

Shall the State of Oregon Build Railroads?

THE people of Oregon are to vote on a constitutional amendment at the general election in 1910, which, if carried, will give the state power to build railroads. The campaign for state owned railroads is now on. Many of the leading men of the state are lecturing from public platforms and writing articles in favor of this amendment. The Oregon-Idaho Development League, which is working so strenuously for a railroad from Boise across Oregon to Coos Bay, favors state-aided railroads. There is also a bitter opposition to it. THE BULLETIN, at this stage of the discussion, takes a stand neither for nor against the amendment. Below, however, we print a synopsis of the address of Col. C. E. S. Wood delivered before the People's Forum in Portland. Col. Wood is a brilliant lawyer and is one of the foremost advocates of the state-aided railroad idea in Oregon. We print his address as it gives concisely the argument of those who favor the proposed amendment.

Eliminates Personality.

"This is a matter which is of vital interest to the people of this state and it ought to be discussed altogether apart from personalities. No one is justified in saying that the Oregonian is bought by the railroad people because the Oregonian opposes this movement. There are plenty of able men in the state who are sincerely opposed to it, and the editor of the Oregonian has consistently held to the views he is now expressing all his life. The fact is, it will be better that some able opposition be expressed, because the people, when they come to vote upon this amendment, should fully understand both sides of the question."

The speaker said probably the best way to treat the subject would be to show how he himself had been influenced. Continuing, he said:

"For example, the state of Washington was building up because of the railroads. The railroad was the modern highway and without it settlement and development of the state was impossible. Seattle and Tacoma were growing because eastern Washington, which is tributary to them, is developing rapidly."

"Eastern Oregon, on the contrary, is practically as it was 30 years ago when it was Indian country. It is nothing but a stock country with very sparse population, and yet eastern Oregon is just as good as eastern Washington. It is as large as the state of Maine and has greater resources, for it has all the pine timber of the east slope of the Cascades and of the Blue mountains and many valleys into which the Willamette valley could be thrown and would be lost. There are nearly 5,000,000 acres of government lands in the Burns district alone."

Harriman's Policy.

"The Harriman system has eastern Oregon surrounded and any line through central Oregon would in a sense parallel the Short Line and the O. R. & N. to Portland. Therefore it is not to the interest of the Harriman people to construct this line until they have to, and it is not to the interest of the Harriman people to spend money in eastern Oregon (which territory in a railroad sense they own) while they are fighting for territory with other lines in Washington and California."

"The truth of these statements is demonstrated by the fact that the Harriman system has plenty of money to get terminals in Seattle, or to duplicate the line from Portland to the Sound, or to keep roads out of California, but makes no

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move to develop eastern Oregon until someone else is ready to do so.

"If, therefore, it is unwise for the state to develop itself by rail highways now, it will be just as unwise to years hence, so that the logic of those who oppose this movement is that the state must wait indefinitely or forever until private capitalists see fit in their own good time and at their own good pleasure to develop the state. This seems bad logic. It does not seem right that the destinies of a state should await the pleasure of a few individuals. It is too much like feudalism, when a baron owned a county, or a province, and did as he pleased with it."

In Grip of Monopoly.

"It is this practical situation which calls for a remedy. Oregon is being held raw and undeveloped in the grip of a few railroad magnates while her neighbors outstrip her. For this evil there ought to be some remedy. Millions of people are wanting homes and would be glad to flock to Oregon, but in our time there is only one commercial highway for the transportation of people and produce; that is the railway, and people will not come to the great empire of central Oregon until the things they raise there can be taken to market."

"Wheat, oats, barley, hops, sugar beets, apples, small fruits, onions, cabbages; in short, pretty nearly everything can be raised in eastern Oregon, and are being raised there now for local consumption, but until a railroad offers the means of carrying the stuff to market it must remain a grazing country."

"What is the remedy? No one offers any suggestion in place of the one proposed, namely, that the state shall construct its own railroads. Until some better solution is offered, either the state must construct its own rail highways, or it must wait indefinitely until private capital chooses to do it."

Exactions of the Railroads.

"There is another general thought which strikes at the root of this problem: any business ought to be in the hands of those most interested in it. Now, in fact, the interest of the people of Oregon, or of any other state, is to have as many railroads as possible. The interest of the private railroad owner is to have as few railroads as possible and extract as much profit from the state as possible, with the very least expenditure. The Oregon situation is a perfect example. Again, the interest of the people is for the lowest possible rate and a uniform service. The interest of the private railroad manager is for the highest possible rate, which is often calculated on bonus or watered stock and not on money invested. Thus, the real interest of the state is for more railroads and low rates; the interest of the private railroad owner is for fewer railroads and high rates. The logic of this is that the state ought in some way to direct the construction of railroads within its boundaries and regulate the rates."

Municipal and State Ownership.

"There is nothing new in the doctrine that highways are the avenues of civilization and that the state is vitally interested in them. Before the days of railroads the

states constructed turnpikes and canals. There are many such in the eastern states. The state of Oregon is deepening her channel in the Columbia and Willamette rivers and has constructed a portage railroad.

"It is a common fact and indeed is the prevailing modern doctrine that cities should operate their own water works, gas works, maintain bridges, and there is no doubt that the same logic that requires that the city own and operate its street railway system should also apply to the state."

"But it is said that the construction of state railways will bankrupt the state with debt, will increase the taxation, will put the railroads into politics and will result in general ill management, and it is pointed out that the portage railroad is operated at a loss. These considerations are all well worthy of attention; but, as it seems to me, the appeal to the old-time history of railroad grafting on the finances of the state is not applicable here."

Former Railroad Graft.

"The evil against which the clause in our constitution was aimed was that the railroad lobby got aid from the legislature or the city council (as the case might be) either in the shape of guaranteed bonds, or lands, and right of way, or direct subsidies; but in any event the railroad people pocketed these bounties and gave absolutely nothing in return, and yet frequently grafted enough to nearly build the road. No door to any such proceedings is to be opened here. On the contrary, this amendment expressly provides that there shall be no aid granted to any privately owned road; that no road built by the state shall be sold; that it shall not be leased except upon terms that provide for the fixed charges and a sinking fund, and upon such other conditions as will guarantee the rights of the people. There is no possibility under this amendment that any lobby or set of grafters can get a finger into the state treasury, or into the people's pocket."

People Now Pay Expenses.

"As for running the state into bankruptcy, the people of Oregon today are paying all the expenses of the Harriman system within the state of Oregon and are paying Mr. Harriman all of the interest on his bonds, are providing him with a sinking fund to retire those bonds and are paying him good interest on inflated stock. The people of Oregon are not fools enough to believe that they are not already paying railroad expenses and paying the profits besides."

"That the railroad might not pay until the country is settled up is true, but the history of the West shows that this would be a very



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short period, not to exceed three years. I am told that the North Yakima valley alone, in Washington, furnishes more profitable freight to the railroads than any area of like extent in the West. There are very many Yakima valleys in Eastern Oregon. If a line through Central Oregon cost \$10,000,000, and this money was got on the sale of 4 per cent bonds, the interest on the investment would be \$400,000 a year; considerably less than \$1 a head for the present scanty population of Oregon; or, this same interest would be at the rate of 10 cents an acre per annum on the lands in the Burns district.
(To be continued next week.)

EDUCATIONAL MEETING

Will Be Held in Bend on Saturday, April 10.

An educational meeting will be held in Bend on Saturday, April 10. It will be conducted by County Superintendent Ford, who is making a practice of holding such meetings at various places throughout the county.

All teachers and school officers embraced in the territory south of Crooked river and east of the Deschutes and all of the Laidlaw, Tumalo districts and that territory tributary to Bend are earnestly requested to attend this meeting.

Questions pertaining to the general interests of the public schools will be discussed. Some of the topics that will be discussed are as follows:

1. Crook County High School training department—Led by Prof. W. B. Chapman of Redmond and Prof. M. B. Hockenberry of the Crook County High School.
2. The School Exhibit at the county fair—How to make it a success.
3. High Schools—Their Future—led by J. Alton Thompson of Laidlaw and Miss Reid of Bend.
4. Literature in the Grades—Miss Rose R. Parrott of Crook County High School.
5. How I Teach the Little Folks—Miss Richardson, Bend.
6. Agriculture and Industrial Education in the Public Schools—Led by Prof. Thompson, John Tuck and Henry Hewins.
7. Language in the Primary Grades—Miss Nellie James of Laidlaw.
8. How to Build up an Ideal School—Miss Ruth Reid, principal Bend schools.
9. Reading in Fourth Grades—Miss Smith, Prineville Public Schools.
10. The Recitation—J. Alton Thompson, of Laidlaw.
11. Inter-Eighth Grade Debates and Declaration Contests—Led by Prof. E. L. Ashby, Principal of Prineville Public Schools and Miss Maude Vaudevert of Bend.

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OFFICIAL CHARTER OF The First National Bank OF BEND.

No. 996
Treasury Department, Office of Comptroller of the Currency, Washington, D. C. March 7, 1909.
WHEREAS, by satisfactory evidence presented to the undersigned, it has been made to appear that "The First National Bank of Bend," in the town of Bend, in the county of Crook, and state of Oregon, has complied with all the provisions of the Statutes of the United States, required to be complied with before a national bank can be authorized to commence the business of banking.
NOW THEREFORE I, LAWRENCE O. MURRAY, Comptroller of the Currency, do hereby certify that "The First National Bank of Bend," in the town of Bend, in the county of Crook, and state of Oregon, is authorized to commence the business of banking as provided in section fifty-one hundred and sixty-nine of the Revised Statutes of the United States.
IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of office this seventeenth day of March, 1909.
LAWRENCE O. MURRAY,
Comptroller of the Currency.

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