

THE LANE COUNTY NEWS

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Published Every Monday and Thursday by the Lane County Publishing Association.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION.
 One Year - \$1.50 | Six Months - .75 | Three Months - .50
 Advertising Rates Furnished on Application.

Member of the State Editorial Association.
 Member of the Willamette Valley Editorial Association.



And Remember to Get a Stop-Over for Springfield.

SPRINGFIELD, OREGON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1915.

NEWSPAPERS AND THEIR POLICIES

In the course of an address at the University of Missouri recently, G. B. Dealey, general manager of the Dallas, Texas, Morning News, Galveston Daily News, and allied publications, said:

"There is a popular idea abroad that a newspaper should give the people what they want—that is to say, that a newspaper should be made by its readers. I do not believe this to be true in its entirety.


"Generally the readers should be given what they want so long as what they want is good for them. But a newspaper always has a moral responsibility, whether it appreciates it or not, to help its readers to higher standards. It is all right to be popular and keep close to the people, but a newspaper should not cater to the baser mind and prostitute its columns into sensationalism and uncleanness. Its aim always should be to uplift—to point the way to better and nobler things.

"The policy of any enduring newspaper must necessarily be based on what is true and what is right, even though it may sometimes come in conflict with the opinions and prejudices of its readers. To apply this statement to our own papers let me say that with them the effort has always been to avoid morbid sensationalism and all that class of news which depends on idle or prurient curiosity for its interest.

"The News does not make a display of public executions, lynchings, murder trials, divorce cases, scandals of salacious personal news of any kind. No doubt, however, there is a demand for this class of news and it attracts a certain kind of readers, but at the same time it has a demoralizing effect.

"I believe that the control of newspaper policies by advertisers is practically negligible, the only exception being in the very indirect way which I have pointed out—namely, that an honest policy means not only large circulation, but high grade circulation. But as for direct influence, no publisher can shape his policies at the behest of any advertiser or class of advertisers for the sake of the revenue to be derived from these without immediately endangering his enterprise.

"There is no business on which a closer watch is kept by the public than that of the newspaper. What the publisher does and what his paper's opinion is goes before the public every day. That same public is merciless in its criticism,



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OUR PUBLIC FORUM



Ralph Peters On Railway Mail Pay

A controversy has been raging in the columns of the press between the railroads and the Federal Post Office Department over the question of proper compensation for handling the United States mails. Mr. Ralph Peters, Chairman of the Railway Mail Committee, when asked to state the railroad side of the controversy to the American farmer, said in part:

"The railway mail pay question will be settled—and settled permanently and with justice to all concerned—as soon as the American people realize that the whole subject, while seemingly complicated and technical, boils down to a few simple points of fair business dealing which no one need be a rate expert to understand. The first is that the Post Office Department weighs the mails, and adjusts the pay of the railroads, only once in four years. This compels the railroads to carry the increase in the mail tonnage during the intervening years without pay—manifestly an injustice in the case of a rapidly growing business. One consequence has been that last year the railroads carried fully half the parcel post for nothing.

"A second point is this: In addition to carrying the mails, the railroads are required to operate many traveling post offices for sorting and distributing the mails while in transit. But the Post Office Department pays for such post offices only where they occupy whole cars, and pays nothing in the many cases in which it merely requires the use of post office apartments in combination cars, although such apartments differ from the full railway post office cars only in size. More than 4,200 apartments of this character have been fitted up, and are maintained for the exclusive use of the Post Office Department. Failure to pay for them has been an especial hardship to the smaller roads on which the Department does not find it necessary to utilize whole cars.

"One last point: In thousands of instances (though not in all) the Post Office Department requires the railroads to carry the mails back and forth between railroad stations and post offices, but pays them nothing for this extra service beyond the rates covering the rail transportation. The railroads have no choice but to perform this additional service gratis, or refuse to carry the mails at all.

"Now for the remedies the railroads ask: They do not ask to have the mails weighed daily, or to have each shipment weighed and paid for separately, as is done in the case of private shippers. They merely ask to have the mails weighed, and the pay of the railroads adjusted, at least once a year, instead of once in four years. They also ask that apartment post office cars be paid for, at reasonable rates, according to size. Lastly, they ask that the Post Office Department cease to require of them free messenger service between stations and post offices, and either relieve them of this service or pay fairly for it. These are the reforms the railroads ask of Congress. They gladly lay these reforms before the public, confident that they will appeal to the common sense and fairness of American voters."

quick to jump at conclusions and frequently unjust in its judgment. A newspaper may deceive a part of its readers for a while, but none of them for a very long time.

"Summing up, I should say that a newspaper's policies should forbid it from needlessly offending good customers or good morals. It should be true to the right, but it need not be 'fussy' or suspicious or meddlesome or intolerant. It should be a good neighbor—honest, courageous, virtuous and friendly—but not like a bad neighbor—vindictive, spying, gossipy and mischievous. It should say: 'My policy is to do right and to be a good merchant, which is to say, to deal in honest goods and give good measure.'"

THE COMING LAND GRANT CONFERENCE

Considerable comment has been aroused in some quarters over the plan to limit preliminary discussion before the state-wide conference on the Oregon-California railroad land grant case, which is to be held at Salem next Wednesday. The preliminary plans as adopted by the rules committee, summoned by Governor Withycombe, provide for the introduction of resolutions by title and author, and their immediate reference to the resolutions committee. All set speeches are to be barred until after the committee on resolutions has formulated its report. The Portland Journal and the Pendleton East Oregonian, raise objections to any plan that in any way limits discussion. Their point, it would seem, is not well taken. The conference is, of course, a voluntary one, with no remuneration for the time of the delegates. Naturally, then, procedure should be so mapped as to take the least possible time to secure the best possible consideration of the subject at hand. Speeches made before and definite question is before the conference would, of necessity, be general in their nature, and would lack direct bearing. Proper parliamentary procedure requires a motion, made and seconded, before it can be open for discussion.

There is a tendency, also, in some quarters, to decide beforehand what should be the outcome of the conference. To attempt to dictate the lines that shall be followed defeats the very purpose of the conference, which is to bring together divergent opinions and plans, and co-ordinate them. There are a number of large interests which have claims that are worthy of consideration, but to enumerate two or three or half a dozen and declare them the only factors worthy of consideration is to display a spirit of narrowness that would defeat the purposes of any conference. The counties, which have advanced to the state tax money not yet collected from the railroad, have a large right to be heard. They also have a claim to attention on account of the roads and the schools they will have to construct when this land is settled. The people of Oregon see in this vast tract of land an opportunity to recoup the state school fund, depleted by the wasting of former grants of public land. Easterners see in the lands an opportunity to add to the reserved forest wealth of the nation. Lumbermen, on the other hand, see vast areas of timber, ripe for the axe, and deteriorating unless cut and utilized. These are just a few of the factors that will have to be considered in the conference. It would be foolish to rule out, beforehand, any pertinent suggestion, else the judgment of the conference would be hampered to just that extent.

NOTICE TO WOOD CONTRACTORS
 Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received by H. E. Walker Recorder of the Town of Springfield, Oregon, until 8 o'clock P. M. Monday September 13, 1915, for the delivery to the Town of Springfield, Oregon, at the City Hall in said town, Fifteen (15) Cords of four foot wood. Bidders are requested to bid on either Oak, Ash, Maple and Fir.

Said wood to be delivered at the City Hall in said town within ten days after the letting of the contract.

Council reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

By order of the Common Council. Dated this 1st day of September 1915.
 HERBERT E. WALKER, Town Recorder.

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