

Warnock & Harlan.

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A BUSINESS PROPOSITION.

The most disturbing question that has ever occurred in state, county and municipal affairs in the history of Oregon, is now before the people to be voted upon at the November election in the matter of local option. Even the great question of electing a president is overshadowed in the agitation. After careful study, this is not strange, for the business world can now readily see the results which would be immediate under the sudden and radical change that the advocates of local option propose.

Up to the time of the last issue of the Gazette, this paper has been silent upon this question, but as the public mind becomes active always upon questions that materially affect the public pulse, and as a real newspaper is the greatest exponent of publicity, then it becomes the absolute duty of the Gazette to comment upon this question, and from sound judgment and reason we hope to maintain the position of this paper which has already been stated.

For the freedom of the press and the liberty of the American people, we owe to broad minded citizenship in careful and unprejudiced investigation in the affairs of government. It is not our intent to antagonize the people who believe in voting for local option, but they shall be treated with the greatest respect and fairness; however, we do hope to show that local option as now proposed will not bring the results desired and work a great injury to business interests as well. Neither will the Gazette oppose true temperance, and in this controversy, so far as this paper is concerned, the question of fairness will predominate. In this issue the local optionists have a hearing as will be seen by an article published elsewhere in this paper, written by one of their advocates.

Before voting for local option, the conservative and wise business man and property owner will have a whole lot to think about. It has taken years of labor, business judgment and economy to accumulate what they now have, and to have it suddenly greatly depreciate in value as well as the increase of taxation which would inevitably follow, is not a pleasant thought. Nor does this comprise all the harm. To close up these buildings would undoubtedly cause a depreciation in their value. How long it would be until the buildings can again be utilized, no one can foretell. There is no idle talk about this, but it is a condition that will follow should local option triumph, as surely as day follows night. If your property depreciates in value, then mine must depreciate also, and from a busy, thriving town Heppner becomes more like a deserted village.

Heretofore, both socially and in a business way, Heppner has been united in a manner that would be a credit to any community. The local option agitation has already been a great promoter of factions, (no worse here than in many other places) and will open a chasm that can hardly be bridged. This discussion and strife will be carried into business and the everyday walks of life, and the result will be enmity and confusion that will be injurious.

This condition will not only be limited to the towns. Tomorrow

county is a good country but is handicapped by isolation. With a continual squabble we cannot do anything to help develop and increase values by getting more people, increasing transportation facilities and many other things. What one man would do some other would pull down and our great resources would lie dormant. We have already had one practical illustration in Heppner. A lot was purchased, work was commenced on a building to cost not less than \$8000, but local option killed the enterprise. A walk down the east side of Main street will prove this. The Gazette can name several other similar cases. To sum up: Local option closes the saloons; but to be placed against this is increased taxation; a vacation of many buildings, which will cheapen all; gives birth to and keeps forever alive factional strife, making the heretofore pleasant business relations impossible; and puts us back at least fifteen years in development. Heppner is justly proud of a first-class hotel. This would have to go with the rest. These are the reasons why we say in the beginning, there is a good deal for the business man and property owner to think about. Having such momentous changes in mind the Gazette cannot avoid the conclusion that local option will do greater injury to the general lines of business than to the liquor traffic.

"All I ask is a square deal for every man."—President Roosevelt

We are not constrained to keep silent on any vital question; we are divided on no vital question; our policy is continuous, and is the same for all sections and localities. There is nothing experimental about the Government we

ask the people to continue in power, for our performance in the past, our proved governmental efficiency, is a guarantee as to our promises for the future.—President Roosevelt.

Everything points to a gradual gain of strength for Roosevelt. The fact is, the tide is strongly against the Parkerites, and they know it. None of the big leaders of the Democratic party are saying anything for him. Some powerful appeals have been made to Cleveland to get him to make a few addresses for the candidate, but he has refused in such peremptory terms that the old reports of his taking the stump will not be heard again in this canvass. The excuse which Cleveland's immediate friends cite for his refusal to talk for Parker is his advanced age and feeble health. Nobody heard anything about these things just before the St. Louis convention, when there was a chance that he would be nominated. Had the candidacy been offered to him he undoubtedly would have accepted it. In that event nobody would have heard anything about his advanced years or his feebleness. Vice Presidential Candidate Davis is almost old enough to be Cleveland's father, yet the Democrats say that Davis is full of exuberance, and is good for a dozen years of hard work yet. Cleveland is keeping out of the canvass for the same reason that Carlisle, Dickinson, Fairchild, Olney and the rest of the old leaders of the party are keeping out. They see disastrous defeat close at hand for Parker, which they could not avert if they tried, but in which they would, in some degree, be involved if they should take an active part in the campaign.

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