

CORVALLIS GAZETTE



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DR. WITHCOMBE'S ADDRESS.

His Views as Expressed at the Big Republican Rally.

(Continued from last issue.)

A question of vital importance to the people of Oregon at the present time is the question of taxation. There is a widespread feeling, in which I concur, that the burdens of taxation in this state have in the past been inequitably distributed. The support of the government in all its various branches has fallen for the most part on owners of real estate.

I believe that the policy of our laws should be to increase the revenue of the state from indirect taxation and the taxation of intangible properties, to the end that real estate may ultimately be free from taxation for state purposes. This result has been reached in some of the commonwealths of the Union and the time will come when a similar result can be reached in Oregon.

I believe in the taxation of franchises. A franchise is property in just as real a sense as a farm. There are franchises in the state of Oregon which are more productive than any hundred farms. I know of no reason why a farm should be taxed and a franchise should escape taxation. I am opposed to the granting of perpetual franchises and favor a general law depriving municipalities of the power to grant franchises for more than a stated period of years.

There is a widespread belief that franchises in the past have been secured by debauching City Councils and paying to the grafter compensation which rightfully belongs to the people. I believe that with every franchise there should be a condition requiring the owner of the franchise to pay to the public a proportionate part of the earnings from year to year, by way of compensation for the special privileges granted.

When a franchise has been unfairly secured from the people or where it has been improvidently granted the people should repossess themselves of such franchises by the revocation thereof when possible or by the exercise of eminent domain, if necessary.

In this connection I will say that I believe every perpetual franchise is improvidently granted for the reasons that the conditions of today are not conditions of tomorrow. Provisions which protect the interests of the people of today may be totally inadequate a few years hence. Public utilities with but few exceptions, I believe, are best administered by private interest rather than by public servants, for in the latter case self interest, the greatest of incentives, is lacking and thriftiness and unbusinesslike methods will surely sooner or later prevail.

A public utility is a public asset and the interest of the public therein should be safe guarded by adequate laws. I believe that the people should reserve control over all public utility franchises to the extent necessary to issue the greatest efficiency of the public service at the least expense, subject only to the right of capital to be justly compensated for its investment. I must not be taken, however, to have a lack of regard for vested interests; our laws should and wisely do protect capital in its investment.

The vast resources of our state call for the investment of capital for their development. It is necessary that our laws should be conceived in a spirit of fairness and should hold out to capital the assurance that its just and honest claims will be safeguarded. It is certainly possible to so frame our laws that they will guard every interest of the people and at the same time by their justice and moderation lend no sense of insecurity to the capital which we invite to aid in the upbuilding of our state.

In all of these matters, however, caution and good judgment are necessary. It is easy by a wildcat system of legislation to alarm the cautious investor. Unwise and inflammatory laws enacted in Oregon at the present time would do much to check the investment of foreign capital and the starting of new enterprises which now promises additional employment to labor and additional prosperity to the people. A wise system of taxation is never conceived in passion or hatred by prejudices. It is the first duty of a government to be just to all persons. I heartily concur in the sentiment of the President that every man is entitled to a square deal. If I am the dealer he shall have it.

There is a demand for legislation for the supervision of private banks. The ordinary depositor has not the means of investigating the solvency of private banking institutions, and it is wise that laws should be passed providing for a system of reports from state and private banks, akin to the information now exacted by the Federal Government from National banks. I am opposed to the

creation of needless offices, although it would seem as if a State Bank Examiner were a necessity.

The burdens of the taxpayers are sufficiently heavy now. They should not be increased without good cause being shown. I believe that the office of State Land Agent should be abolished. The lands of the state of Oregon have been for the most part disposed of and the property which the state now owns can be properly looked after by the clerk of the State Land Board. One of the first duties of a public servant is that of economy in the expenditure of the public money.

No public official should wink at the waste of the people's resources. If I shall be elected Governor it will be my effort to fight all extravagance and promote a careful and economical administration of the laws.

Among other reforms which invite the attention of the people of Oregon is the pernicious custom of tacking riders on general appropriation bills. Our constitution should be so amended as to permit the veto power to be exercised on individual items of every appropriation bill. Every appropriation bill should stand or fall upon its own merits. Bills so framed as to prevent the call for a preempt veto, and this power fearlessly exercised will speedily correct this long established abuse of legislative power.

The State of Oregon should adopt rational measures for the protection of our immense forest wealth. Great losses annually occur from fire which can be greatly obviated by a well regulated patrol system. These losses run up in the millions of dollars, and while the effect of this loss may not be felt at present, our indifference at least deprives posterity of a rich inheritance. I favor a broad and generous policy for the conservation and development of the great natural wealth which nature has so bounteously bestowed upon our state.

Every legitimate means should be employed by the state to facilitate the transportation of the products of our various industrial enterprises. One of the greatest problems affecting the general prosperity of our people is cheap transportation. The natural waterways of the state should be made available for unobstructed transportation at the earliest possible date.

The tribute exacted from the products of our farms, mills and factories at the Oregon City locks should be abolished. By a persistent and united effort on the part of our people this barrier to competitive transportation can be removed. This will mean added value to every pound of hops, every bushel of grain and every other commercial commodity tributary to this waterway.

The portage railroad at Celilo should be made as near canal conditions as practicable. The lowest possible freight rate only should be exacted. In this way a great system of transportation can be built up in the Upper Columbia and its tributaries, thus stimulating production and adding to the prosperity of our people over an immense area of our commonwealth.

Nothing will add more to the prosperity and happiness of our rural population than will good public highways. It is unnecessary at this time to enter into details but suffice it to say that I believe the state should give substantial assistance to the betterment of our public highways. Instead of our convicts being brought into competition with the honest skilled labor of law-abiding citizens they should be employed upon the roads. That prison labor on the construction of roads is a success has been fully demonstrated by Multnomah county. With a well organized co-operative effort on the part of the state and the various counties it is confidently believed that within a few years material progress will have been made toward a better system of public highways throughout the state.

I am a friend of the public school system of the state. A republican form of government cannot exist except among an intelligent people, and all of the instincts of self-preservation require the Government to provide a fair measure of education for the people. The state should, therefore, have and properly support higher institutions of learning.

The pardoning power of the Governor should be exercised with extreme caution. When a man has been convicted of crime by a jury of his fellow citizens and when a court has sentenced him to a term in the penitentiary, public justice and the public safety require that in all ordinary cases he should remain there during the term for which he has been sentenced. He should not be pardoned because of political influence which he can bring to bear on the Governor, nor because good natured citizens can be induced to sign a petition for his release.

Especially is this true of the professional criminal. The public safety demands that this class be confined within the jails and penitentiaries where they

HE TAKES EXCEPTIONS.

And Says the People are Progressive—Reply to Miss Brown.

Editor Gazette:—One would naturally suppose from the reading of the recent article by Miss Carrie Brown, as published in the Gazette, that the people of Alsea were struggling in abject poverty and ignorance, but a degree above the Aborigine, before the daring genius of Columbus pierced the night of ages, and added the Western Continent to the geography of this planet.

It surely has been many years since Carrie Brown explored the Alsea country, or she was actuated by prejudice in misreading her readers by misconstruing facts regarding the Alsea people.

She spoke of the illiteracy of the people, and referred to a school board in which the chairman was a negro. To the contrary there is not, now, and never was, a negro resident in Alsea. Miss Brown's story would suit conditions when the valley was inhabited by the Indians and wild beasts, but the lapse of a third of a century has wrought many changes. Great stretches of forests have been converted into smiling fields of golden grain, and the wilderness reclaimed from the wild beasts. The school bells, the church bell, and the blooming fields, the rumbling machinery, the lowing herds, presents a different aspect of civilization than Miss Brown describes in her write-up.

In regard to the disadvantages of communication and transportation, to which she referred, there are three telephone lines centered at Alsea, one from Waldport, one from Five Rivers, and one from Corvallis; farmers lines are extended all through the valley and there is scarcely a farm house that hasn't a 'phone in it.

When the good roads spirit seized the minds of the people in Benton county, the citizens of Alsea were among the first to vote a special 5 mill levy, and build two miles of permanent road in the center of the valley. Seeing the fruits of their labor, they have made another special levy, and another two miles of good roads is under construction, and the people are determined to continue the good work until Miss Brown can visit Alsea in an automobile. Difficulties and obstacles that beset the footsteps of the pioneer, have been largely overcome, and the people

cannot prey upon the lives and property of law-abiding citizens. I make this statement on the subject of pardons because I believe that in the past pardons have been granted with too great liberality.

The Governor of Oregon should be the servant of the people. The people should have his ear and it should be his endeavor to serve the people. If I shall be chosen Governor it will be my endeavor to administer the office along these lines. I shall invite suggestions from the people on all matters pertaining to the public welfare and shall endeavor to administer the office with justice to all and special privileges to none.

In conclusion I commend to the consideration of the voters of the state the other candidates of the republican party. They have all been nominated by direct vote of the people. The primary has afforded an opportunity for a fair expression of the popular will. The primary law is on trial in this campaign. If the candidates of the majority party are defeated at the polls the primary law will be discredited and there will be an agitation for its repeal.

For these reasons, and also because of my respect for my associates on the Republican ticket, I call upon all republicans in the state to support them at the polls. Oregon has been one of the banner Republican states of the Union. Let it prove itself so at the coming election and let our majority be so large that it will announce to the world most emphatically that the people of Oregon have confidence in that matchless leader of the Republican party—Theodore Roosevelt.

are thrifty, energetic and improve every opportunity for the betterment of society, both morally and educationally.

MARTON HAYDEN.

A Big Event.

The annual field and track meet between OAC and U. of O. will be held in Eugene May 18. This promises to be one of the fastest meets ever pulled off in the northwest. Smithson, the well known Corvallis sprinter, will have to run the race of his life to win the 100-yard dash over Kelly of U. of O., who is showing up in fine form. Trainer Hayward of Oregon says he would not be surprised to see the "hundred" run in 9 4/5 seconds. Oregon will probably break some records in the broad jump, discuss throw, 200-yard dash, hurdle and shotput. McKinney put the shot 45 feet 3 1/2 inches last Wednesday and is expected to come close to the coast record on May 18. Everything promises to make this meet one of the most attractive meets ever held in Oregon. There will be a holiday at the university, the 18th being University Day. A half holiday will be given at the high school, and besides this many of the business houses of Eugene will close for the occasion. The "varsity" band, containing 24 pieces, will be out in full force to add to the merriment of the afternoon's contest.—Albany Herald.

Will Build a Church.

Rev. F. J. Springer, of Corvallis, rector of the Catholic church in that city, left for home Friday after a brief visit here. He recently secured a fine building lot in Newport for a Catholic church and in the past few weeks has raised some \$500 in Salem, Albany, Corvallis and Eugene toward erecting a church at that popular summer resort. Heretofore the only churches represented at Newport were the Presbyterian and Episcopal congregations, these two owning nice church buildings and keeping pastors in charge of the work. A number of Catholics reside in the place and many others spend a goodly portion there, and it was thought best to build a church. This will now be accomplished and before the summer guests arrive in Newport in large numbers it is expected that the new church will be built and ready for occupancy.—Albany Herald.

This Week's Plays.

Mr. Lee Willard, the young actor, has done some remarkably good work in support of Henry Miller, Nance O'Neil and Frederick Ward. He has been connected with companies in New York, Chicago and all of the large eastern cities.

Mr. Willard has a fine presence and a strong personality. He is exceedingly clever and versatile, has strong dramatic ability, and handles his roles with the finish of an artist.

Miss Marie Dunn, who supports Mr. Willard, is well known throughout the United States, having supported Wilson Barrett. The Willard company will play a two nights engagement at the opera house, commencing next Thursday, April 17.

He is The Man.

Vote for Fred C. Peil for sheriff. He is a worthy young man of unusual clerical ability, a strong constitution and affable manners. There is no reason why republicans should not support him, as he is their nominee, and is a splendid choice as well. No demerit would be making a mistake to give this gentleman a vote.



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Things are on the move in the building line down at Wells station. Willard Southern has just let the contract to contractor Snell, of Albany, for a fine residence and also a large barn to be erected immediately on his ranch near Wells. H. T. Ridders has the foundation laid for a new residence on his place west of Wells which will make a very attractive home.

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