

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Steals Us; No Fear Shall Awe."
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State Road Bonds

SHOULD the state highway commission issue more bonds for highway construction?
Recently the Statesman said "No" in objection to the urging of the Oregon City Enterprise, among others, for the issuance of a million in bonds a year. The Enterprise rejoins with the contention that unless bonds are sold sufficient funds will not be available for new construction; and that we do not give proper consideration to those sections of the state which have contributed to the building of the fine roads in Marion and Clackamas counties. The roads which the Enterprise says are specially in need of completion are the Bend-Burns section, the Mitchell-Dayville connection, the Roosevelt highway from Yaguina bay to the mouth of the Umpqua, and the Klamath Falls-Lakeview-Bend road. The highway commission in its last reports makes particular reference to the needs of the first three of these roads.

The Enterprise refers us to page 53 of the commission's report to show the dearth of road funds from ordinary sources during the biennium. But this report on the same page, in a paragraph which the Enterprise does not quote, "gives \$6,990,000 as the probable gross total amount that will be available during the biennium for additional new construction and betterment projects."

To this may be added the carry-over allowance for contracts not yet completed, which amounts to \$1,071,244.80. This gives a total appropriated or available of over \$7,000,000. Of course there may be a carry-over at the end of the biennium to be subtracted, but that cannot be computed now. Well, during the last biennium during which no bonds were issued the state spent a total of \$6,677,130.72 for new construction and betterment, which was quite a sizeable sum.

As for probable revenues the commission's estimates were made on the basis of the old laws. The new law will give some extra revenue this biennium because of two collections of license fees, in January, 1930, for a half-year and in July, 1930, for a full year.

Now how much money is required for the three projects which the Enterprise and the highway commission regard as most needy. The rough estimate furnished us by Highway Engineer Klein is: Bend to Burns, \$500,000; Mitchell to Dayville \$600,000; Newport to Gardiner \$4,250,000. This totals \$5,350,000. It is not likely that these projects could or should absorb so large a proportion of the available revenues during the biennium, but it is not unreasonable to expect the completion of the first two during this period and the expenditure of at least as much on the Roosevelt highway as was spent the past biennium, namely: \$2,230,075.53, about one-third. The same amount the following biennium would see the completion of the Roosevelt highway. The road, while important, is essentially a tourist highway, certainly not of the vital importance to the state as a whole that many other trunk highways are.

Our opposition to the issuance of bonds is not because we take a provincial point of view, as the Enterprise intimates. On the contrary we favor road building in all parts of the state. We are looking primarily at the economic situation the state is in.

Oregon ranks second in per capita bonded debt. It is not enough to say that the road bonds are not property obligations. They are debts which we must pay out of one kind of tax or another. Then the chill that came with last year's proposals to tamper with road revenues, which would have resulted in making the road bonds property debts, gives a hint that some day a freak law might be passed, after the bonds were issued and the highways built, which would cripple the revenues now available. The road bonds outstanding the first of this year were \$32,716,750. In 1931, 1932 and 1933 the maximum load of interest and principal retirement on this debt will be reached, \$8,343,314.70. After that the diminishing requirements of the debt service, together with the normal increase in revenues will give increasing sums for road construction, sums which will surely be adequate to take care of reasonable needs.

At the present time it is quite out of the question to issue bonds in view of the high cost of money. Many bond issues have gone begging because credit was too high-priced for low-rate coupon issues. While the state could probably sell its road bonds all right, it is not advisable to issue long term bonds at high interest rates.

In our opinion the state of Washington has done well to build its highways out of revenues with no bond issues. The question was fought out years ago and Governor Lister, against powerful opposition, held the state in line for the "pay-as-you-go" policy. Now it has ample funds for road construction, all of which goes into roads, none into bond payments. We do not criticize the Oregon commission for past bond issues, for they did result in giving the state highways better than Washington. But it is sound public economy to complete the roads out of current funds rather than to go farther in debt.

Looking ahead a year or two longer may seem a long time. Looking back we may see that we have crowded into the short space of 12 years the construction of 3,723.7 miles of state highway, 85% of the system, with only 644.6 miles yet to be completed. Sooner than we realize these unfinished gaps will be completed. Funds will then be available for other work, including such permanent improvements as paving and bridges. The time has arrived for Oregon's highway board definitely to adopt a "pay-as-you-go" plan.

Rules and Schools

SECRETARY OF STATE HAL HOSS has decreed that preference shall be given to unmarried women so far as positions in his office are concerned. The test is to be whether a person is supporting herself and others, in contrast to those who have other support themselves. That is a good rule, subject to certain exceptions in cases of particular efficiency.

The same rule might well be applied in the teaching profession. For instance how many married women are teaching in the Salem schools, on the regular staff, who have husbands able to support them? The school board might well consider some such rule as Mr. Hoss has put into effect.

What attempt is being made to lift Salem out of the low salary schedule group this year? Albany and Corvallis have adopted new and increased scales of pay for their teachers. Salem has been an offender on the side of low wages. We hope the teachers will get some consideration this spring when the hiring and firing board meetings start.

Santiam water or Marion lake water; it makes little difference, but the supply would be cool, pure and adequate. Eventually, surely, now, perhaps.

Getting Hard To Manage



Bits for Breakfast

By R. J. HENDRICKS

Still water in Willamette. It is now in sight, if two things can be assured.

What are the two things? They are, first, a constant supply of government money, and a constant flow of water in the river in the summer season.

With these two flows assured, in the volume of the present year, the United States engineers in charge of the work will get and maintain a still water channel in the Willamette, between Salem and the point near Champeog below which there is always at least a six foot depth regardless of any or much work—the depth of the channel above Champeog to be from two and a half to three and a half feet, according to the present program—then a reasonable summer boating stage on up as far as Harrisburg.

E. B. Thompson, in direct charge of the upper river improvement, has been on the job for about 19 years, as he told the Salem chamber of commerce luncheon crowd at the noon hour yesterday. He has never had enough money to spend, but he has acquired in the 19 years a knowledge of the river that is invaluable. Every river is different from every other river, and every improvement project has its peculiar problems; even each section of such project is sui generis; a proposition that has its individual vagaries and attributes.

Mr. Thompson has learned these peculiarities of the Willamette channel. He knows his river. As Captain Edmund H. Levy of the corps of engineers, U. S. government, one of the speakers at the luncheon of yesterday, told the Bits man, the Willamette channel is a gravel proposition, while the improvement of the Columbia's channel is a sand proposition. Stop the flow of the water in the Willamette's channel at any point, and the stream drops and constantly piles up gravel. And there is plenty of water in the flood season in the Willamette; it runs to 400,000 cubic second feet, while at the summer stage it drops to 3500 cubic second feet. So the problem is to conserve in a permanent channel the 3500 second feet, and to keep the 400,000 cubic feet at flood time from playing havoc with the permanent improvements that are made in low water time.

Splinters:

Gathered Here and There from the News of This Week.

MARION county does not send the public a statement that taxes are due. It expects each citizen who owns property to know that he must pay taxes, and to make inquiry of the sheriff's office as to the exact amount to be paid. Sheriff Bower explains that this custom saves much waste time in making out statements to property owners, only to find that the ownership has changed during the year which elapses from the time the assessment is made until taxes are due.

All the taxpayer need to do is to inquire for his taxes on certain pieces of property which he holds and this information will be immediately forthcoming. But it will be on the specific property the citizen owns, not on the listing as shown on the tax rolls.

The Mexican revolution appears to be another false alarm, now that two of the rebel generals, Velleral and Madero have sought the protection of the United States in Texas. What a horrible waste of time page space! Newspapers must fight of battles about to start, much

of the stock. Cutten and the Fishers make a habit of purchasing corporations which are not doing as well as they might and by installing shrewd management, bringing the corporations to a sound basis. Resulting profits have increased stock values tremendously. Cutten came to New York City from Chicago while the Fisher Bros. made their original money in Detroit, "retired" from manufacturing to that more interesting field of corporation management and investment.

Plans for the new state office building in Salem having been accepted, and it is now certain that early in June work on this half million dollar project will be under way. This is a most satisfactory outlook for this city which needs that building work to round out the program for 1929 which to date has not reached the mark set in 1927 or 1928.

Financing of the new building is an awkward business. Instead of having the state continue to rentals to private lessors, the state itself is to rent office space to its own departments and from these the interest and retirement charges for the new building are to be met. All money coming to pay for the building from the state industrial accident fund is in the nature of a loan and all is to be paid back to the state.

In an ordinary business such internal financing might well be considered too much inter-marriage of capital but in the state, with large reserves set up in the accident fund demanding investment, the deal is sound and practicable.

A water system for Salem which will tap the high supply available in the mountains in the eastern part of the Willamette valley may be a necessity—some day. Just now the cost of the pipe line and the maintenance charges would create a heavy burden in increased water rates. But the city is growing and tomorrow's population may be adequate to make such development feasible. Just now the water company can do nothing which will ingratiate itself better with the community than to rush the completion of the new filtration system from a new source of supply up the river. The old intake is too clogged by sediment and the method of pumping the water out of the river into a pond and then draining the water through the accreted matter to create a heavy burden in increased water rates, no matter how pure it may be. A new filter and intake, placed up the river and not under an artificial pond in an island will do much to stop present complaints.

HARDY SCHEDULED TO TELL HIS STORY

SACRAMENTO, Cal., April 22. (AP)—Strong light is expected to be thrown on the impeachment charges against Superior Judge Carlos S. Hardy when he takes the witness stand on his own behalf Tuesday.

Rex Hardy, son of the accused jurist and one of his defense counsel, announced Saturday that plans are to place the defendant on the witness stand when the case is resumed Tuesday morning.

So, from the judge's lips the senate is to hear his version of the many angles introduced into the records by prosecution and defense witnesses—including his own version of Mrs. Lorraine Wiseman Sleaf's story of how she and Judge Hardy planned to produce the mysterious "Miss X" so as to bear out Kenneth Ormiston's affidavit concerning the identity of his Carmel companion. The defense would like to know what the state is going to do with the evangelist. If she is definitely released the defense may subpoena her to testify for Judge Hardy.

Editors Say:

THE TONGUE POINT BASE Senator Stewar in a recent message hints that if the Astoria bridge bill is put through and the bridge erected that the navy department will abandon the Tongue point naval base. To the casual observer who has penetrated the thickets that now cover the Tongue point site, who has noted the rotting and unused piers; and who has been informed of the filling in of the entrance channel; it would appear that the navy department "abandonment" of the Tongue point site occurred some years ago.

It is an insight into the costs of government, when it is considered that the United States threw some \$400,000 into the construction work there; left it unfinished and unused for almost a decade; and now, through an indirect source, hints that because along proposed plans, would not interfere with the passage of the biggest battleship, let alone submarines and destroyers, for which the base was designed; plans to throw up the sponge altogether. And in considering the waste do not forget that \$100,000 that Clatsop county, with tacit consent of the government, dug from pockets of the taxpayers and used to purchase the land so that it could be given to the government for naval base purposes. The "raw" deal this community received from the government in relation to the Tongue point base has not been forgotten and the people of this district do not like to be "kidded" about the matter even through such a distinguished personage as a United States senator.—Morning Astorian.

SAWDUST AND TALKIES

With the advent of the talkie, humanity realized that it had much to be thankful for. Filming the voices of actors, with their actions, does add greatly to the realism of the screened production, and consequently to the audience's faith in the beaten circuits the best in vaudeville, in opera. More than ever does it lessen the difference between the advantages enjoyed by the city dweller and the individual in the small or medium sized town.

At that humanity had no really comprehensive idea of how much it had to be thankful for. It could not have until now. But at last the great significance of the talkies is made known. Billy Sunday is to be multiplied.

The news is given out today. Already he and his voice have been filmed for the preservation to posterity of his presence and his pronouncements. This is important. But vastly more so is the announcement that within a few weeks the evangelist will head for the Los Angeles studios to put on a regular revival. That is to say, the Reverend Billy and his assistants will "act" a revival. Musicians, choir, sawdust, atmosphere—oh, lots of atmosphere—perhaps even a flock of extras hot footing it down the sawdust trail in simulated penitence.

Once that is done it will be possible for every town to have a Billy Sunday revival—providing only that it has a talkie outfit. An acted revival, of course, but still of the same sincerity, the same spontaneity, the same application, which would be on top were the Reverend Billy present in the flesh.

Whether the royalty plan of charging for these pseudo appearances of the evangelist will be used is not stated in the news, but that is a point on which a becoming reticence is customarily observed.

The important thing is that, through the talkies, Billy Sunday is providing for a wide diffusion of his personality, for the carrying on of his influence even after death. He is taking no chance that the benefits which he is so peculiarly fitted to confer may cease merely because he ceases his earthly existence.

MAKING MEN

"Bigger and better men" is the slogan of Dr. Oscar Riddle, of the Carnegie Institute, who says that science has already accomplished experiments with the "hormone of the pituitary gland" which indicates that within a short time that some three feet in height together with other comparable physical attributes, may be added to the race of men. Super-intellects may also be produced, Dr. Riddle says, and man's mentality so influenced that he will cease to be irritated by obstacles and misfortunes, for his new mental and physical equipment will obviate such contingencies. Dr. Riddle may be right or wrong in his prophecies but strangely enough, his picture of a race of super-giants existing in lazy and god-like ease, has for us, only a slight appeal. Man has reached his heights only in time of adversity and his greatest depths in period of idleness. Let us hope that Dr. Riddle and his fellows do not make life too easy.—Morning Astorian.

BEATING THE DEVIL

Beating the devil around the stump has become an idea devised to secure public money at a time when a huge deficit is staring the state in the face. Two years ago, under legislative enactment, the surplus of the industrial accident commission fund was touched for \$400,000 to finance an office building at Salem, upon the presumption that the money advanced would be restored from rentals to state departments. Oregon has many buildings and commissions that the new building was needed to house the ever-growing army of state employees; and it was not possible to levy a tax to cover the construction costs.

Two years later when the state fair wanted a new grandstand, some one hit upon the happy expedient of adding \$100,000 to the deficit, with the understanding that the fair board would borrow \$50,000 more and that the money would be repaid to the state from profits of the fair.

As the state fair does not ordinarily operate at a profit, another legislature will probably be solicited to approve some weird scheme for refinancing the so-called loan, but in the end the taxpayers will probably be called upon to pay the bill.

The fair affords a cutting for thousands of people around Marion county, but it is, after all, of doubtful benefit. Horse races, brass bands and colorful decorations are attractive, but they do not build up the economic prosperity of the state, which has a total tax bill this year in excess of \$50,000,000.

The new \$150,000 grandstand at Salem will soon become a costly monument to loss and extravagance in the governmental affairs of Oregon.—Oregon City Enterprise.

A MIGHTY ISSUE LOOMS

The application of the Northwest Power company for a hydroelectric development on Marion lake and its environs puts squarely before the people of this community an issue of far reaching importance. The question is whether they will consent to development of their latent power resources or whether they desire to lock them up in their primeval and virgin state to be untouched by the hand of man.

Recent federal and state legislation safeguards the public against the speculative ambitions of power-site grabbers. In this respect public policy has changed tremendously. It is no longer possible for power interests to grab sites without developing them, in relation to the Tongue point base will revert to the nation or to the state, as the case may be. In the Northwest Power company's application, therefore, there is no danger that the public will be jeopardizing its right of ownership without obtaining value therefor.

We think that much of the opposition to the Power company's application comes out of a fear that development of the Marion Lake region will mar one of nature's finest beauty spots. We are certain that this is the position of the Santiam Fish and Game Protective and Propagating association. We think, too, that it explains the recent action of the Albany city council protesting against the application.

It must be borne in mind, however, that the power site lies within the national forest and, therefore, will not be subject to the spoliation that might be expected

OUTLOOK IS GOOD

If Governor C. C. Young, of California, knows what he's talking about—and he usually does—that state as a whole will make as much money out of deciduous fruits this year as it did last, in spite of the fact that the crop will be only half as large.

And that, unless our arithmetic is sadly out of whack, means that Southern Oregon, which will harvest a full crop, will make twice as much money as last year. Bartlett prices are already nearly 100 per cent higher than pre-season contract offers of cash buyers last year in this district.—Medford News.

CLOCKS MOVED FORWARD

PARIS, April 22. (AP)—France tonight went on summer time, at 11 p. m., the clocks were set forward to midnight.

HUMOR

straight from the

HEART

SOMETIMES Uncle Bob puts away his old corn-cob pipe and gives Annie a bit of his kindly philosophy. We all should know, and listen to, old Uncle Bob in this entertaining new

Comic of the Heart

Turn to Page 8

You'll enjoy this picture story every day thereafter in

The Oregon Statesman