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HIGH TAXES BAR HOME SEEKERS.

NEARLY EVERY town or city of any considerable size in the state has its commercial club and, as a rule, employs an expensive secretary. These various commercial clubs prepare literature descriptive of their particular locality, for the purpose of enticing emigrants to locate. This persistent and continuous advertising is, no doubt, responsible for bringing many people from the states East to Oregon, and, especially, the Willamette valley. It is prophesied that this year will see the largest influx of home seekers from other states, in Western Oregon, of any year in the history of the state. But there are ninety men down at Salem which are undoing the work most effectively which has been done by the boosting clubs of the state and valley. Often among the first questions asked by the prospective home seeker is "What is your rate of taxation?" When we are compelled to answer all the way from 2 to 4 per cent. upon an assessment very close to the cash valuation of the property, the aforesaid prospective home seeker is apt to turn his attention to other localities less burdened by taxation.

We are told that the total of appropriations that the legislature will make at the present session will pass the four million mark and may reach to six million dollars. This is very nearly an average of ten dollars for every man, woman and child in Oregon. And this for state purposes alone. When we add the levy for county, city and school district we have piled up a rate of taxation which, to say the least, does not look good to the home seeker.

Money can be hired for 5 and 6 per cent. When we know that fully 10 per cent. of the earning power of the average farm is consumed annually in taxes, we are apt to get busy with our thinking apparatus. Not less than another 10 per cent. will be required to keep the improvements of the farm up, making a total of one-fifth of the income from the farm used for which there is no appreciable beneficial return, we are apt to conclude money invested in interest bearing bond is preferable to owning a farm. The only saving grace possessed by the farm is its appreciation in value which to be realized upon, requires the sale of the farm. The question is "What are we going to do about it?" Can we call a halt to this ever increase of appropriations of the people's money for a most any old purpose? When we consider that all of this enormous expense must come from the products of the soil, the thought becomes almost paralyzing. True the merchant, banker, mechanic, manufacturer, pay their taxes the same as the farmer; they simply recoup by adding a larger profit or a larger wage. So, in the end, it can be seen that the soil foots the bill, whatever it may be. Is it any wonder that farmers kick at appropriations of their tax money, for many purposes, which are not strictly necessary and from which the farmer reaps no direct benefit?

Tax moneys appropriated to the legitimate requirements of state, county and municipal governments, for roads and bridges, for the public schools and for agricultural fairs, are willingly paid by the farmers. But to support these numerous commissions, the principle object of which is to furnish places for high salaried officials, to maintain half dozen state colleges and to pay for numerous other special and generally useless purposes, goes squarely against the grain. Like numerous Statement No. 1 legislators, they do not pay from personal choice, but with a protest.

Until our legislature can learn to say NO emphatically to about nine-tenths of the demands upon the state treasury for almost all conceivable purposes, many of which are not in accordance with fundamental law, it is placing a bar to the home seeker who has money, which will cause him in many instances, to look elsewhere. We had better deny ourselves many public improvements which are very desirable; numerous high salaried commissions which the state can get along without; a lot of expensive state colleges, and numerous other expenditures which are not necessities, than to create so excessive a tax system, that people will desire to leave rather than come to the state.

The burden of taxation should not increase faster than the increase of population. That is to say the increase of population should take care of the increase of taxation. But this is not true. The

farmer who has owned his farm for 25 or 30 years, if he will compare the tax receipts of 30 years ago, with the receipt of to-day, will find that he is paying very nearly double now for the support of government. What more does he get for the increased cost? True he can send his children off to college at Corvallis or Eugene and make lawyers, doctors, architects, electricians, civil engineers, chemists, carpenters, blacksmiths, printers etc., out of them, providing he can spare them from the farm and to help earn the tax money.

Our legislators should get busy in devising new methods of revenue for the state, rather than to scheme through fat appropriations, create new offices and increase salaries. Suppose that a law be enacted by which corporations holding money making franchises, should be required to pay their just proportion of taxes; that water rights, such as that at Oregon City, be taxed at their real value; that a graduated inheritance tax is imposed and a reasonable tax on incomes can be collected, rather than to devise schemes for looting the state treasury? Legislators would then become real representatives of the people and would be accorded an honor that is now withheld—the gratitude and respect of the people. The title "Hon" would then amount to something which the man possessing it would delight to wear. Then we would not be required to go to the expense of referring their acts to the people for approval or rejection.

EXEMPT THE HOME FROM TAXATION.

THE AMERICAN home is the basis of American patriotism. Destroy the ownership of the home, no matter how humble, and you destroy the mainspring of one's love of country. When Russia was at war with Japan, the lack of patriotism in the rank and file of her armies was remarked by everyone. Why? Because the Russian peasant is regarded by the bureaucracy of that country, which constitutes the ruling power, as fit only to earn tax moneys with which to support their rulers. The conditions are such that the peasant, the wealth producer, is allowed to retain but a fraction of his earnings for the support of his home. No wonder then, that the Russian battalions presented but a feeble front to the Japs; no wonder that the Russian fleet became an easy prey to Admiral Togo. The Russia soldier who, as a rule, is homeless, has nothing to inspire a love of home or nation, for which to fight. On the other hand, Japan is a nation of home owners. As a consequence, the overwhelming patriotism of her rank and file, both in the army and navy was, simply a mark of admiration by the disinterested nations of the world. The lesson to be learned from this last great war is: To protect and encourage the home and the ownership thereof, if we would foster patriotism.

There is an element of selfishness in all humanity, which behooves us to protect and foster any and everything which we may call "mine." We protect and provide for our wives and children because nature has implanted within us an affection for them which we do not have for the wives and children of others. Likewise, is there an affection for the home which one can call "mine," which does not exist for the home that is hired.

It follows, then, that the most patriotic nations are those which encourage the building and owning of homes by their peasantry and wage earners. America's volunteer soldiers and seamen are said to be the most intrepid soldiers and sailors in the world. Why? Simply because those volunteer soldiers and sailors are composed, largely, of home owners and the sons of home owners.

The home of the humble citizen, then, should be extended favors by our law makers, which are not nor should not be extended to other species of property. Every head of a family should be exempt from taxation, a sufficient amount in the way of furniture and household fixtures for the reasonable comfort of his family. If he owns his home he should have a further exemption of, say to the value of \$500. This last would encourage men to own their own homes. And though this home would be most modest and humble, it would cause a spirit of pride and patriotism to exist in the bosom of the owner, which could be implanted in no other way. Our legislature could do no greater work for the state and for the future happiness of posterity, than to provide for the exemption of both taxes and debt, mortgage or otherwise, the reasonable household furniture and the humble home.

The poor man necessarily would become the law's favorite; so far as the protection of his humble home and household goods are concerned. It would, also, become a cause for men to pay their debts. If the creditor knew he could not recoup from the household furniture, nor the humble home, he would be chary of trusting the poor man. Hence the aforesaid poor man would have to establish a character of debt-paying in order to obtain credit. When we know that the volunteer soldiery is composed chiefly of these poor men, and the sons of poor men, then should they become an object of special interest to the state and nation. Surely, if they maintain the honor and integrity of the Nation, on the field of battle, they should be favored somewhat in the burden of government in times of peace.

To exempt the humble home and household fixtures from taxation and execution, is to build up a breastwork of patriotism that is a sure protection to the Nation against all hostile people. You have given and guaranteed to the American citizen something worth jeopardizing his life for "The American Home."

Secretary of the Interior Garfield declares that during the past two years government land worth \$110,000,000 has been stolen. The Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald says: "Information of these wholesale frauds has come into the possession of the secretary through special agents in the field. These lands are situated chiefly in states west of the Mississippi river and have been fraudulently acquired by corporations and individuals. With a view of recovering the lands, Secretary Garfield sent to-day letters to Chairman Hale and Tawney of the senate and house appropriation committees respectively, asking for an additional appropriation of \$500,000, which, if granted, with that already asked for, will give the department \$1,000,000 for that purpose. The specific purpose of the appropriation requested is for preventing encroachments upon public timber, protecting public lands, examining swamp lands, etc." It is stated that there is reasonable prospect of recovering much of this alleged fraudulently acquired land if the appropriation is promptly made. It also is pointed out that, while a million dollars may seem large, it is not one per cent. of the commercial value of the land which the government may hope to recover. Secretary Garfield also submits a statement of H. H. Schwartz, chief of the field service, showing over 32,000 distinct cases of alleged land frauds demanding further investigation. The number of such cases awaiting investigation, by states, is as follows: Oregon, 1,462; California and Nevada, 1,409; Washington and North Idaho, 1,325; Montana, 3,605; Colorado, 8,621; Arizona, 436; Wyoming, 21,155; Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, North and South Dakota, 5,894; Missouri, Louisiana and Arkansas, 1,503; Utah, 1,482; Oklahoma and Kansas, 1,912; New Mexico, 1,205; and Florida, Alabama and Mississippi, 1,960.

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We will have on sale, commencing Monday, February 8, the odds and ends left from our Clearance Sale, such as short lengths in Calicoes, Dress Goods, Ginghams, Muslins, Towling, Oating Flannels. Odds and odd sizes in ladies' and gents' ready made garments, and other things too numerous to mention.

These odds and ends will all be placed on bargain counters that have been especially arranged for them, and each article will be marked in good plain figures.

Our Clearance Sale, which was our Sixth Annual Clearance Sale, was the most successful sale we ever had; more goods sold than ever before which has left our shelves almost bare, but in good shape to receive our large Spring stock that will be here in a few days.

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