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\$1.50 THE YEAR.

ALL FAVOR AN INVESTIGATION

County Good Roads Association Goes on Record for Having the Finances and the Engineering Checked Up by Experts.

"We got some of your strikers there."

"No you didn't; we never had any strikers."

The first remark was made by A. N. Christianson, one of the North Slough ranchers, who has been working on the Glasgow-Hanson county road project, and was directed to A. H. Powers, the head of the Smith-Powers Logging company.

The place was at the circuit court room, the time Wednesday morning and the occasion the meeting of the County Good Roads Association.

Mr. Christianson went on to explain that the men in question were from the C. A. Smith mill at Marshfield when there had been a strike, and after a day or two they quit the road work because it dirtied their hands.

With President Hall in the chair, the association was discussing the question of what action to take in regard to the petition Mr. Powers had presented from the logging companies and mill men of the county requesting the county court to curtail and discontinue road work in order that their industries might be able to get men enough to keep running.

In regard to the road north from Coos Bay, Mr. Christianson had stated that of the 85 men now at work on it, there were twenty transients, and all the rest were ranchers and ranchers' sons, who would not go to work in the mills or logging camps if the road work were stopped.

Instead of soldiering at the work as Powers had claimed the men in the road were doing, Christianson said he was doing all he could and so were the rest. They had waited for years for a wagon road up in that country, and now they saw no way to get one except to pitch in and build it themselves.

By the time he had presented his case, Mr. C. had won it, for Al Powers himself declared very emphatically that work on that project ought not to be stopped but must go on in any event.

It was a good deal the same when

Mayor Geo. P. Topping, of Bandon, made a plea for the continuance of the contract work on the road from that city south to the Curry county line.

He said that the outlet for the cheese, the ties, the poles and most of the Curry county products was over that road, that a Coos county port was the market place for all these products which they sent to us from Curry in such large amounts over this road, and that they were all the while protesting against the terrible condition of that road and begging or insisting that it should be put in better condition. And among the hardest kickers on this account was the Bandon manager of the Fyfe Wilson Lumber company, which got the largest share of the Curry county business, and whose name was appended to Mr. Powers' petition for stopping road work.

It was here, too, that Mr. Powers declared with intensity of conviction that there ought to be no stoppage but that work should be kept up on that road, over which he said four times as much tonnage was hauled as over any other highway in the county.

This is largely a Powers' story because Mr. Powers was the spokesman for all the lumber firms and corporations that were asking the county court to ease up on the road projects and let them have more laborers. So it is the place here, to go on and tell how Mr. Powers declared that the work ought not to stop in the Coquille-Marshfield road which was closed while it was under way. Of course, he said, it didn't carry tonnage like the Bandon-South road, and there was a railroad to take the traffic and travel between towns, but still it should be finished. At the same time he thought work on it might be curtailed and the time for its completion extended.

In answer to the objection by Judge Watson that it must be completed as soon as possible in order to secure

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Same Assurance Again.

The following letter from the State Highway Commission has been received by Judge Watson:

July 31.—To Judge James Watson:—We are informed that labor conditions are making your road work cost very high. We want you to get the most possible road work for your money and hasten to assure you your delay in preparing grade will not change your status under the law to claim hard surface money—State Highway Commission.

Change in Grocery Firm.

W. H. Lyons and Fay W. Jones have dissolved the partnership that has existed between them for the past six years. Will is now sole proprietor for the first time since he went into business here in 1906 as the junior member of the firm of Land & Lyons. Mr. Jones expects to remain here for some months to come, at least, and has taken a position in Henry Lorenz' store. Mr. Lyons has engaged Harvey Paxson to assist him in the store.

He Would Make It \$5 a Day.

Discussing the wage question here last Wednesday A. H. Powers stated that the men employed in the Smith-Powers logging camps were now being

paid \$4.18 a day, including bonus; and that if the company would act upon his advice they would make it \$5 a day for the future.

Beyers Draws the Prize.

The vacancy in the draft examining board here caused by County Clerk Oddy being found ineligible, has been filled by the appointment of Assessor J. P. Beyers. The board thus consists of Sheriff Gage, Dr. Richmond and Mr. Beyers. Their first case came yesterday, when C. B. Harris, who was registered and drafted in Humboldt county, California, came in for examination. Physical defects caused his rejection. Today another man drafted from the same county, Carl Svenson, is to come before the board.

Boy Breaks His Arm.

Last Tuesday Le Norme Powder, Sheriff Gage's nine year old grandson, who has been living with him for the past two years, while up at Bridge broke the inner bone of his left forearm near the wrist and at the same time put one of the wrist bones on the opposite side of the arm out of joint. While visiting his aunt, Mrs. Frank Fish, he tried the swing at the school house and was thrown out, his arm striking a rock.

WILL THEY COME?

Before Breaking Jail Raicy and Weidner Write a Letter Telling Sheriff Gage all About It and Promise to Be Back.

So far Sheriff Gage, after sending out word in every direction, has been unable to get any trace of the men who escaped from the county jail Monday night. He says they had no money and must be hoofing it unless they struck some one for a loan which would have been a risky proceeding.

As a journalist Weidner ordinarily knew how desirable it was to place their side of the case before the public and so wrote the following letter to the sheriff, furnishing a copy to their attorney, L. A. Liljeqvist, for publication:

W. W. Gage, Sheriff, Coquille, Oregon,

Dear Sir:—It is nearly three months now that we have been confined in the county jail awaiting trial. All the promises and assurances of an early trial have come to naught, and from present indications it will be late in October until we are afforded an opportunity of proving ourselves innocent of the charge against us. In view of the fact that we are practically serving a 6 months term in prison prior to conviction and knowing that we are absolutely innocent of a criminal act or intent—the injustice of our confinement behind prison bars looms up larger from day to day. On top of all this we are locked up with a raving maniac, who has attacked us in physical combat, and have been subjected to a thousand indignities. Also have been exposed to syphilis and disease while here. In fact this place has degenerated into a veritable "Chamber of Horrors." Why must we endure all this, inasmuch as we have not been convicted of a crime? We have appealed for an interview with the powers that be, with the view of discussing the situation now existing, and to find out whether or not something could be done to somewhat alleviate our distress. All our appeals for some unknown reason are utterly ignored. It is enough to drive one mad and our subsequent departure for more peaceful environments are not to be wondered at. We feel that we are acting entirely within the rights that are due to civilization and humanity. The incongruity of the law, relative to justice is unfair to the man accused, inasmuch as the accused is deprived of his liberty and locked up as a common criminal for six months when he may be entirely innocent of the crime with which he has been charged.

We have been model prisoners, have performed numerous services that were beneficial to the county and to the comforts of the unfortunates confined here. We have never violated a trust or confidence placed with us while in your custody. Messrs. Peart and Landreth and our fellow prisoners will substantiate the above statements. We pledge our word of honor that when we are called to trial we will be here in person to answer the summons. We have no intention

whatsoever to avoid trial. If this were the primary reason for leaving, we could have gone months ago when conditions were more favorable, but we stayed on, confidently believing that each succeeding week would bring us into court and end this awful suspense. We have left the jail on a number of occasions for long walks, in fact delivered letters to the postoffice. We do not think the other prisoners were aware of our little excursions, as we always left the jail after everyone had gone to bed. We do not want you to think that our stolen privileges were due or possible on account of any carelessness of our keepers. Far be it from such. The fact of the matter is that there isn't a cell or a combination of cells here that will hold us, if we are determined to get out. We had no help from the "outside" or "inside." We had no tools or materials other than the equipment which is permissible for the use of the inmates, neither did we damage or so much as scratch any portion of the county property. The jailer will find things just as he left them. We would regret it if the county were to go to any expense to recapture us, as we solemnly swear that when our trial is called we will be here and you will not suffer any embarrassment whatsoever.

We are going to try awfully hard to get away, so we can attend to certain business matters which have been too long neglected. The odds are greatly against us and we would not be surprised if our liberty should be of short duration. We will not resist arrest. We are not looking for trouble and do not care to be termed "Desperate Criminals Abroad." We shall only use our wits. When we realize that our chances of a clean and gentlemanly get-away are doubtful, we shall return to Coquille at once and come in as quietly as we can. Trusting you will appreciate our situation and not judge us too harshly, we beg to remain,

Respectfully yours,
RAICY & WEIDNER,
per A. R. Weidner.

The first jail delivery from the Coos county bastille for many years took place last night at an unknown hour when F. W. Raicy and J. R. Weidner unceremoniously bade farewell to their quarters there and departed for unknown parts. The men unlocked their cell doors with a key manufactured it is supposed from an old composition comb and walked out while the other prisoners and the jailer were sleeping. They even went to the extreme of relocking their doors before departing.

The men were confined in the jail awaiting trial on the charge of embezzlement placed against them by F. B. Cameron, of the Agitator, and have

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WON'T STAND FOR EXPENSE

Coquille Commercial Club Refuses to Put Up Any Money to Investigate Roadmaster and Road Work.

An unusually large attendance at the Commercial Club Wednesday evening was present to discuss the proposition put up to it by the Good Roads Association that day—the appointment of a committeeman to investigate road matters in the county.

President Norton reported the result of the association meeting, as told elsewhere, and called for suggestions as to whom should be appointed.

This started a two hours' discussion as to the wisdom and advisability of the Commercial Club going to the expense contingent on carrying out the Road Association plans to employ an expert accountant and an engineer to make a thorough investigation. The Association figured that the investigation could be made for \$300 but the Commercial Club members were almost unanimously of the opinion that a thorough checking up of all road matters would require two or three times that amount, which it is proposed to apportion among the six county commercial clubs—Powers, Myrtle Point, Bandon, Coquille, North Bend and Marshfield. That \$300 would pay for more than a casual examination was ridiculed.

In order to get the matter before the meeting C. A. Howard moved that it was the sense of the Coquille Commercial Club that a committeeman should be appointed to participate in the investigation of the roadmaster's office and the expenditure of road funds.

L. H. Hazard said that personally he was not favorable to an investigation because he was convinced that there was nothing to the talk which is being indulged in of waste and extravagance in road expenditures. He said that a big majority didn't know what they were talking about nor whether the work was costing too much or not. If the expense of an investigation could be borne by the people who wanted it, let them go ahead; but he objected to its being borne by a few.

Jack Lamb remarked that if this investigation was made and every-

thing found as satisfactory as those present thought was the case, there was nothing to prevent an investigation every three months as long as the road work continues.

Everyone was agreed that a thorough investigation of all road matters would be the best thing possible for all concerned—the roadmaster's office, the county court and the people—but they were opposed to the Commercial Club's standing for a \$50 to \$300 bill for the expense of making it.

M. O. Hawkins told of the afternoon meeting of the county court at which Judge Watson said the court would welcome a complete and thorough investigation of road affairs, but not a garbled and incomplete travesty for the sole purpose of "getting" somebody. Another point made by the judge was that \$6,000,000 was not going to pave all the roads in the state and that if Coos county was not ready to pave, the money would probably be spent where the roads were graded, with no funds available when Coos county announced herself as properly prepared.

An amendment to Mr. Howard's motion was offered by F. B. Phillips that the investigating committee be authorized to draw on Coquille Commercial Club for not to exceed \$50 for expenses.

This amendment was carried by a small majority but when the amended motion was put there was not a single vote in its favor.

Mr. Howard then moved that the chair appoint a representative to meet with the investigation committee the first of the week and report back to the club what action was taken. This motion was unanimously carried and the president has appointed Leo J. Cary, who has consented to act.

That the "croakers" who know but little about the truth of the stories they repeat, would bear none of the investigation expense, while those who are better posted and find no fault with road affairs would have to stand the expense, was the point most frequently made by the many men present who expressed themselves.

MUST WORK BE STOPPED NOW?

This Question Fully Discussed at Meeting of Good Roads Association, Timbermen and Others Wednesday Morning.

One of the objects for which President Hall called a meeting of the County Good Roads Association here Wednesday morning was to consider the criticism which has been recently directed so strongly towards the road work in this county and the Roadmaster's office in particular.

In bringing the matter before the meeting Mr. Hall said that regardless of the question whether there was any merit in those criticisms or not it was our duty to make an investigation and see how the \$300,000 or \$400,000 of road money derived from the sale of the bonds is being expended.

G. E. Tonney, of Myrtle Point, said it was estimated that it would take \$300 to make this investigation. The proposal had been made by the Commercial Club of Myrtle Point, to the other clubs of the county that they should unite in making this investigation and that the Good Roads Association should ask for representation from the various commercial clubs of the county to provide a committee. He said the present time, with practically every road project under way, it would be a good time to check up the roadmaster's office. He advised the appointment of a committee to get the sort of men needed to do this work and have them go to the hat and find what the conditions were.

Indeed, if everything was going as smoothly as could be, we ought to have the thing checked up, the same as we would want to if it was our own private business. Taking the whole thing together, with road money, bridge money and bond money, nearly half a million dollars is to be

spent, and that was a big enough sum to make investigation desirable in any event.

There has been a lot of criticism throughout the county, said Mayor Topping, of Bandon, about the way the work has been done and about the friction between the roadmaster's office and the county surveyor's office. He referred to the remark of a man engaged in the road work south of Bandon, who said the way the work was done there "shocked his conscience."

There had been lots of rumors about the trips the roadmaster had made to Portland and having the expenses of the trips charged to the county and about his having overrun his allowance. The responsibility was on the Good Roads Association to investigate this work. "A real investigation," said Mr. Topping, "takes labor, time and money, and the majority of people make charges without taking the trouble to investigate." He did not appear with any criticism against any one. We will never get the truth the way things have been going so far. A real investigation is important. No business man will operate his business with success unless he looks after it. The average American voter goes to the polls and votes his sentiments. For the rest he goes away and kicks.

J. E. Norton, of this city, said we had all heard these rumors and reports, most of which were improbable. In any event the matter should be investigated. He thought Coquille

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COURT PUTS ON THE BRAKES

No More New Work to Be Begun--Wages Will Not Be Raised--Some Help for Road to Sunset Bay.

Commissioner Armstrong says that so far at its present meeting the county court has done less, than before in seven years, in the same length of time. Visiting delegations have demanded and received the attention of the court.

Wednesday afternoon the men who attended the Good Roads Association meeting in the morning made the same talks over again to the court, with slight variations. One of these was the strong indorsement or approval that A. H. Powers gave Roadmaster Murdock. He emphatically stated that he is the right man in the right place.

A full report of the talks made was taken by the court stenographer, Mrs. Scott.

After listening to everything the visitors had to say both for and against continuing the road work in this county, the court went on record to the following effect:

No new projects will be undertaken this year; the wages now paid for work on the roads will not be increased; there will be no change in the work now being done on force account; no more time will be given the contractors on the projects now under way if they can possibly be completed under the terms of the contracts.

As to the latter clause, the opinion was expressed that the way Mr. Perham is getting at his job between here and Coaledo it can be finished this season. Roadmaster Murdock, however, whose July reports indicates only 7,000 cubic yards yet moved, will have to be shown.

L. J. Simpson was before the court

yesterday asking that the road from North Bend to Sunset Bay be macadamized. Grading work is now in progress on that road, and the court ordered that a sandy stretch of two miles, the worst part of the project, should be macadamized, and will advertise for bids for that work.

On the present Perham contract the plans call for the retention and maintenance of half a mile in length of the China camp bridge and also of the long bridge at Coaledo.

It was also decided to use gravel and macadam on some of the fills south of Bandon.

The widows' pension and indigent cases still remain to be considered and the auditing of bills is not yet completed.

Good Fire Insurance Work.

The city police took a very wise precaution yesterday in burning all the dry grass and vegetation between the Front street buildings and the railroad. There are many other places in the city where similar precautions should be taken. It is now the time of the year to cut all dry grass and weeds about residences and in vacant lots. Everything has got so dry that a little fire might very easily grow to be a big one.

O. C. Sanford, treasurer of the Red Cross fund, informs us that of the \$5007 subscriptions in the Coquille district \$2956 has already been paid, leaving about \$2159 yet to come. The second payment was due this week where, as in most cases, the subscription was in installments.