

The Santiam News.

OBSERVE THE LAWS

UNDOUBTEDLY the greatest menace to the stability and perpetuity of civilized governments, is the lack of observance and enforcement of the law. When a people reaches the point where either from lack of ability or disposition to enforce law exists, that government becomes a farce, and a revolution in its form or in the execution and observance of its laws is at hand.

All civilized government is based upon the observance of its laws. No matter what the position of the individual or association of individuals may be, if he or they can violate its laws with impunity, the danger point in the perpetuity of that government has been reached. An immediate reform in the enforcement of its laws must occur or anarchy results.

When, in 1860, the states of the South refused to obey the Federal laws, the government authorities, at that time, were impotent to enforce them. A long and bloody war ensued before the supremacy of the federal laws could be established. Had a federal police force been at hand to enforce the law when Fort Sumpter at Charleston, S. C., was attacked, the civil war would not have transpired. The life and stability of any government depends upon its ability to enforce its laws, without which the tenure of such a government is short.

The U. S. government, being a government of the people and by the people, is probable the slackest of all governments in the enforcement of law. As the execution of law depends upon officials elected by the people, human nature is such that but few officials will enforce the letter of the law against the friend to whom their election was due. Unscrupulous and dishonest men take advantage of this feature of our political system, and scheme to elect men as officials, whom they can afterwards use to conserve their interests. To this feature of our system the most of the ills that now afflict the body politic are attributable. To correct this evil our country is now engaged in the most gigantic political contest of its existence.

The war that is being waged by governmental authorities against railway law-breaking, corporations and trusts, against public land grabbers, etc., and the efforts of municipalities to eradicate law breakers, grafters and bribers, is ample evidence that our governments, national, state and municipal are undergoing a course of house cleaning, which will result in a purer public service, let us hope, for all time.

A good citizen is he who would scorn to break law even to secure personal gain. Transversely, he who breaks law for personal gain, is a bad citizen. Yet, in many instances, men who are ordinarily good citizens, are led to break laws for mere personal gain. The loose and reckless methods by which men have acquired public lands is a case in point. Men have taken homesteads in the best of timber lands. In doing this they have committed no less than three crimes. When making claim at the land office, they swear that the land is more valuable for agricultural purposes than for timber or stone. This is perjury No. 1. They swear that they will make the particular quarter-section their bona fide homes and when they come to prove up in order to secure patent, swear that they have done so. This is perjury No. 2. They, also, procure two witnesses in proving up, who swear that the settler has made the claim his continuous home. This is crime No. 3—subornation of perjury.

All of us know men, who pose as respectables who have committed all of these crimes and are now enjoying the fruits thereof. The "Land Conscience" has secured a pretty strong hold on the people of Oregon but, thanks to Dr. Heney, we are rapidly recovering from the attack.

Law breaking by these so called respectable people, however, is not limited to the securing of public land. We have a game law that men and boys have, heretofore, violated with impunity. A little energetic enforcement of the law, has caused a material change in this respect. Even farmer boys are a little careful now about shooting China pheasants out of season.

At the present time, however, violations of the local option law are the objects of principal attention in the "dry" counties. Whether or not our present local option is for the best, it is not necessary here to discuss. Honest and good men differ in opinions in this regard. Suffice it to say the law is on our statute books and should be obeyed. Men who, for trifling gain, will sell liquor illicitly, cannot be regarded as good citizen. If they will violate law in this regard, they cannot be trusted in other respects. Nor should they feel ill treated if they are made to pay a heavy penalty for their misdeeds; especially if for a second or third offense.

Generally speaking, laws are enacted to be obeyed. No doubt there are laws enacted that are unwise—that are difficult to enforce. Yet, they should be enforced to the letter and without favoritism. If the law is bad, enforce it and it will be the more quickly repealed. Any law that, because of its unpopularity, is not enforced, causes a dangerous disrespect for all law in the minds of many people. Hence, the spectacle of the Oregon legislature in openly violating constitutional law, as it has in the past, has been a dangerous example to

place before the people. Why should the people obey law if our lawmakers, themselves, disobey it?

A good citizenship can only be established by a prompt and willing obedience to law. Men should not feel that they obey law because they fear the consequences of disobedience. Such an one is not nor cannot be a good citizen. A feeling of love and respect for our country and its laws, is and should be the ruling spirit of every citizen. Unfortunately, however, the love of gain will cause men to do wrong and for the control of such, laws are enacted with penalties attached. Nor should the lawbreaker feel aggrieved and wrongfully treated when he is overtaken in his criminality and is made to suffer the consequences.

If all men were controlled by a spirit of right living—if they would do right because of a sense of duty, very few laws would be necessary. But modern humanity is not built after that pattern. As a consequence the right minded lawabiding citizen is burdened with the responsibility of forcing the wrongdoer to do right—a duty both unpleasant and unthankful.

JUDGE GALLOWAY'S DECISION

LAST week Judge Galloway decided the question of how the University of Oregon appropriation referendum measure shall be placed upon the ballot. If the judge wishes to hoodwink the average voter, he could not have pursued a better course than he did in this decision. He directs that the measure shall be stated on the ballot as follows:

"An act to amend section 3529 of Bellinger and Cotton's Annotated Codes and Statutes of Oregon, by increasing the annual appropriation for the support and maintenance of the University of Oregon."

In order for the voter to know what section 3529 states, it is necessary for him to have access to the statutes. This to most voters, will be so inconvenient that they will not make the necessary investigation. As a result nine-tenths of the voters, especially in the country districts, will necessarily be grossly ignorant concerning the matter. They cannot know, except from the newspapers, that the university now gets an annual maintenance of \$47,500, or \$118.75 per student nor if the appropriation is increased to \$125,000 per annum it will get \$312.50 per student.

Most of the newspapers of the state favor the increase and, therefore, will not take very great pains to explain the measure to the people. On the contrary, they will whoop up the university. They will point out how much more some other state is allowing her university and what a good work our university is doing; that 65 per cent. of the students are young men and young women who are earning their way, etc. They will not tell you that there are about double the number of teachers now employed at the university that are necessary; nor that a part of the appropriation asked for will be used in purchasing a foot-ball field. All of these things will be kept in the background. Nothing but the bright side of the university will be exhibited. They will not point out the fact that every dollar appropriated to the Eugene school is so appropriated in direct conflict with the state constitution.

Judge Galloway did the people of Oregon an irreparable wrong in deciding this matter in the way he did. It was in his power to cause the measure to be so stated upon the ballot, that the most illiterate voter in the state would have understood the matter. Instead he has made a study of how he can best befog the voters.

Suppose he had directed the measure to be stated as follows: "Do you favor increasing the annual appropriation for the University of Oregon from \$47,500 to \$125,000?" So stated, every voter would then have an intelligent understanding of the matter and would vote accordingly.

So long as these referendum measures are stated upon the ballot in a way to befog or confuse the voter, a fair expression of the voice of the people cannot be had. On this question, as now stated, many people will vote contrary to their wishes. There is not a question of doubt but what, if the matter should be stated as plainly as above indicated, the taxpayers of Oregon would refuse the increase. But stated as Judge Galloway directs, many will vote for it thinking they are voting against it; while very many others will fail to vote on the measure at all, because they cannot understand it.

The NEWS thinks Judge Galloway has made a serious mistake and one that will rebound against him with terrific force, should he come before the Third Judicial District for re-election.

A COPY of the Oregonian that does not have some editorial utterance derogatory of Mr. Bryan, is a rarity these days. About the meanest and most untruthful thing it has said is to place Mr. Bryan and Harriman in the same class, which it did in an issue of last week. Mr. Harriman represents everything which Mr. Bryan has been fighting for years. The only thing in which Mr. Bryan and Mr. Harriman can be placed in the same category is: they are both roundly hated by the Oregonian. Mr. Bryan is a veritable red flag to the Oregonian.

MR. HENEY is certainly a terror to evil-doers. He likes to prosecute the big fellows, rather than the little ones.

Political Announcement

In this column will be published the announcements of any citizen who aspires to the candidacy for any office, subject to the will of the voters at the forthcoming primaries.

To the Republican voters of Linn County:

I hereby announce myself as an aspirant, subject to your will at the forthcoming primary election, for the candidacy for the office of

COUNTY RECORDER

GRANT FROMAN,
Present Recorder.

OREGON TAX REFORM LEAGUE.

(Contributed)

The Oregon Tax Reform Association has filed its proposed amendment for the election next June, having several thousand more names signed than required by law. To show the widespread interest taken in this amendment it is said that the names were easily secured throughout the state making it the strongest petition ever filed.

This amendment is not based on new or untried theories, but its principles are demonstrated to have truth and right in them. New Zealand, Manitoba, and other British Colonies, have for a number of years exempted improvement and personal property, and it has invariably worked in the interests of the producing classes in city or country.

Many of the greatest Americans have endorsed the principal which this amendment approaches. Among them Senator La Follet, Governor Folk, Tom Johnson, Henry George and Wm. Lloyd Garrison. They believe in the principle of raising the needed revenues for carrying on our government, and at the same time discouraging land monopoly by taxing land values and franchises more and exempting improvements and personal property in short what is commonly known as the single tax.

100 feet square sold in Portland on January 22nd, for \$800,000, or at the rate of more than \$2,000,000,000 per acre. The latter amount is about ten times the assessed value of the farms of Oregon. Such city values, as well as the values of railroad rights of way, is made by tribute paid by the producers of the state. This measure will shift the taxes mainly to site values, such as the above, not to acres.

But where a railroad holds millions of acres, this measure will hit them so hard that it will be interesting to see the fight they will put up against it. The farmers of this country will certainly see to it under this law that every acre of land grants is assessed at least as high as that of the improved farms which makes the adjoining unused land valuable without the owners efforts. This law goes on the principal that if you want to discourage the holding of a lot of worthless dogs, or a bunch of vacant lots or vacant sections of land, put the taxes upon them. To encourage production and home building it takes the taxes off from (in the words of the amendment) "all dwelling houses, barns, sheds, outhouses and all other appurtenances thereto, all fences, farm machinery and appliances used as such, all fruit trees, vines, shrubs and all other improvements on the farm, all livestock, household furniture in use, and all working-men's tools."

Supporters of this amendment say that every locality has "Undesirable citizens" who oppose every improvement of roads; good schools and teachers, bridges and other public necessities, because of the fact that the less taxes they pay, the more land they can hold out of use, awaiting the industry of the entire community to make them wealthy. Non-resident land owners are more obstructive to local improvements, yet contribute nothing to the business interests and development of the community.

If the large tracts of this country paid the same tax as improved farms, they would be divided up and rapidly improved, increasing our population and wealth, and making twenty subscribers for this paper where there is now one.

Our merchants, blacksmiths, barbers, carpenters, bankers, hotel keepers and all other business men would feel the effect of the new blood, capital and energy, and under such a system of taxation our community would move forward as never before.

One of the best features of the amendment is the exemption of manufacturing plants, which some thoughtlessly criticize. This is done by several southern states, and they are becoming independent of the East. Besides giving employment to labor it will provide a real home market for our Oregon farmers, not in Conn. or Mass. but in Oregon.

Those of all political faiths can see that this does not conflict with their views, but does encourage manufacturing in Oregon, something we all want.

EXECUTOR'S NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been duly appointed Executor of the last will and testament and estate of Rebecca Jane Iorns, deceased, by the County Court of Linn County, Oregon. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present them, duly verified as by law required, to the undersigned, at his residence near Lyons, Linn County, Oregon, within six months from the date of this notice.

Dated February 7, 1908.
THOMAS LYONS, Executor.
T. J. STITES,
Attorney for Executor.

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