

**Polk County Observer**

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EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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DALLAS, OREGON, APRIL 23, 1910.

The way to build up Dallas is to get more Dallas people.



**THE HIGH SCHOOL.**

Next Monday afternoon the voters of Dallas school district will decide by their ballots whether a High School building is to be built this year. As the need of a modern high school in Dallas is admitted by all, the only question confronting the voters for consideration at this time is as to the amount of money that should be voted for building purposes. The directors of the district have asked for \$40,000. The Observer favors the building of a school house suitable to the needs of the district and creditable to the city of Dallas, let it cost \$40,000, or \$50,000, or whatever it may. But with all due respect to the directors, who are honorable and conscientious men, the newspaper would urge that the best of business judgment be exercised at every step. While Dallas cannot afford to let any false ideas of economy stand in the way of the proper education of its youth and the growth and development of the city, it must be borne in mind that \$40,000 is a large amount of money to be devoted to any single public need or improvement in a town of this size, and it must further be remembered that the tax now paid by our people for city and school purposes equals or exceeds their state and county taxes combined. The Observer is not urging this fact against the erection of a creditable school building, for we desire it distinctly understood that this paper is in favor of spending as much money as is necessary for that purpose, be the amount \$40,000, or \$50,000. We only desire to call attention to the fact that there is always a point where prudence ends and recklessness begins. The condition confronting the people at this time is one which calls for calm, sensible action and the exercise of prudence and good business judgment.

The voice of the reckless and irresponsible shouter, heard in every community in the land, should not be listened to. It will be remembered that when Polk County found itself face to face with the expensive necessity of building a courthouse a few years ago, the cry went up from the irresponsible element that a rich and growing county like Polk should not think of spending less than \$100,000 or \$150,000 for a building. Courthouses in neighboring counties costing similar large sums of money were pointed to by these agitators, just as some are now calling attention to the great cost of high school buildings recently built elsewhere, and it was argued that Polk County would not be able to secure a decent building for a less amount of money. What followed? Bids were asked for the construction of a modern stone building, and when opened the lowest was found to be as follows: Basement, \$5,000; three-story superstructure, \$24,000; total cost of building, \$29,000. The result was that for \$29,000 Polk County secured a building acknowledged by all to be so far superior to the \$80,000 and \$100,000 brick courthouses of neighboring counties as to admit of no comparison—a building that is not only pleasing and satisfactory to the residents of the county, but is admired by every visitor and stranger who passes this way. Who will say that the courthouse is not a building creditable alike to the rich county of Polk and the beautiful and progressive city of Dallas? The school district may count itself fortunate, indeed, if it shall succeed in securing a building as creditable in every way for the amount of money expended in its construction.

As the Observer views the situation, it is not so much a question of what a High School building shall cost as it is of getting a dollar's worth of building for every dollar spent in its construction. This is all the people of Dallas have a right to ask of the directors, and it is all any reasonable man will ask. It is only fitting and proper that Dallas should build the largest and best equipped High School in Polk County, and such a building will necessarily cost a large amount of money; but, with the exercise of good business judgment in planning the structure, and in the actual work of construction, the investment will prove a blessing to the district.

The Observer desires to see a High School building erected in Dallas, and to see it built this year. If \$40,000 is necessary for the purpose, bonds to that amount should be voted next Monday. As to whether that amount is necessary, the Observer can only frankly say that it does not know. It must be taken for granted that in fixing the cost of building and grounds at that figure, the directors were not merely guessing, but had some fairly definite plan in mind. This plan the board has not seen fit to make public, and as a consequence the people can only trust to the wisdom and good judgment of the directors, if anything is to be done this year. The Observer had hoped that the board might see its way clear to give the people some general idea of the character of building in mind, whether it was to be built of brick, or stone, or both; its size as to probable number of rooms, a general idea as to its location in the city, and the general estimate of school grounds. In asking this, we have fully realized that no man of any business acumen whatsoever would expect the board to submit definite plans for a building or to say exactly how much it is willing to pay for grounds. Giving out such information prematurely would be the worst of follies. Our only reason for suggesting that the board would do well to give out some general statement of its plans was prompted by recollection of the fact that at two different school elections in former years, the taxpayers voted against bonds for building purposes, only to reverse their verdict

and vote favorably as soon as they learned in a general way how the money was to be spent. It has been in the hope of avoiding as far as possible the remotest chance of an unfavorable vote next Monday that the Observer has urged the directors to take the people into their confidence as far as possible and business judgment will permit.

If \$40,000 is needed to put up a strictly modern and creditable High School in Dallas, it should be voted. If \$50,000 is needed, it should be voted. Dallas positively cannot afford to long-delay the construction of another schoolhouse, and it cannot afford to build anything but the best.

**MORE UREN SCHEMES.**

The authors of the "Please-Read" pamphlet have proposed many amendments to the constitution of the State of Oregon, which, if adopted, would entirely change our present representative system of government. Nearly every one of the 23 sections in Article IV have been changed, and many additional sections added, designated as section 2a, section 2b, section 2c, section 2d, section 2e, etc. We wish to call attention to those just named, found on page 21 of that pamphlet, for they provide for the recall of the entire legislative assembly as a body.

Section 2a provides that "if at any time a petition shall be filed with the Secretary of State signed by a number of legal voters equal to not less than 12 per cent of the whole number of voters cast for Justice of the Supreme Court at the last preceding general election, and such petition shall demand the recall of the legislative assembly, or either house thereof," the Secretary of State must order a special election to decide whether the legislative assembly, or the house against which it is directed, shall be recalled, and to choose the successors of the Senators and Representatives.

The proposition is manifestly unfair and unjust. Now, observe that: The recall of the entire assembly is voted on by the entire body of Douglas County, or any other county, has a member with whom the people are satisfied, he can be recalled just the same by the entire electorate of Oregon. The voters of Douglas County would have nothing to say about it, except as many voters in the entire State of Oregon. It would hardly be possible to secure a Legislature without securing some good men, but those men would have to share the disgrace of all the bad men in the Legislature if the recall election succeeded. The state would still be divided into Senatorial and Representative districts, but for the purpose of the recall, all district lines would be abolished, and every member would be subjected to a state majority in the special election. Section 2c provides that any single member may be recalled, but provides for the same petition, 25 per cent of the voters of the state. In such case the special election would be held only in the member's own district, "unless the reasons given for the recall petition be refused to obey an instruction from the state." If the reason given in the petition for the recall is "refusal to obey an instruction from the state," whatever that may mean, the election will be held in every county in the state, to recall the member from Douglas County, and elect his successor.

The scheme is wild, visionary and impracticable. What would the people of Eastern Oregon know about the qualifications of a candidate in Douglas County? Should not the people of Douglas County have a right to say whom they want to represent them without interference from the balance of the state?

And it is further provided that the filing of the recall petition "shall operate as a complete suspension from office of all the Senators and Representatives against whom it is filed." That is, under the present system, with only two parties, it takes a majority of the voters in each district to elect a man to office, but 25 per cent of the voters of the state can put him out. There is no limit to the amount of harm such a law would do, and there is no limit to the frequency of the recall election. It could be used by scheming politicians like its authors to prevent and destroy all legislation. Just as well abolish the Legislature at once.



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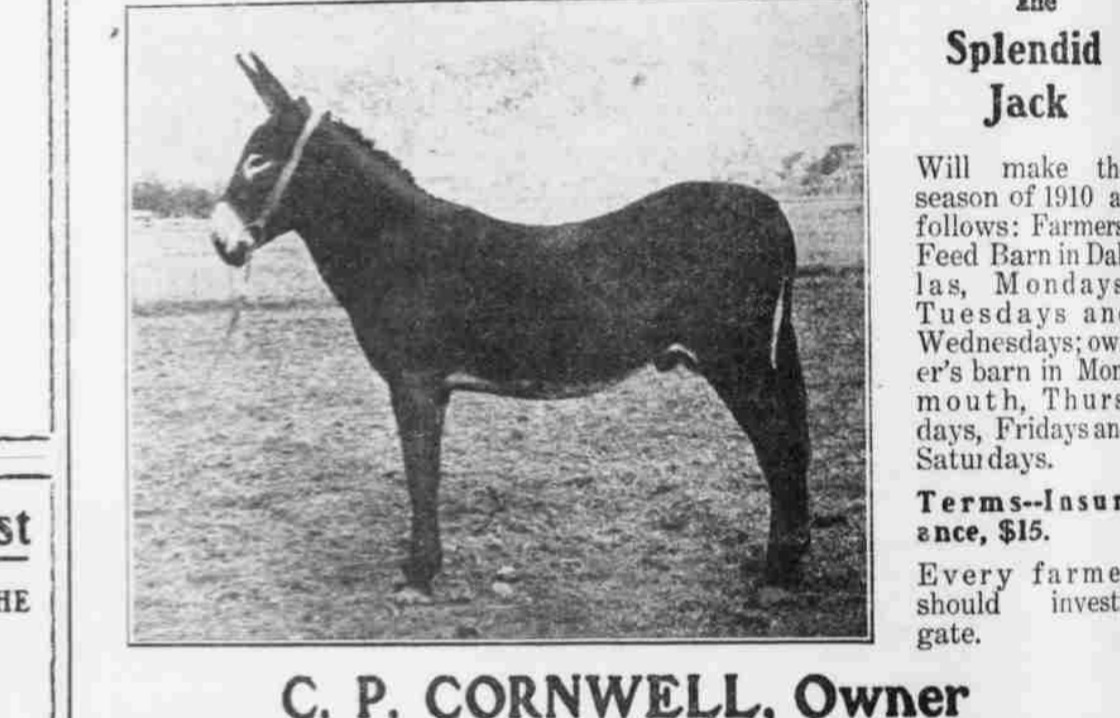
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