snow Says:

Down in California for more'n a year a bunch of scare-throws has been workin' to hamstring the nishavite with a contraption to have 25 per cent of the voters sign for any measure about taxes. The way them fellows worked themselves and other people tryin' to sneak up on the blind side of the nishavite would of prevented the world war. It must of cost the patriots of California who don't like the nishavite none more'n half a million dollars. But the people of California wasn't so trustful and sleepy as you might of supposed along they waited that there scheme by 100,000 majority or such a matter. The nishavite is like a camel and has a sweepin' kick both for'ards and back'ards.



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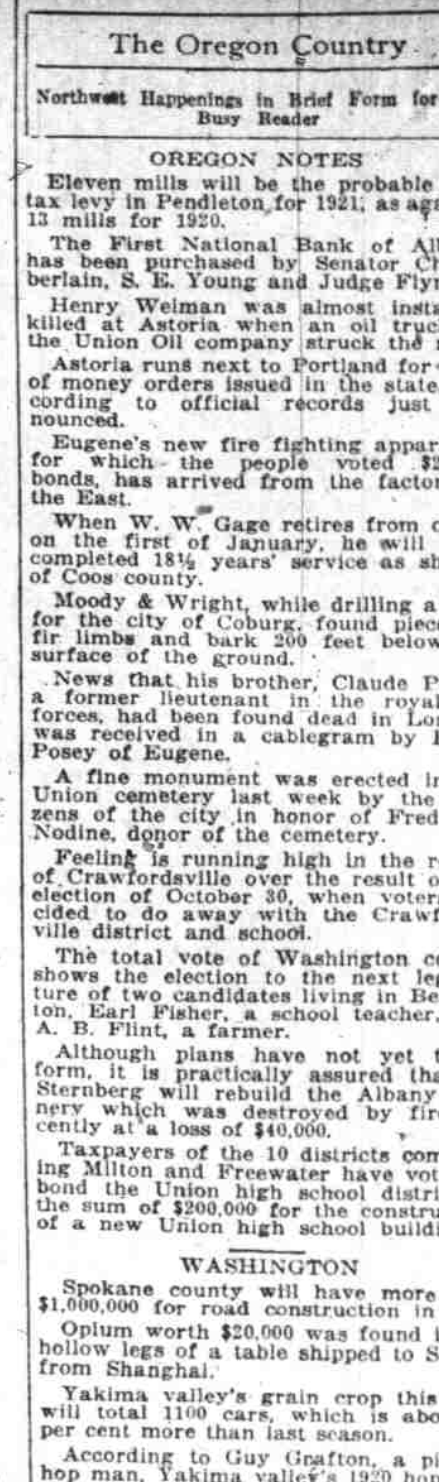
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THE OREGON COUNTRY

Northwest Happenings in Brief Form for the Busy Reader

Eleven mills will be the probable city tax levy in Pendleton for 1921, as against 13 mills for 1920.

The First National Bank of Albany has been purchased by Senator Chamberlain, S. B. Young and Judge Furness.

Henry Weiman was almost instantly killed at Astoria when an oil truck of the Union Oil company struck the man. Astoria runs next to Portland for total of money orders issued in the state, according to official records just announced.

Eugene's new fire fighting apparatus, for which the people voted \$25,000 bonds, has arrived from the factory in the East.

When W. W. Gage retires from office on the first of January, he will have completed 18 1/2 years' service as sheriff of Coos county.

Moody & Wright, while drilling a well for the city of Coquille, found pieces of iron about 100 feet below the surface of the ground.

News that his brother, Claude Posey, a former lieutenant in the royal air force, had been found dead in London, was received in a cablegram by E. B. Posey of Eugene.

A fine monument was erected in the Union cemetery last week by the citizens of the city in honor of Frederick Nodine, donor of the Union high school.

Feeling is running high in the region of Crawfordville over the result of the election of October 30, when voters decided to do away with the Crawfordville district and school.

The total vote of Washington county shows the election to the next legislature, which was decided by fire recently at a loss of \$40,000.

Taxpayers of the 10 districts comprising Milroy and Freewater have voted to bond the Union high school for the sum of \$200,000 for the construction of a new Union high school building.

Spokane county will have more than \$1,000,000 for road construction in 1921. Optum worth \$20,000 was found in the hollow legs of a table shipped to Seattle from Shanghai.

Yakima valley's grain crop this year will total 1100,000 bushels, about 25 per cent more than last season.

According to Guy Grafton, a pioneer hop man, Yakima valley's 1920 hop crop is worth about \$2,000,000.

Both Mr. and Mrs. J. W. J. Miller of Sunnyside were badly injured in an auto smashup when their car was run into by a speeder.

Over 1000 boxes of apples and a