

Eastern Clackamas News

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Editor and Manager.

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The Country Newspaper and Politics

Before another issue of the News appears the election will be a thing of the past, and all will be over except the shouting of the victors.

The News is not a partisan paper, altho formerly it ranked as Republican. But the present editor abandoned that policy because, first from a sense of fairness to his supporters. In a small community, where two papers are not practicable, and the members are divided up into several political camps, with no particular one dominating, it hardly seems just to maintain a paper in the interest of only a part of the community which contributes to its support. The country paper is preeminently the home paper, to conserve local interests rather than for the political ends of any party.

Secondly, a political paper must be run as an organ of a certain party and accept and back all that that party stands for or advocates, irrespective of the editor's own opinions. So he has to merge his individuality politically in the party of which his paper is an organ. Or else he can, while backing a particular party yet be independent of it, and speak out his mind as he likes. In this case the paper is republican or democratic to the extent the editor is.

The former instance while perhaps good from a business point of view, does not appeal to the editor of the News. He wishes to keep and impress his own individuality on his paper in every way, as, if it be not too presumptuous to make the comparison, in former years Horace Greeley did on the New York Tribune, and more recently Henry Watterson on the Louisville Courier-Journal.

As concerns the latter he is not as yet qualified to take a leading political part, so prefers not to attempt what he cannot successfully carry out.

However in local affairs of a political nature when he thinks he can speak helpfully, he will not hesitate so to do.

Warden Murphy's Defense

Warden Murphy of the State penitentiary, has sent round to the papers, an explanation which he has addressed to the Governor, about the increased expenditures at that institution. He claims that these increases are in accordance with those of private individuals and not the result of extravagance. Among other things he says:

"The increase in the total expenses of maintenance is easily accounted for and can be fully realized by every family in the state in calculating its own expenses for the same period. In the principal commodities represented by food and clothing there has been an increase of 40 to 150 per cent in the purchase price. The demand for labor and the wages which labor commands have advanced to such an extent that we were forced to reduce the hours and increase the pay of guards and officers in order to hold efficient, reliable men. I inaugurated a three-shift system on the 24-hour service and advanced the wages in several cases, yet the increase in the pay roll for the period just closed over the preceding period is only \$12,712.59, or about 20 per cent. The increase in all other items of consumption was \$35,630.69, or 29 per cent. I would ask any householder or business man in the state to decide for himself whether he has kept his expenses of the past two years as close to those of the previous two years as that."

"I do not claim to be super-human. I have not expended one dollar of the state's money that I did not believe to be necessary and for the best. The times and conditions have been extraordinary the past two years and it has not been possible to make a reputation as an economist, but I am confident there has been no extravagance. And I claim that the prison farm, the orchard, the stock and the general surroundings are in better condition than they have ever been in before, while in the gardens and lawns there is more of tidiness, taste and beauty than ever appeared at any previous time, so that for the operations of the future there is the best possible preparation made."

"I am bidding for no laurels, but I ask the people of the state to view the conduct of this institution in the light of their own practical knowledge and experience and not by the light of political jealousy and the desire to build up causes for undeserved criticism."

The R. R. Fishing Bill.

In regard to the above Fishing bill which has been referred to the voters, the question is so clouded by controversy that it is extremely difficult to decide on its merits. The Oregon Voter suggests that the whole matter be left to Fish and Game Commission which enjoys the confidence of both the angling and commercial fishing fraternities. If it requires more authority let this be given it by the next legislature. Those who think this suggestion wise will vote against the bill.

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