

Polk County Observer

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The way to build up Dallas is to patronize Dallas people.

WHO WILL PAY THE JANITOR?

The Observer's good friend, E. T. Hamer, of Salem, whose communication appears in another column, thinks he has evolved a scheme which would result in improvement of conditions in Oregon relative to voting on initiative and referendum measures. He would have the newspapers print in full each measure proposed, and in addition, he would have a series of meetings held in every community for the full and complete discussion of all subjects upon which the people are asked to vote. This plan appears all right at first glance, but Mr. Hamer unconsciously exposes one of the most formidable stumbling blocks in the way when he says, in referring to the meetings, "who would hire the hall and pay the janitor?"

We wonder if Mr. Hamer fully realizes what he is asking when he suggests that the newspapers devote a column each week to the publication of the different measures proposed at each election in this state? A newspaper's space is its stock in trade, and the great majority of them haven't any to spare. If the newspapers, especially the weekly and semi-weekly publications, were to attempt to publish in full all measures proposed, it would require much more space than a column a week to accomplish it. In fact, many of them would have to fill their columns with it to the exclusion of everything else.

Then, again, suppose the newspaper did follow this practice, what assurance have we that the people would read it? The law now provides that a pamphlet containing all the measures to be voted on shall be sent to every voter in the state in plenty of time to permit him to read it, together with the arguments for and against each proposed law, yet how many do it? A few, it is true, but the great majority pay no attention to it and either take somebody's word as to their merit or ignore them altogether at the polls. The Observer questions the idea that more would read them if printed in the newspapers.

We agree with our correspondent in that the newspaper should be a forum for the discussion of all questions of public merit and this newspaper stands ready at all times to print any reasonable article of merit which shall be signed by its author.

The whole problem resolves itself to this: In order to vote intelligently upon any question the voter should be somewhat familiar with it. How else shall he know whether it is of benefit to him or to the people of the state? And how shall he familiarize himself with the proposition unless he shall study it and think over it? Right here is where we see the weakest point in the Oregon system. It depends upon the willingness of each individual voter to spend hours in searching out for himself all the advantages and disadvantages of each measure. It presupposes that he will do it, and on its face has the appearance of being ideal. But a very large number of men, through ignorance or indolence, fail to investigate. When their pamphlet comes from the Secretary of State, they carelessly toss it into a corner and forget all about it until election day, and when they see this or that measure staring them in the face on their ballot, they either pay no attention to it, or vote "yes" or "no" in a haphazard fashion and thus assist in placing on the law books of the state measures which very often they do not want and, when once they find out their true import, they clamor for the referendum to annul their action.

The Observer believes in the wisdom of laws for the benefit of all the people, and the fewer of them the better. Discussion is probably the only way that the people generally will come to fully inform themselves upon any public question. In the memorable campaign of 1888, we had plenty of it, and it is safe to say that but few voters went to the polls in November of that year, without knowing whether "the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the legal ratio of 16 to 1" was what they wanted, or otherwise. But until a philanthropist shall be found who will "hire the hall and pay the janitor," we fear that we shall have to struggle along gathering what

light we may and trusting to luck and Bill Uren that nothing terrible will happen to us.

On his retirement from the presidency Theodore Roosevelt surrendered the office to his successor, President Taft, a man whom he himself had been instrumental in selecting, and of whom he himself had said: "I do not believe there can be found in the whole country a man so well fitted to be president." He had made this statement early in the campaign and the American people took him at his word. They made Mr. Taft president and they have since had no occasion to regret that choice. Now, after the lapse of four years, Mr. Roosevelt comes to the people and says in effect that he was wrong when he gave President Taft his endorsement. He further says that he didn't mean it when he made that famous utterance in November, 1908, "the wise custom which limits the president to two terms regards the substance and not the form, and under no circumstances will I be a candidate for, nor accept another nomination." He still further declares that he meant something else when he said as late as last summer that he would "not be a candidate in 1912." Was there ever an exhibition of a more complete flop on the part of any public man? Where in all history do we find a parallel case? In scanning the roll of honor upon which is engraved the names of the great men of a Nation, where do we find another instance of so prominent a public man openly renouncing his pledges and declaring that he did not mean the thoughts that his plain words conveyed; who can point to another exhibition for such an insatiable greed for office? Will the people forget all his former pledges and believe him now? We think not.

What horrible dreams must beset the slumbers of those unfortunate individuals in this country who can see nothing but calamity ahead. Their lexicon teaches them that the poor are growing poorer, the wealthy richer still, and things generally are going to the demitition bow-wows at a mile a minute clip. All our courts are corrupt, the trusts are forcing up the price of everything we buy, beating down the price of things we have to sell. Everybody is a rascal but ourselves, and our folks, and it will be only a short time now until the devil will come along and shovel the whole business off into oblivion. At least that's the way it would appear to one reading and believing some of the calamity howling newspapers, and public speakers that are heard so much at the present time. Yet the sun still shines, the world smiles and nearly everybody you meet looks happy and has a dollar or two in his pocket. It really doesn't seem that the world is kiting into meanness at such a fearful rate and, on second thought, it will be better to stick around a while longer. The optimist has some things to be thankful for, after all.

Uncle "Brigham" Young, the well known resident of the Luckiamute, read a whole lecture to the "progressives" the other day and it didn't take him long either. He called at the court house to register and, in answer to the question, "what are your politics," he replied, "Republican, of course, always Republican." Later in conversation, he was asked whether he was for President Taft or Roosevelt. Then "Brigham" grew emphatic. "I vote for Taft, of course, didn't I just tell you I was a Republican?" There will be no occasion for "Brigham" to declare that "I'm just as good a Republican as anybody" during this campaign. People will never call his party fealty into question.

The Ashland Tidings is supporting Roosevelt. It says it is a "progressive" newspaper but can't stand for LaFollette on account of his radicalism. Yet the Wisconsin man, in his palmist days never advocated any proposition so wildly radical as the "recall of judicial decisions" which is the battle cry of the Sage of Sagamore.

Editorials of the People.

Signed communications will be printed under this head from responsible parties but their publication does not necessarily imply that they express the sentiments of the editor.

LAW LEADS TO EXTRAVAGANCE

Fallacy and Expense of State Owned Printing Plant Shown.

To the Editor:—When the bill providing for a state-owned and state-operated printing office was introduced in the Oregon Legislature last year, The Observer was one of the few newspapers in the state that raised a warning voice against its passage. It was pointed out that state-owned printing plants had proved an expensive venture wherever established, and the suggestion was offered that if the Legislature wished to pursue the business-like course, it would revise the scale of prices under which the State Printer was then working, (a scale which had been in existence, without revision, for nearly forty years) and in its place provide a law requiring that official to furnish printed matter at the prevailing prices charged by modern commercial printing offices for a like amount of work.

The warning was also raised that

a state-operated printing plant would open the way for graft and corruption on a gigantic scale; that, with the state purse-strings loosened for the payment of bills for machinery, wages and supplies, the temptation to accept "crooked money" from unscrupulous supply houses, in return for fat contracts, might prove irresistible to some mercenary State Printer and disastrous to the taxpayers of Oregon.

It was further pointed out that the salary, (\$2,500 a year) provided by the new law would attract none but inexperienced printers, or experienced rascals, to make the race for this important office—such a salary being far less than the yearly remuneration of competent managers or superintendents in the larger printing offices in Portland.

It was also prophesied that, with the State Printer left free to employ such help as he might choose, the state office would soon be filled with a small army of clock-watching, political buzzards, who, being too lazy to do an honest day's work in a commercial printing office, would be rewarded with a "sit" in the state shop, in return for their ability to line up the voters in their home precincts on election day.

All of these dangers were pointed out, but the warnings fell upon deaf ears. The experience of California, and a few other "horrible examples" with state-owned plants, had no terrors for the wild-eyed bunch sitting under the Big Dome by the grace of the "peepul of Oregon." Socialism was rampant. Populism had its inning. Common sense and good business had no place in the proceedings which brought about the passage of this new printing measure. As the law could but end in extravagance, it seemed only proper for it to begin in extravagance. As the taxpayers were to be stung for all time to come, it seemed fitting that the expense account be opened at once. Acting upon this theory, evidently, the lid was torn off the Oregon treasury and every doubtful member was told to help himself.

Was it an appropriation he wanted? A little trifle of a few hundred thousand for some pet institution, or a "slice of pork" for an admiring and devoted constituency? Why, certainly; go right down to the State Treasurer's office and help himself. Only a small favor would be asked in return—he must vote right on the State Printer bill. And the faithful chronicler of Oregon history will be obliged to record that the big majority of these "doubtful" brethren did help themselves—and that liberally. They were not at all bashful. They dug deep. Probably the only reason they did not dig deeper was because their arms were not longer.

And so we have it. The new printing bill is law, and the property owners of the state are just now paying for the "first round." Next year there will be more to pay. And the next year, still more. Oregon has already purchased the site for the new printing building. It cost money; and a lot of it. Next will come the building itself. That will cost more money. Then will come the plant and equipment—and that will cost more money than any man not familiar with the printing business could even imagine. And after that will come the yearly, and monthly, and daily purchases of paper and ink and machinery—and the wages of the clock-watchers—and the "hand-out" to the political buzzards, (who can't set type much, but who are long on lining up the vote in their home precincts on election day.)

The salary of the State Printer himself will not amount to much. He will probably have to steal to keep even. But there will be the State Printing Commission, (of three, or five—I forget just how many members,) which is to be appointed to "supervise" the State Printer. Trust your genuine, dyed-in-the-wool, "will-of-the-people" legislator to look out for the salary end of it. He's a new species in Oregon politics. And he's a bird. He keeps one ear to the ground for the faintest whisper of the people's will, but he keeps both eyes on the flesh-pots.

And what provokes all this outburst on the part of the writer at this late day, you ask? Oh, nothing in particular. Only that this afternoon, while perusing the columns of the American Stationer, his glance lighted upon this paragraph:

"That the California State Printing Office has stock enough on hand to supply over a million copy books to school children and to meet the demands for over five years, is the substance of a report made last week to the text-book committee. A careful investigation shows that this stock cost the state nearly twice what it could now be purchased for; that when the last purchase was made in 1908, there was then enough stock on hand to supply the market for nine years. (Queer wasn't it? These remarks in parenthesis are mine.) In less than one year 2785 reams of copy paper was purchased at 19 and 19½ cents a pound. Various houses have recently been asked to give prices on this paper in quantities as small as 100 reams, and the average bid is 10.1-2 cents a pound. The stock which cost the state \$34,219 can now be purchased in small quantities for \$18,420."

Will California's experience be the experience of Oregon? The Observer predicted that it would, and the writer of these predictions has never changed his mind. Especially, since two of the leading lobbyists for the Oregon bill have recently confessed

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The new knitted mesh, pure thread silk top with Messaline Flounce and Silk Dust Ruffle. A Kloffit Skirt of pure silk

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The New Petticoats of

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In the latest shades of Green, Blue, Red and Brown. An All Silk Messaline at \$3.00

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Plain and Fancy Silk Petticoats in Taffata and Messaline. All colors. \$3.50 to \$10.00

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Home of Hart Schaffner & Marx Clothes, Packard Shoes for Men, American Lady Shoes for Women, Buster Brown Shoes for Children.

to him that their only fear of the new law is that it may lead to extravagance.

May lead to extravagance! How can the state be led to something it is already up against? Look at your new tax receipt for the answer.

J. C. HAYTER.

Dallas, Ore., March 21.

SAYS NEWSPAPERS COULD HELP

Salem Man Sees Way to Enlighten People on System.

Editor Polk County Observer, Dear Sir:—In your paper of the 12th inst. is an editorial on "Intelligent Voting" that is no doubt to the point. But it fails to point out a remedy for the existing conditions. It seems to me that the remedy lies to a large degree in the hands of the editors of the newspapers of Oregon. Most of the people read the papers and if, when there are matters up to be decided by the people under the initiative and referendum, the papers would each devote a column or two of each issue to a discussion of these matters, most of the voters would go to the polls with a fairly intelligent idea of the matters to be decided. The newspaper should be a kind of forum where a large number of the most intelligent citizens should give out their best thought on questions of public interest for the enlightenment of their fellow citizens. Added to this, wherever it is practicable, there should be neighborhood gatherings for the discussion of questions; then gatherings of wider scope where men prominent in affairs and who have given the matters under consideration careful study shall discuss the questions before the people. But, who would hire the hall and pay the janitor? It seems as though there is no one who is public spirited enough to care whether his neighbors are informed or not. But we have the papers and in them, it seems to me lies the largest possibility of remedy for the present conditions. If the editors could only see it and would make full use of their opportunity. They should be the "Intelligencers" of the people.

Yours for "Intelligent Voting."
EDWARD T. HAMER.

Salem, Ore., March 18.

LET CONTRACT FOR CULVERTS

Salem Man Closes Deal For Construction of Two in Polk.

By an order of the county court entered on March 16, O. C. Leisen was awarded the contract for the construction of two concrete culverts on the Wallace road in District No. 4 and bonded in the sum of \$2,640, signed by the contractor and the Na-

tional Surety company was approved and filed. By the terms of the bond, the contractor agrees to construct the culverts in a workmanlike manner and to guarantee them for one year.

Obituary.

Lavina Koser was born in Lawrence county, Penn., February 1, 1827, and died at her home in Rickreall on Tuesday, March 19, aged 75 years, one month and 19 days. She was married to Levi C. Koser September 20, 1850. The family came to Oregon in 1886 and settled in Dallas, afterward removing to Rickreall where they have since resided. Deceased was the mother of six children, of whom five are living. Mrs. C. A. Ogden, of Salem, Ohio; F. A. Koser, of Rickreall; Mrs. W. H. McKee, of Perrydale; Miss Mattie and J. R. Koser, of Rickreall. Deceased had long been a member of the Congregational church. Funeral services were conducted at the Evangelical church in Rickreall on Thursday, March 21, at 10 o'clock, by Rev. C. P. Gates, of Dallas, interment taking place in the I. O. O. F. cemetery at this place.

Miss Bertha Foster is visiting at the home of her aunt Mrs. I. F. Yoakum.

Attention Mohair Growers.

All those having mohair for sale are requested to report their fleeces either to H. L. Penton or at the Dallas Mercantile company at once, in order that the pool may be made up.

Sam Evans, who consolidated the Klamath Chronicle and the Klamath Falls Pioneer Press a few weeks ago has now dropped both the old names and will call his paper henceforth the Klamath Falls Northwestern.

Granulated Eye Lids

Do not need to be cauterized or scarred by a physician. Sutherland's Eagle Eye Salve is guaranteed to cure them without pain. It is harmless and a sure cure for granulated lids. 25c tubes at Stafin's.

Astoria Budget: Alex Frederickson is making excellent progress on the construction of the wharf at Tongue Point to be used by the county in connection with its rock crushing plant. It is expected the crushing of rock can be commenced early in April.

A Smooth Skin

Black Heads, Chaps, Pimples, Sores and all unhealthy conditions of the skin are unsightly and detract from the looks. Buy a box of Dr. Bell's

Antiseptic Salve, a creamy, white ointment, apply as directed and your skin will be as clear as a babe's. Sold at Stafin's drug store.

The Dallas Variety Store

Carries a complete line of Ladies' Coats, Suits, Waists and Underwear.



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A 25 acre and a 21 acre prime orchard for sale.

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