

## Tax Limitation Measure Makes Grave Problems for Legislature

State Must Operate on \$400,000 Less Than in 1916 Despite Institutional Growth and Replacement Needs—Balance from 1915 Creates Unexpected Complications.

(From Friday's Daily Bulletin)

SALEM, Dec. 15 (Special to The Bulletin).—Money makes the mare go, according to the old proverb, and money will make the coming legislature go some—perhaps even a bit crazier than usual, especially those favored legislators who draw herbs on the ways and means committees.

For the big problem of the 1917 session will be finances. The last one was called an economy legislature, but its saving streak was mostly voluntary, resulting from hard times and previous extravagance. This legislature will be economy-plus, because the six per cent tax limitation constitutional amendment, passed by the electorate November 7, has bogged any profligate tendencies of the solons so thoroughly that they can't even spend on state government as much as the last close-fisted gathering of law makers did.

In a nutshell, the maximum amount that can be spent next year is \$2,703,000, which is actually \$400,000 less than the amount required during 1916.

### Prohibition Second Fiddle

Putting the bone dry prohibition amendment in running order will be the second big act on the program. And there will be plenty of lesser acts, designed to tinker things into shape and out of shape in almost every branch of state administration. And probably a few of them will become laws, some of them with benefit to the public and some of them the reverse.

But no matter how the counter attractions are advertised, the big headlines will control the spotlight and command the distracted legislators' attention. How to cut expenses—that's the question; how to get along under the provisions of this new economy measure which a public, rightfully sick of extravagance, has voted into being, when given the chance by some money-saving folks who were chiefly out after county and municipal wastefulness and didn't know what they were wishing on the state.

The new law says that no tax levying body shall raise an amount for any year which shall be more than six per cent in excess of the amount raised the previous year.

That is what it says. Probably what was meant is that this year the state—or county or city—shall not raise over six per cent more than it spent last year. But instead of using the word "spent," it used the word "raised."

### Balance Plays Hob

Now, the state carried over an unexpected balance from 1915 of \$550,000. That balance went toward the expenses of 1916. So the amount raised for 1916 was that much less than normal. The state last year raised by taxation \$550,000 less than it actually needed and subsequently actually spent. It was more than half a million dollars to the good.

But now that half million plus looks to the bad. In 1916 the state required \$3,100,000 for operating expenses. Deducting from that amount the \$550,000 balance on hand from the previous year, it was required to raise only \$2,550,000, although it spent \$3,100,000.

So that \$2,550,000 is the basis upon which must be reckoned the maximum increase of six per cent for next year allowed under the new amendment. In other words, the maximum which can be raised for 1917 is \$2,703,000. That is \$400,000 less than the state spent in 1916. It is \$583,000 less than a six per cent increase upon the amount actually spent in 1916.

### Gunning for County Courts

Robert Smith of Roseburg, chief parent of the bill, admitted that he didn't know about that \$550,000 balance which has put such a serious crimp in the state's financial outlook for the coming year. He was chiefly interested, anyway, in holding down road extravagance and the playful ways of some county courts and city governments in spreading on the expenditures.

It is possible that the amendment cannot be made to stick as regards the state, because the state, some contend, is not a "tax levying body," and such bodies specifically are the only ones governed by the law. The state incurs expenditures, but it doesn't levy a tax. It simply apportions the general expense among the counties, and the counties do the levying.

That contention probably will be settled in the courts, as a friendly experiment. If it held good, presumably the state would go ahead and spend what it needed, and then it would be up to the counties to foot the bill. The first money realized by counties in their tax collecting has to be handed over to the state, and thereafter counties would have to get along on the lean pickings left in their treasuries.

If that doesn't work—and consensus of opinion is that it won't—the only far-reaching alternative to a slashing which really would cripple the state where its citizens don't want it crippled, is issuance of bonds. For instance, a bond issue could care for all road work, and what now goes to roads could be utilized elsewhere.

Here and there greater revenue can be secured from licenses. No doubt auto licenses will be increased heavily. The state banking department, for instance, probably can be made self supporting. As things are, the insurance department, corporation department and industrial accident department are money makers or self supporting from fees.

General Trimming Expected. There will be trimming and clipping, of course. There will be some consolidations, some eliminations and perhaps some salary cuts. But people should look into the possibilities of all this before they get the notion that it can amount to a very great deal from a dollar and cent standpoint.

At present one dollar out of every ten paid by the average taxpayer in the average county goes to the state; the other nine go for county, city and school district expenditures. The economists can raise hob with every branch of state administration—cripple things up to their heart's content assuming that the legislature should get the fever foolishly—and the sum total would be such an insignificant saving, proportionate to the totals, that it would amount to but a few cents out of that dollar; and of course it wouldn't affect at all the other nine of taxes which stay closer to home.

Without any doubt or equivocation those at the head of the state government intend to see that the six per cent tax limitation is lived up to, in letter and spirit. There will be no sympathy at the state house for subterfuge or evasion regarding it.

No doubt, however, there will be honest effort to so adjust matters that vitally necessary functions of state administration will not be crippled. There will be no hesitation about cutting out unneeded expenses. Some heads will fall.

### Real Needs Exist.

But in the final analysis it should be remembered, point out those who are giving the new problem close attention, the state is growing and its institutions are growing. The feeble-minded home, the girls' industrial school, the boys' school, all are crowded beyond capacity and have waiting lists. The state's wards must be cared for.

There are crying demands for improvements here and there; at least for betterments which will keep the institutions up to present standards, with no thought of new expenditures. Under the millage tax which supports them, the income of the state's educational institutions—the university, O. A. C. and Monmouth normal—have decreased during the last three years, because the taxable valuations of the state have decreased. And yet the population of those institutions—each one of which is doing really constructive, vitally needed work, and doing it economically—is increasing with leaps and bounds from year to year.

The present tendency means not only that they can't grow, but that they can't have more money, but that they must get along on less money, and actually retrograde unless financial angels appear to foot the bills which the state refuses to foot for the higher education of its young men and women.

Altogether, the financial problems of the coming legislature are tremendously involved and tremendously important. They deserve the thoughtful consideration of every citizen. They are not to be treated lightly.

And it is childish to think that they can be met, or even partially evaded, by any half baked economy cuts in existing governmental machinery. That will help, and some of the commission and the rest of it will be beneficial. But most of it could be wiped clean and yet that \$400,000 handicap which has been placed upon Oregon for the next year's race couldn't nearly be equalized, nor the legitimate new demands of growth and replacement be met.

### FIRE ALARMS WOMAN IN TIME FOR ESCAPE

Mrs. G. H. Allen Faces Wall of Smoke When She Goes to Greet Husband—Saves Her Baby.

Wakened by a noise which she took to be her husband's footsteps, Mrs. G. H. Allen, living near the railroad tracks, opened the door of her room last night to greet him, only to be met by a dense puff of

smoke, reddened by the fire behind. Snatching up her three months old baby, she rushed from the house, the only article saved being the baby buggy. Neither Mrs. Allen nor her child sustained any burns or injuries.

She immediately went to the house of Mr. and Mrs. Pringle, living nearby, and by the time Mr. Pringle could run to the burning house to see if any fire fighting measures would be possible, the entire roof of the Allen residence had fallen in. The house was situated in a gully, and work by the fire department would have been impossible.

Mr. Allen was at the Hippodrome attending the Moose Carnival, shortly after 10 o'clock, when a friend informed him that his house was on fire. As near as can be ascertained, it was approximately the same time that he started in his auto for home that his wife thought she heard his footsteps.

No cause for the fire is known, unless it may have resulted from a defective flue. The value of the building, owned by William Price, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is approximately \$1000, while the house furnishings are unappraised. Being unplastered, the house yielded readily to the flames.

Stopped Children's Croup Cough. "Three weeks ago two of my children began choking and coughing, and I saw that they were having an attack of croup," writes Billie Meyberry, Eckert, Go. "I got a bottle of Foley's Honey and Tar and gave them a dose before bedtime. Next morning their cough and all sign of croup was gone."—Adv.

See Edwards for good house painting.—Adv.

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## MOTHER CROOK MOURNS LOSS

BUT CLOUD HAS SILVER LINING.

Now That Deschutes Has Gone Old Crowd Figures It Can Pull Recall on Judge Springer and Commissioner Blanchard.

(From Saturday's Daily Bulletin.)

(Special to The Bulletin.) PRINEVILLE, Dec. 16.—Old Mother Prineville sits sadly beside the Ochoco softly singing "Where is my wandering boy tonight?" while she mourns the departure of her second son who has set himself up in the west on his own resources. Truly, there's a measure of pathetic appeal in the situation. It is hard for a mother to be bereft so completely. Whatever her faults of the past, the fact remains, in the beautiful language of the modern poet, that "no matter how dark the night she is still your mother."

And now old Mother Crook's youngest offspring, Deschutes, has left her, while two years ago she was deserted by little Jefferson, although she managed to catch and bring back young Deschutes just as he was making his getaway with Jeff.

Every cloud has a silver lining, however, and some folks over here are said to be busy assessing the value to themselves of said lining. Not in coin of the realm, mind you, but in possible political gain. Also, it is averred, the foresighted silver liners are getting ready to line up some little deals of interest. Anyway, there's plenty of talk about it, just under the surface, with now and then a bubble coming up publicly.

There is to be a recall started. That's the big item of local political concern. Now that the troublesome west side has departed this life, so far as meddling with east side voting is concerned, some say it's going to be pleasantly easy for a certain "old crowd" to handle things. Which is why said O. C. is beginning to perk up, realizing the possible advantages of the late lamented division.

The Williamson-Brink-Coombs fraternity aren't enthusiastic about Judge G. Springer and Commissioner J. F. Blanchard. In fact, they like 'em just about the way a cat likes a healthy dog looking for trouble.

Heretofore there was no hope of pulling a recall election against his honor and the commissioner, because the west side vote would most probably have lined up the wrong way. Now that complication is removed, political prophets declare it can be put over. They say Springer and Blanchard would get just about the same kind of an east side vote

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## BEND SCHOOLS CLOSE

Will Reopen After Holidays on Second Day of New Year.

Bend schools closed their doors today for the Christmas vacation, to reopen on the morning of January 2, the occasion being marked by numerous programs, composed largely of songs and recitations in which the holiday spirit predominated.

Monday the instructors are scheduled to go to Prineville, where a 3-day teacher's institute is to be held, with examinations lasting through two days, following. A number of the Bend educators will leave afterward, for their homes outside the city, to spend the remainder of the holidays.

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## \$35,000 DELIVERED ON RAILROAD BONDS

Another step toward the Strahorn railroads was taken today when G. E. Keeler, of Keeler Bros., bond dealers, of Denver, arrived in Bend to place \$35,000, the purchase price of the bond issue authorized to secure terminals and right of way, to the credit of the city, in the First National Bank. It is understood that work will be started to secure the necessary terminal sites within a few days.

## THANK YOU.

The first issue of the Bend Bulletin as a daily newspaper has reached Salem. The paper is published by George Palmer Putnam and has been run as a weekly heretofore. The paper has a regular telegraphic news service, including many reports from Portland, and its stories are well handled. It is made up and in appearance equal to the best of the smaller dailies of the Oregon Statesman, Salem.