

The Sentinel

A GOOD PAPER IS A GOOD TOWN

H. A. YOUNG and M. D. GRIMES
Publishers

H. A. YOUNG, Editor

Subscription Rates

One Year \$2.00
Six Months 1.00
Three Months50
No subscription taken unless paid for in advance. This rule is imperative.

Advertising Rates

Display advertising, 25 cents per inch; less than 5 inches, 30 cents per inch. No advertisement inserted for less than 50 cents. Reading notices 10 cents per line. No reading notice, or advertisement of any kind, inserted for less than 25 cents.

Entered at the Coquille Postoffice as Second Class Mail Matter

Office Corner W. First and Willard St.

HAVE OREGON PEOPLE AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX?

The article below, by Robert Sawyer, president of the State Editorial Association, was delivered at the annual Press Conference at Eugene last month. It is one that every thinking person in the state should read and ponder. An inferiority complex, an acknowledgement by Oregon citizens that neighboring states have better climate, more resources, or more outstanding opportunities, is an insult to Oregon, for it is not true.

Mr. Sawyer is editor of the Bend Bulletin, and a member of the State Highway Commission. Below we print his address in full.

The fact that a paper discussing ways of developing a forward-looking and cohesive spirit in Oregon seemed desirable and in place at this press conference is, we must realize, evidence that such spirit is lacking today. And, indeed, is it not? On all sides rise complaints that Oregon is stricken with poverty, over-burdened with debt and taxation, lacking in leadership, given to fads and foolishness in legislation. From this quarter veiled charges are made against our legislators and public officials, from that come innuendo and whispers directed at leaders in endeavor of every sort. Oregon is compared with her neighbors to her disadvantage and discredit. We suffer from a complexity of complexes.

Edmund Burke did not "know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people," and I cannot write a prescription for a whole state. I can, however point out how little they regard the facts who see in Oregon only frustration and negation and I can urge upon you here and upon our newspaper leaders in every town and city in the state to sound a new note of progress and optimism. Let the public that is so largely to blame for the complaints we hear in Oregon today be given the facts until the true greatness of Oregon is known.

Do not misunderstand. I am no male Pollyanna, nor do I propose any campaign of boost. I urge rather that we cease this constant assertion of the negative, that instead of denying we affirm, that we learn our Oregon, that we stop complaining over what she lacks and recognize and make the most of the abundance she has.

What an abundance that is! In timber, in wheat, in fisheries, in fruits, in sheep, in cattle, in farms—no, I do not say that Oregon leads the world nor the nation, though in some of these she does, but I ask what state or what nation, rich as it might be, would not exult could it but add to its resources those of Oregon today? Shall not Oregonians equally be proud? Shall we not enthuse over our mountains, our lakes, our valleys, our deserts, our rivers, our coast line, our rain, our sunshine—our infinite variety. Where in the nation is there a finer American breed than in Oregon? How well have we done with our man-made things, our harbors, our towns, our colleges, our highways.

Oregon suffers today from a poverty complex. It is said that the state lacks wealth. Because of an antiquated and outworn system of taxation an unequal burden falls on certain classes of property. Those who complain of the condition because of its weight on them insist that taxes are too high and that the state cannot afford such a burden. From here it is an easy step to the conclusion that the state is poor.

Again, because of our tax system, and, in particular, because of the limitation clause of the state constitution funds are not available for many most worthy and important causes and activities. The financial needs of our institutions of higher learning—to mention a condition well known to all here—cannot be met. Our state library suffers. Our officials are underpaid. Our hospitals need enlargement—and there is no money. It is because of our tax system that the money cannot be had, but poverty is set up as the cause.

What are the facts? Oregon is not poverty stricken. On the contrary the state is fortunate beyond all but a few in the enjoyment of riches. In 1927 the estimated per capita wealth of Oregon was \$4,026.

She stood fifth in the list of states. Only Nevada, South Dakota, Iowa and Wyoming ranked above her. In 1924, in order of amount of income per capita Oregon stood 13th in the nation with an estimated per capita income of \$635. The national average was \$530 or 12 per cent below the Oregon figure. Oregon had, by the latest compilation, 251 automobiles per 1000 of population, a number exceeded by only three states of the remaining 47, Iowa, Nevada and California. Her gasoline consumption per 1000 of population was 147,062 gallons, an amount exceeded in but four other states. Here are four separate indices each pointing to Oregon's wealth. Another appears in the fact that savings are increasing more rapidly in Oregon than in either California or Washington.

No, Oregon is not poor. Oregon suffers today from a California complex. We are too prone to think and to talk and to write of California achievement. California publicity, California methods, California success and to compare Oregon's, to these to the disadvantage of Oregon. We envy our neighbor. We belittle Oregon when we mention California.

Now California is a favored land—but no more favored in her way than Oregon in hers. About California there is a romance, an aura, and, too, a capacity for practical results that stir every imagination. Her history, her gold, her oil, her size, her progress, all are amazing. It is not necessary, however, in recognizing California to belittle Oregon. Oregon, as well has romantic history and remarkable resources. She, as well, has made tremendous progress and has a glowing future. As a place in which to live and enjoy existence Oregon yields nothing to California.

I have already pointed out what Oregon's wealth is and given you some comparison with California. Do you know that taxation is higher in California—and in Washington, too—than in Oregon? It is not only higher but it is increasing more rapidly. Since 1911 the state tax in Oregon has increased two and a half times. In the same period it has increased twice two and a half times in California or over five times altogether.

A few Oregonians spend the winter in California. Thousands of Californians spend the summer in Oregon. Does not that summer influx tell us we have something that is lacking to the south? We never begin school in August so that we can finish before the heat becomes intolerable in the spring. We shall never have to fight with six other states, for the muddy waters of a distant river. Earthquakes do not bring us fire and destruction. What a commentary on his home state it was when a Californian named Oregon "the green land."

We are fortunate in having such a neighbor. We send her much, we take much from her. In some sections of Oregon half the new population comes from California. Let us remember our good fortune and resolve that henceforth we shall no longer be depressed by a feeling of inferiority, but instead inspired by one of satisfaction and clear that, whatever California may have or be, we are Oregonians.

How does Oregon stand in the matter of health? The rate of infant mortality is a good measuring stick of the general welfare, wealth, intelligence, and degree of civilization of a community. Do you know that Oregon has the lowest infant mortality rate in the United States? The Oregon rate is 48 per 1,000. Idaho and Washington are tied for second place with a rate of 50 each. California is not in the first 12. They can raise a lot of things down there but something in the water or the heat or the climate or the intelligence of the people puts the state in a poor place in the matter of infant mortality.

The latest figures show that Oregon's death rate from tuberculosis is going down. So, indeed, is the rate of the United States, Oregon's is going down faster than the average. That is, where Oregon had the 10th lowest rate in 1922 and the 12th in 1923, '24 and '25, she had the 9th in 1926. In that year the deaths from tuberculosis in Oregon were 61.8 per 100,000 of population. Is it fair to call attention to the fact that in that same year California had 134.8 deaths per 100,000, or more than twice the Oregon figure?

I have told you of health and wealth. What about the literacy of the people of Oregon? Oregon is fourth in the nation in the percentage of the population that gets a high school education—something not at all possible, by the way, in a state that is poor. Oregon is eighth in the percentage of its teachers who have normal school education. It is seventh in the amount of education, figured on years in school, that the average young person receives. An impartial investigation places Oregon as ninth in literacy in the nation. Only two states have fewer illiterates than Oregon. These are records in which every Oregonian may find satisfaction.

In working for the development of a forward looking and cohesive spirit in Oregon let us give recognition more frequently and more generously to those who are making an effort in office or in public service. Motives are not always ignoble and selfish, yet

much too often we write of men as though they were. In a democracy the rule runs "When you see a head hit it," and heads that in the slow march begin to rise above those surrounding them are all too often the target for criticism, misrepresentation and abuse. Let us vary the procedure. Instead of swinging the club or throwing the brickbat let us take the lead in recognition of ability.

Does Oregon treat its young men as they deserve? I have heard it said that only in Eugene, Medford and Bend will the budding merit and promise in a young man be permitted to flower and fruit. I cannot say how this may be so far as other towns are concerned. You know about your own. If the charge be true make it false. Give youth a chance. Today's problems are his tomorrow. His contact and participation can begin none too soon. As never before youth is serving the world today. Let youth serve in Oregon as well, where undeveloped resource gives opportunity for enterprise, initiative and vigor.

How well do you know Oregon? Have you been to Burns, to Astoria, to Brookings, to Vale, to Ashland, to Mitchell, to Kent, to Joseph, to Sis-

ters, to Scottsburg, to Austin, to Prospect, to Oakridge, to Vernonia? If not, I urge that you go about as fast as you can. If you are to look forward in Oregon we must know Oregon and to know that state we must travel. It is again our fortune that travel is easy because of our splendid highways. Get to know those highways and the fact of Oregon's greatness and good fortune are ever with you.

Travel outside of Oregon. Go through Washington and California, go to the east—preferably the east. View with clear eyes and an open mind. You will see much that is different and much that is good, but you will return more thoroughly an Oregonian than ever. I urge on every one of you that if you will travel only a little—it need not be for long, nor for far, nor expensively—you will return to join enthusiastically in this movement for Oregon.

Complaints are made of high taxation as though Oregon alone suffered from tax troubles. Let us agree that taxes are high—they are no higher on the average in Oregon than in the other states. Indeed, the general run of taxes in Oregon is under that in

many states, particularly here in the west. This business of taxes has worried the world ever since records have been kept. From the sunbaked tablets of Babylon to today's issue of the Oregon Voter there has been discussion of tax matters and there will be discussion so long as taxes are levied. Our duty is to study taxation and to write about it, but let us do so sanely, reasonably, temperately. For the most part the taxes the people pay are for the purposes we have endorsed and they have approved. Is the money being spent wisely and economically? Is the desired purpose being achieved? Are we getting value? Are just contributions being made by all? These are tax subjects so we can write about without sinking into a sea of pessimism over Oregon. Let us make that our effort instead of criticism and complaint.

I might go on. I might recall for those of you have forgotten the splendid health record made by the young men of Oregon who were examined in the draft. In the case of diseases that are somewhat under the control of the individual and whose absence is an indication of a good standard of individual conduct Oregon stood very high. The young men of Oregon were

eighth in the nation in their freedom from social disease. Whatever you may think about taxes, or poverty or California, I say that this record alone is enough to justify such pride in Oregon as will submerge her feeling of inferiority.

I might urge a change from the acceptance of defeatism because great enterprises and great new growth are not chronicled for Oregon every day. Let us remember that size and bigness are not tremendously all important. Of quality of achievement, of citizenship and of progress Oregon need not be ashamed.

I might present other facts and other ideas but here are enough. Oregon is fortunate and wealthy and great, great in history, in resources, in citizenship, in accomplishment and in promise. Pioneers endured extreme hardship to reach Oregon, to subdue its wilds and to establish their homes. Like them we have chosen it for our home because it promises most to us. We can develop a forward looking and cohesive spirit if we will learn all that is good in Oregon, tell of it, preach it, write about it and take pride in it.

Calling cards 100 for \$1.00.

The Hub

presenting

SPRING SHOE FASHIONS

In The Smartest
Most Attractive

Deauville Sandals

Red - Green - Brown
and Fancy Weave Blonde

Prices - - \$5.65 \$6.95

Corrective
Shoe Fitting

489 Taylor St. - - Coquille