

# RABBIT BOUNTY LAW DISCUSSED

## HARNEY COUNTY MEN DISAGREE

Nearly \$15,000 Paid in Bounties Since January 1, 1915, and Still They Come—County Judge Levens Thinks System is Bad.

BURNS, Or., March 18.—Since January 1, 1915, Harney County has paid bounty of five cents a head on nearly 300,000 jack rabbits. The total expense to date is close to \$45,000. Opinion is divided as to whether or not the bounty law is a wise one. In view of the agitation in favor of placing a bounty on jack rabbits in other Central Oregon counties the experience of Harney county with the bounty law is of especial interest at this time.

The bounty law was adopted by the people of Harney county on an initiative petition at the general election in 1914. The law became effective on January 1, 1915, the bounty provided being five cents per rabbit. The vote on the measure was 1,156 in favor and 793 opposed.

Under the law it is the duty of the county court when setting the tax levy to make a sufficient levy to meet the estimated expenditure for bounties in the ensuing year. Under this provision the court levied a tax of three mills for 1915, producing revenue amounting to \$32,000. The whole amount was exhausted before the end of the year and \$10,000 in warrants issued. According to County Judge H. C. Levens, in spite of the number of rabbits killed, there is no diminution in the supply, the claims for the bounty at the latest term of court having been as great as at any term in the past year.

### Judge Levens Opposed.

Judge Levens is one of those who think that the Harney county bounty law is bad. His opinion is that a bounty is only temporary in its results and that the county would be better off if it bought rabbit wire in car load lots to turn over to ranchers, instead of paying the bounty. Even assuming that a bounty is desirable he believes it a bad thing unless all counties in which rabbits are found have the same bounty law. At present he is satisfied that Harney is paying bounty on rabbits even from Nevada, which borders his county, as well as from the neighboring Oregon counties. Theoretically this situation is guarded against by the requirement that a bounty claimant make affidavit that his rabbits were killed in Harney county, but the judge's faith in human nature, at least on this particular subject, is weak. Proof that rabbits were killed out of Harney is impossible. The court can only accept the affidavits and pay the bounty, but it often has its doubts.

Judge Levens also believes that if a county is to have a bounty, five cents a head is too high. Two and a half cents would be nearer right in his opinion.

Another official, who does not wish his name to be used, favors a bounty law, but agrees with Judge Levens that it is undesirable for a single county to be paying bounties. In his opinion, if it came to a vote, Harney county would today enact the bounty law by a larger majority than in 1914.

For the current year the levy for rabbit bounty in Harney is two and a half mills, the total levy for state and county purposes being 22 mills.

In connection with the foregoing the following letter from the United States Biological Survey is of interest.

Washington, D. C., March 8.  
Mr. J. W. Moore,  
Sey, Redmond Commercial Club,  
Redmond, Oregon.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of February 25, in regard to the practicability of the bounty system in controlling jack rabbits, is received. In reply it may be stated that the Biological Survey has made a study of the bounty system for over twenty years and, as far as can be learned, extermination of animal pests has never been accomplished by bounties. It is a general experience that the administration of bounty laws is attended by much fraud. Also, the expense connected with this method of controlling rabbits is out of all proportion with the benefit gained and nearly always results in the exhaustion of county or State funds long before any permanent good can be accomplished. As an example, it may be cited that Harney county, Oregon, during the period from January 1, 1915, to January 31, 1916, has paid bounties of five cents each on 952,537 rabbits. The destruction of this enormous number of rabbits has materially reduced the total number of rabbits, according to the county officials, but owing to the heavy drain on county funds payment of bounties will soon have to be discontinued. As there are still a great many rabbits left, they will soon multiply to their previous number. Many other similar

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- 1 No. 2 1/2 Can Lemon Cling Peaches . . . . .15
- 1 No. 2 1/2 Can Muscat Grapes . . . . .29
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- 1 Gallon Can Apples . . . . .35

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cases are on record, which clearly show that bounties fail to accomplish any permanent relief, and they quite often fail to afford even temporary relief unless by the expenditure of large sums.

Very truly yours,  
H. W. HENSHAW,  
Chief, Biological Survey.

Spring will soon be here, Mr. Farmer, and you should be thinking of the seed you will sow. See The Bend Flour Mill Company's list of suitable seed for spring sowing.—Adv.

For sign painting see Edwards.—Adv.

**Value of an Inch of Rain.**  
Every inch of rainfall above four inches in the Dakotas, California, Washington, Kansas and Nebraska in May and June means an increase of \$15,000,000 in the wheat crop. Every inch of rainfall above three inches in July in Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Iowa, Ohio and Nebraska increases the value of the corn crop by \$100,000,000. These figures are compiled by E. J. Cragoe for the Journal of Geography.

### Hollow Shafts.

By careful experiments it has been proved that a solid column subject to bending strains is no stronger than a hollow one. Consequently all iron shafts are made hollow, and the steel shafts which drive the screws of steamships have a hole bored down the center so that the weight may be reduced.

### Penny Weddings.

Until 1845 marriage feasts, known as "penny weddings," were held in Scotland. Each guest paid a penny or a small sum of money to defray the expenses of the feast. If any money was left over it went toward the furnishing of the new home.—Exchange.

Idleness wastes a fortune in half the time that industry makes it.—Samuel Smiles.

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**Mammoth Cave.**  
"To me the Mammoth cave of Kentucky is simply a portion of the Grand Canyon of Colorado underground," says George Wharton James, the traveler and author, in "Our American Wonderlands." "Almost all the phenomena of the great cave are revealed in the Grand canyon region, and, given time enough, it is not inconceivable that the Mammoth cave might develop into a Grand canyon region of its own."

**Cannot Praise Them Enough.**  
Many sick and tired women, with aches and pains, sore muscles and stiff joints, do not know that their kidneys are out of order. Mrs. A. V. Wells, Box 90, Route 5, Rocky Mount, N. C., writes: "I am taking Foley Kidney Pills and cannot praise them enough for the wonderful benefit I derived in such a short while." Sold everywhere.—Adv.

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## Rodent Poisoning and Game Birds

(R. A. Ward, Biological Assistant.)

In connection with the poisoning of harmful rodents in Crook county numerous inquiries have been received in regard to the effect of the poison on pheasants and other game birds.

The sportsmen of the community need have no fear of the destruction of game birds from this cause. Poisoning operations on a large scale have been conducted by the U. S. Biological Survey for a number of years on many National Forests and on large areas of Government range. No authentic record is thus far obtainable, of the killing of any grouse, quail, sage chickens, pheasants or other game birds by the grain poison used in experiments by the Biological Survey. The writer has poisoned areas which were visited within forty eight hours after the distribution of the poisoned grain, by large flocks of sage hens and California quail, but no birds were found dead although a careful search of the surrounding country was made. Rumor to the effect that grouse and sage hens have been killed by poisoned grain, when traced, proved unauthentic in every instance. All gallinaceous birds, and this includes grouse, quail and partridges, are perhaps the least susceptible to poisoning of any

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of the common birds of the western United States.

To those who are especially interested I would suggest they read the entitled "The effect of strychnine sulphate on California valley quail," by C. C. Pierce, Senior Surgeon, and M. T. Clegg, Bacteriologist, United States Public Health Service, which appeared in "California Fish and Game" for January. In these experiments the amount of strychnine reckoned by body weight which was fatal for quail was from 10 to 40 times greater than that which produced convulsions and death in ground squirrels. When the quail were fed our regular ground squirrel poison which is poisoned barley in the ratio of one ounce of strychnine to 16 quarts of barley, no symptoms resulted. The conclusions arrived at from this most interesting article are as follows:

(1). California valley quail may be fed under natural conditions rel-

atively large amounts of strychnine sulphate without showing toxic symptoms.

(2). The minimum lethal dose by subcutaneous injection is four milligrams per 100 grams of body weight.

(3). The California ground squirrel (Citellus beecheyi) is very susceptible to strychnine sulphate; .09 milligrams per 100 grams of body weight produced convulsions.

(4). Nineteen grains of barley containing 2.7 milligrams of strychnine sulphate, when retained in the pouch of the ground squirrel, proved fatal.

(5). Poisoned barley as used for ground squirrel eradication does not cause the death of California valley quail under natural feeding conditions.

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