

**CURRENT POLITICAL DISCUSSION.**

The Questions at Issue Before the People of Oregon Today.

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**ABOLISH THE FEE SYSTEM**

**BURDENSOME TO THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTE TAXES.**

Makes of Office a Graft and Creates an Army of Office Seekers Who Wish to Share in the Spoils.

Mr. Furnish is in favor of continuing the present unconstitutional and unconscionable system of fees, whereby the emoluments of state office are swelled beyond all reason. Mr. Chamberlain has attacked this system. As a result, all the beneficiaries of the present system are for Mr. Furnish and against Mr. Chamberlain.

This is not a new question. Public sentiment has long been strong in favor of a reform in this matter. Indeed, it was so strong in 1894 that the republican party could not resist a declaration on the subject. It promised reform of the fee system, but it took its own declaration in a Pickwickian sense. Now here is what the republican platform of 1894 said:

"The offices of the administrative department of the state have become too expensive and their expenses must be reduced. When the constitution fixes the salary only the constitutional salary shall be paid, without additional emoluments. The practice of employing unnecessary clerks and of paying fees in excess of just payment for services needed or rendered has become an abuse that must be cut off, and we pledge the republican party to prosecution and accomplishment of this reform."

Now this abuse has not been corrected or diminished in the slightest degree. On the contrary, it has been augmented. Mr. Chamberlain has again pointed out these abuses. He calls for their correction. But Mr. Fulton, speaking for Mr. Furnish, challenges Mr. Chamberlain's position. He contends that there is no abuse. He thinks some \$10,000 paid to the secretary of state's office is not too much and more than \$10,000 paid that officer in fees over and above his salary and expenses is nobody's business.

Now what did the republican legislature do following the declaration of 1894? A bill was introduced in the house to carry out the pledge of the republican party, "for the prosecution and accomplishment of this reform." But it did not include all the state offices. Motion was then offered to render the bill to a special committee of five with instructions to amend so as to include all state officers, the committee to report back the bill at 2 o'clock that day. The motion was lost. A motion was then made to recommit the bill with instructions to put the secretary of state on salary of \$4000 and treasurer of state at \$4000 and all fees paid into the general fund of the state. This motion was lost. A motion was then made to indefinitely postpone the whole matter, and by a vote of the republican house it was indefinitely postponed, and remains postponed to this day. All these proceedings may be found in the house journal of 1895, pages 825 and 826.

So the republican pledge of 1894, designated to get votes and not to be kept, was broken.

But the question was not dead, but only slept. The people know about these illegal fees and are again demanding relief. So in obedience to that public sentiment which influences platforms, both the republican and the democratic platforms of 1902 declare for the abolition of these fees and for flat salaries. Mr. Chamberlain stands upon both these platforms. Mr. Furnish stands upon

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neither. There is this much credit due Mr. Furnish: They make no secret of their opposition to the republican platform on this subject. They join issue with Mr. Chamberlain and by the same token, with the people with the frank avowal that there is nothing wrong in these fees, and that Mr. Chamberlain's contention does not meet their approval and will not receive their official sanction. Every voter, therefore, who votes for Mr. Furnish, or for Mr. Fulton for state senator must do so with the understanding that these gentlemen publicly proclaim their adherence to the fee system, and that an election will justify them in retaining it. They have wiped out the republican plank against fees, and are running on a plank of their own, in favor of fees. There is nothing strange about this in the case of Mr. Furnish. He knows how it is himself.

This story has another chapter. The Matthews party does not stand upon the republican platform denouncing fees. It does not concern itself about platforms, for it has a spokesman to speak for it every day. Its purposes and policies are found in its organ, the Oregonian, from day to day. That paper of yesterday, speaking for the Matthews legislative ticket, says on this subject:

"It (the flat salary) might prove the more economical way. It seems certain however, that on this subject the constitution is never to be obeyed. The 'racket' about it that comes up periodically is mostly for election purposes." That is to say, the Matthews ticket agrees with Mr. Furnish and Mr. Fulton that the republican pledge was made for "election purposes." The Oregonian, therefore, "advises people not to take too seriously the utterances of politicians who are 'working' this subject, purely in the hope of making votes out of it. Of course the Oregonian has authority to speak for the Matthews ticket, and it also quite frankly lets people know that the Matthews ticket, and it also quite frankly lets people know that Matthews works the subject in his platform 'in hopes of making votes out of it.'"

But it has no authority to speak for George Chamberlain or the fusion ticket. These expect, indeed, to "make votes out of it," but they also intend to deserve them. At least we have their solemn assurance that they will try to abolish these fees, and we also have the solemn assurance of Mr. Furnish, through Mr. Fulton, who is making his campaign for him, that these fees ought not to be abolished and the solemn assurance of the Oregonian that its Matthews ticket is not expected to abolish them. On the doctrine of chances it is safer to stand with the man who says that he is with you, rather than with the man who "makes no bones" of being against you. If you want these fees retained, there is no difficulty in finding the men to do it. —Portland Journal.

**FOR REPRESENTATIVE.**

A Pioneer Citizen Who Has Ever Contributed in Good Work, Private and Public.

Pendleton, Or., May 21.—(To the Editor)—W. M. Blakley is a candidate for representative upon the democratic ticket and C. E. Macomber is opposing candidate on the republican ticket. Mr. Blakley is a pioneer citizen of Umatilla county. His interests have been identified with the interests of the county for a great many years. His home is here, his farm is here, and for more than 20 years his name has been upon the tax rolls of the county. He has during that time contributed a handsome sum every year to the general fund of the county. He scarcely needs an introduction.

Mr. Macomber appeared suddenly from somewhere, at the republican county convention two years ago, and was promptly put upon the republican ticket by Mr. Furnish for the office of county surveyor, while J. W. Kimbrell, the old soldier, old citizen, and home owner in Umatilla county, was sent back to sit down. The name C. E. Macomber has never appeared, and does not now appear, upon the tax rolls of Umatilla county, not even for a poll tax.

A careful search of the county has entirely failed to discover that Mr. Macomber has a home or a dollar's worth of property in the county. If he is possessed of any portable property anywhere, Mr. Macomber has never thought enough of the public welfare to pay a just or any tax upon it to the general coffers. The voter must draw his own conclusions.

But, certainly Mr. Blakley deserves the support of the voters of Umatilla county. ANOTHER PIONEER.

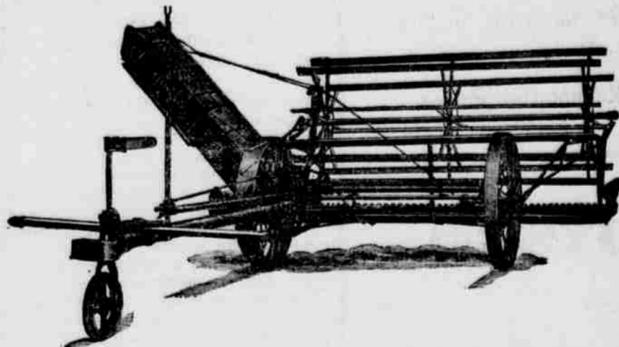
The failure of Governor T. T. Geer to preside at the Furnish rally in Salem last Friday night, is exciting comment in all parts of the state. The action is being taken as an evidence that Governor Geer is not yet placated.

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