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East Oregonian

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1901.

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A CENTRAL BANK.

Secretary Gage's proposal for a central federal bank, with ramifications in all parts of the country, is not new. It is straw that has been threshed over in past generations. However, as relates to the present times, it is new, and, coming just now, when centralization is so prevalent, it is especially significant. When old Andrew Jackson defeated such a plan, it was because the people were yet loyal to the idea of individualization in industry, finance and in all the relations of this life. Such a thing as a trust was unknown. A combine was but an unborn thing of the future. And stern old Andrew Jackson squelched the person who proposed the central bank as he would squelch the viper who glided among the people to sting them to death. He regarded the animus of the central bank as containing the virus that would poison the independence of the nation, and place it under bondage to the money power.

At this time, Secretary Gage proposes a central bank, and not even the usually alert newspaper men of the country notice the radical character of the proposal. It is radicalism of the most extreme type, and, if such radicalism were to come to notice from one of the opposite party, it would cause a howl of scorn by republicans from one end of the country to the other.

Not even all bankers will favor it. As one of them remarked to the East Oregonian, while discussing the measure, "It would be well for the big fellows, but would be for the small institutions virtually to surrender the control of their businesses to the banking magnates."

Nevertheless, Secretary Gage's plan will eventually prevail. It is as sure of accomplishment as the sun is sure to shine, or the trust movement go on with accelleration.

It is apparent to thoughtful men that nothing can stop the centralizing tendencies, and that the only expedient left is to effect the control rather than prevention of the trusts—industrial and financial, in the best manner possible. This appears to be the position both of radicals and conservatives, in journalism and in politics.

ROOSEVELT VS. GEER.

Governor Geer takes ground upon the trust question that is diametrically opposed to that occupied by the president. In the latter's message to the congress, he argued for federal control of trusts, while Governor Geer in his letter to Governor Van Sant of Minnesota, advocated the state regulation of combines. This is, in effect, the meaning of the two utterances as related to the question of the railway merger.

They represent the extremes upon this issue, and illustrate how sections of great parties hold to different views upon mooted questions.

President Roosevelt, in so far as he specified, is exactly like W. J. Bryan in the matter of federal control of the trusts. Colonel Bryan stated his position in different manner, using different language. He expressed greater fear from the combines, while Mr. Roosevelt seems to have no fear that the trusts will obtain hurtful power.

In its last analysis, the Roosevelt plan is the Bryan plan. In fact, the utterances of Colonel Bryan are more and more being duplicated by republican statesmen, nowadys.

Governor Geer's plan for continuance of state control is merely to leave the issue as it has been during past years, and these years have witnessed its injection into national life as the biggest and most protentous matter that claims the attention of the people.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Comment on the message from north coast papers follows:

Portland Oregonian: The thoughtful reader of President Roosevelt's first message will rise from its perusal with the conviction that it comes from the sound heart of a man who is sincerely desirous of knowing what is right and best, and then carrying out his decision with entire fearlessness. It is the product of honesty and common sense. Nobody need be in doubt as to what he president means.

Portland Telegram: President Roosevelt's first message, though meaty throughout, is disappointingly long. In whatever respects he may be a reformer, it will not be, judging from his effusion, in the direction of condensed messages. For the benefit of the readers who haven't time or disposition to wade through the message, some of its main features are hereinafter summarized.

Spokane Spokesman-Review: President Roosevelt's first message to congress may not be a disappointment, but it will create some surprise, in that it is neither striking in its general character nor original in its recommendations. It may not meet the expectations of those who looked for some of the president's distinctive personality in his handling of more important problems now pressing for solution, but it will be favorably received by those who had not expected a document essentially conservative throughout.

Boise Statesman: In his first message to congress, President Roosevelt has fully met the expectation of the public and splendidly sustained his reputation. He has shown his independence by cutting loose from the tradition which made the messages of former presidents so largely masses of dry statistics. These he has left to the reports of the departments, confining himself to discussion of matters demanding attention.

Walla Walla Union: As was predicted, the message is a long one, but in its scope it covers a multitude of the most important matters confronting the government. It is forceful, clear and concise, straight to the point and between every line can be read the fearless and resolute character of its author.

Seattle Times: When Grover Cleveland was president he raised the general average of presidential messages up to about 18,000 words—and every anti-Clevelandite publishing a newspaper in America howled himself hoarse against "Cleveland's verbosity." After the Spanish war occurred, however, President McKinley raised one of his messages to 28,000 words, just beating Cleveland's record by 10,000. While President Roosevelt has no war to discuss, having succeeded to the presidency through the death of his predecessor, it naturally follows that he should find a large and extraordinary field in which new subjects have become exceedingly prolific. At least 6,000 words are devoted to an encomium of the late president and the disposition of anarchists—and since presidential messages in the past have not dealt liberally with the subject of trusts, it is evident that President Roosevelt feels that the whole matter should be exploited, and hence finds another matter involving a great many words in its proper elucidation. Thus it happens before the new president gets fairly under way with well worn subjects, he finds himself in possession of nearly 9,000 words, or about the length of the average presidential message nerty twenty-five or thirty years ago.

Boise Capital News: President Roosevelt's message printed in full in today's Capital News is a good or a bad public document according to the political belief of the critic. If one is a democrat he will find more to condemn than to praise, not that there are not good suggestions made in the message from any political standpoint, but because several of the main topics are lamely treated, or are argued from a premise that to a democrat is not consistent with a capable administration of public affairs. On the other hand, a republican will find the message a fairly able and well written argument in favor of the policies advocated by that party, the document being more in the nature of an argumentative address than has been customary with occupants of the presidential chair.

Walla Walla Statesman: President Roosevelt's message was a disappointment. It lacks the clearness, force and strenuousness that have usually characterized the utterances of the "Rough Rider." It is evident that the original draft of the document had been materially modified by of members of the president's cabinet.

Baker City Democrat: President Roosevelt's message is an interesting document and he shows a wonderful sense of political sagacity in his utterances. His expected bitterness toward trusts does not materillaize and on all the grave subjects before the American people he expresses himself with a smoothness that is distinctly that of a politician. President Roosevelt is evidently not losing sight of the next national convention.

Baker City Republican: Theodore Roosevelt has demonstrated that he knows his people, is in touch with their needs and is one of them. His first state document rings with that true richness marking every event of his life.

Eugene Herald: President Roosevelt is verbose. His message of nearly twenty thousand words is more above the ordinary. Still a considerable part, the introductory, is devoted to his predecessor and the lamentable circumstances by which he lost his life. One cannot but be struck by the thought that the president draws the incident out too fine, alleging that his elevation to the high office the result of accident and seeks the support by appealing to the sympathies of the people.

James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern said: "I have no intention of resigning the presidency of the company. Furthermore, I am not going to give up my home or residence in St. Paul."

At Chicago the publishing business of Earl & Dumont has been placed in the hands of a receiver. Dumont has filed a petition in bankruptcy, asking to be relieved of an indebtedness of $256,000. The assets amount to $537,000.

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