

# The Santiam News

POLITICALLY INDEPENDENT.

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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### COUNTING CHICKENS BEFORE THEY HATCH

THE OREGONIAN is assaying the very difficult feat of "counting chickens before they hatch." That paper assumes that the Republicans of Oregon are only too anxious to take up the mass advisory convention, in order to break down the spirit of the primary law, including the abolishment of Statement No. 1. So far as the mass of the Republican party outside of Portland is concerned in this matter, the NEWS believes the Oregonian is basing its assumptions upon unreliable information. It is probably true that petty would-be-political-bosses, from all over the state, have made statements which coincide with its editorial assertions. No doubt these people are anxious and more than willing to agree to any scheme which, in the end, will place the reins of political power in their hands again for they are, probably, getting very hungry, by this time. But these would-be-bosses are not the upstate Republican party. Indeed, since they have been shorn of their political power through the adoption of the direct primary law, they are a very small portion of it. But, like coyotes, they make so much noise that the Oregonian supposes that the woods are literally alive with Republicans who would be only too glad to adopt any scheme which will get them out of the pit which they, themselves, have dugged. A little reasoning will convince anyone that this conclusion is not well taken.

Returns of past elections show that there are about twice as many Republican voters as there are Democrats, in Oregon, except for offices for which Senator Chamberlain has been a candidate. This proportion of voters was true when the Direct Primary law, including Statement No. 1 was adopted. More than two-thirds of the voters of Oregon pronounced for this law. Statement No. 1 was of purely Republican origin and was placed in the law at the instigation of one of the most popular Republicans which Oregon has ever had and Republican voters are responsible for it being a part of the law. Now as there has been no opportunity for Republicans to express widespread dissatisfaction with the law or any portion of it since last election, the Oregonian has no grounds—can have none, upon which to base its confident assertions of the readiness of the rank and file of that party, to rush pell-mell into the advisory mass convention.

The main source of grievance with the Oregonian seems to be, that George E. Chamberlain has held and is now holding the most important office within the power of the people of the state to give. Twice was Senator Chamberlain elected to the office of governor and before the expiration of the second term, the people promoted him to the office second only to that of president. Governor Chamberlain was able to save for the taxpayers of Oregon, some hundreds of thousands of dollars, which an unwise and mayhap dishonest Republican official had endangered, besides conserving the public school fund and bringing to book the Oregon City Locks company. Because of the manner in which he had administered the affairs of the state, his promotion to the U. S. Senate resulted and, too, by the grace of Republican votes. The Oregonian charges Senator Chamberlain's election to the primary law, and to Statement No. 1. The NEWS believes this contention is correct. Without Statement No. 1, Mr. Chamberlain would never have been elected, nevertheless, a majority of the people of Oregon desired that he should be. This provision of the law was made to cover just such an exigency. That is to say, when a majority of the people desired the election of any particular man to the office of United States Senator, the legislature should be in duty bound to

ratify their choice. Senator Chamberlain has held his present office less than one year. As yet, he has not made even one speech in the chamber which has been made resonant with the voices of the statesmen of the past. He has, as yet done nothing to cause the people to regret that they selected him for the office. He is the product of their political action, of which they have had no reason to regret, as yet and, therefore, they have no reason to be dissatisfied with the law.

No neighbor, the snarling and growling of a few dethroned political bosses is not the voice of the Republican party of Oregon. They are endeavoring to make a racket sufficiently loud to cause timid and partisan Republicans to think the party is in the move. But it is not so. When the masses—the rank and file, have an opportunity to express their opinions upon this subject, which will not be until next year's election, then and then only can the primary law be again passed upon with any degree of authority.

If the Oregonian will give its great influence towards making our primary law more effective and in accordance with the spirit first intended, it would add popularity both to the law and itself. The question "shall the people rule" was never more pertinent than it is today. Evidently, the Oregonian is opposed to the people ruling. If so, will it have the courage to say so without quibbling?

### CONCERNING TAXATION

THE LAW contemplates that the burden of taxation should be equally distributed. If some men are favored by the assessors, or succeed in having a too low valuation for taxing purposes, placed upon their properties, then the burden is made heavier upon the balance than it should justly be. In these days, when men are appearing before boards of equalization, asking that the valuation placed upon their properties be reduced, the fact becomes plain that some men or corporations would shirk their just proportion of the burden of the support of the government, if they could. Especially is this true of the railroads. No matter what valuation assessors may place upon their properties, their tax agents appear before the various county boards with religious regularity, asking for a reduction in valuation. Possibly this is done for effect, or it may be done by the tax men to make a show of earning the fat salaries they draw down.

Probably, the true value of a railroad is the value which the railroad people estimate, when they make up their tariff sheets. The interest upon their stocks and bonds, besides operating expenses, is always considered. The money realized from the sale of these stocks and bonds, is supposed to be used in the construction of the road. If there has been water injected into the stocks, no difference should be made; for the patrons of the road must pay interest upon these watered stocks, the same as the legitimate stock. If the Southern Pacific should be assessed upon this basis, it would have to pay upon a valuation nearer \$100,000 per mile, than the \$38,000 per mile to which it objects. Surely, property of this class is worth what the people are required to pay interest upon.

Also, many of the owners of timber lands think a too high valuation is placed upon their holdings. So long as assessors value these lands below what the timber barons, themselves, value them—at what they are willing to pay for them, they should not object. Three quarter sections of timber up Thomas creek was sold, recently, for better than \$10,000 per quarter. These quarters are, probably, about an average of the timber in this locality. In Linn county, these lands are valued for taxation purposes at about one third of this amount, yet taxes are paid upon this valuation under protest.

Our farms and personal property are assessed at what is supposed to be, their true cash value. Not at what may be called their speculative value, but at what men are willing to pay for them. Nor are they valued at what per cent. of value they earn, for there is a vast difference in what is the earning power of different farms. Railroads and timber lands should be measured, relatively, by the same standard. But the railroads have been accustomed so long to paying upon such low valuations, that they think they should do so indefinitely. Timber lands, as a rule, have cost the holders but trifling amounts. Those held by the railroads, nothing. The Northern Pacific acquired some of the best timber sections in the county, through this infamous scrip law, a law which this and other interested railroads had passed by congress, for the purpose of acquiring lands to which they were not entitled. Surely they should be willing to pay taxes upon land which has cost them nothing, at what the land is now worth.

The first man of Linn county to pay a fine for killing a female pheasant, was that of Mr. Gantenbein, of Harrisburg. He was fined \$25 by Justice of the Peace Douglas, for his failure to note at what he was shooting.

### THE DEMONSTRATION TRAIN

LAND FERTILITY is not destructible. It may be temporarily exhausted, but by feeding it, can be brought back to life. This is the gist of a bulletin recently issued from the bureau of soils in the department of agriculture.

It is but recently that we have become skilled in the conservation of soil fertility. For 150 years we had little or no occasion to be concerned about the producing power of our lands. It was in the search for new fertility that the population rolled westward until the Pacific was reached. Even now the direction is changed and thousands of United States citizens are going annually into the northwest territories and other parts of frontier Canada. In our pursuit of reclamation projects and demand for colonial lands to be expeditiously by the government in reclaiming waste lands there is other exemplification of this quest for soil that has yet its virgin fertility.

But within the recent past we have turned attention to revitalization of the dead land. We have seen how England in 100 years has increased land productivity about 300 per cent. We have seen the Netherlands, after centuries of use, yielding an average of 42 bushels of wheat per acre. We have observed that in China land that has been cropped to food products for 4000 years is not only still fertile, but even more productive than it was in the virgin state. The effect of these observations, coupled with the further fact that we have no more virgin lands to settle on, has been to direct attention to investigation of how to restore the exhausted land to its original fertility.

In several counties in Maryland and other states, lands that had been abandoned are being re-occupied and their fertile energy renewed. It is largely the result of investigations made and rules prescribed by the federal experiment stations and agricultural colleges. The analysis of soils has been pursued by scientific men until we know all the elements and requirements of fertility. With these analyses men can take the abandoned lands and prescribe the food and treatment that will restore them to new vitality just as a physician diagnoses and prescribes remedies for his patient.

Agriculture is in fact fast becoming one of the most exact of all the exact sciences. Production is swiftly passing out of that old time category in which it was a question of the weather and a few other operations of chance. It is no longer easier to move westward and take up new land than it is to keep the old in prime repair. The developments of science and the increase of earth's population have made the movement for soil conservation worldwide. Governments are promoting and the best minds in the world planning it. A simple instance is seen in the demonstration train a railroad company and the state agricultural college are to send over the O. R. & N. lines in eastern Oregon this week. It is an illustration of how the brain and hand of the world are grappling with the great problem of making the earth fertile, and are going to solve it.—Oregon Sunday Journal.

X-BANKER ROSS has been able to keep out of the penitentiary for more than two years after conviction by the trial court and he is still at liberty. If the same degree of celerity is made with the officers of the Oregon Trust bank, which they looted over three years ago, providing they are found guilty, we may expect that they will find lodging at the Hotel de James about January 1, 1912. But, all the same, it is encouraging that these pious psalm-singing scoundrels are brought to book at all. The footpad, who robs people of their money on the highway, is infinitely less dangerous to society than are men of the Ross stripe, who first obtain our confidence and then rob us at their pleasure. An administration of the Chinese law to bankers, of the class of the men who promoted the Title Guarantee & Trust and the Oregon Trust banks, would have a wholesome effect upon men who contemplate the establishment of wildcat banks in the future.

THE LEGISLATURES of thirty-one states have adopted memorials to congress asking that an amendment empowering the election of United States senator by direct vote of the people of the various states, be submitted to the legislatures for action. Some of the legislatures ask for the calling of a constitutional convention, while others ask for the submission of the amendment only. Now, as it is plain that the election of senators by direct vote was the only inspiration of memorializing congress, the mere wording of the memorial should make no difference. But the power which rules the Nation today, is opposed to placing so much power in the hands of the people as this amendment would give and, for this reason, we may expect that they will take advantage of this technicality and refuse to submit the amendment. More of the states will yet have to adopt the Oregon plan, before the people have a majority in the American House of Lords. Then only will this amendment be submitted.

It is pointed out by calm and unprejudiced men that the direct primary has resulted in giving us throughout Oregon very competent and faithful county officials, at least fully up to the standard of the old convention days. The state officers and representatives, judiciary and congressmen may safely be said to equal the ones selected by the convention system—and some think better. The confidence and satisfaction with the primary seems to be strong with the rank and file of the dominant party, and the politician who seeks to antagonize the demand that the machine disintegrate should ponder well the lesson that all who are born must die, and that even the machine has had its day.

The United Railroad running out of Portland is urged to make a 5-cent fare between that city and Linnton, five miles, but refuses to do so on the ground that it would be ruined. Other lines in Portland are doing more than that for 5 cents and making money. The municipal line of Calgary, Alberta, is carrying their nine miles for 3 cents. The fact is that the railroads in Oregon municipal and others, would make more if they charged less, and the facts in other states bear out this.

### Aeroplanes for Everybody

Up to this time the people who have flown have been the inventors, and each man has flown in his own machine. But now we have come to a different period in flying machine history. A large display advertisement in the London Times informs the world that there is an agency prepared to furnish without delay any one of four successful types of aeroplanes. The respective aviator is confronted with the respective merits of the Bleriot monoplane, of the type Calais-Dover, of the Latham type, of the Antoinette monoplane and of the Wright and Voisin biplanes. There are any number of others for sale also; some, such as the Curtiss machine, have flown successfully, and others have never been in the air. Immediately after the channel flight a wealthy Englishman bought a Bleriot machine for his own use. Two Wright machines and one Curtiss machine have been sold to private persons in this country.

The cost of the aeroplanes is comparatively low. A Bleriot monoplane, the No. 12, designed to carry three people, costs in Europe \$4,800. The price of the No. 11, for one person, is \$4,000, and the planes of the No. 11, without the engine, \$2,000. The price of the Curtiss biplane is \$5,000 and of the Wrights, in this country, \$7,500.

There are plenty of machines good enough for the public to buy and fly in. The difficulty lies in knowing how to fly. The sailor can see the squalls approaching him across the water. The automobilist can see his road. But the aviator cannot see the squalls that may strike him, nor tell when he will strike inequalities in the medium through which he is going. Even the best aeronauts are just beginning to learn something of the science of aeronautics. Yet these difficulties need not prevent the rapid spread of flying machines. Enough knowledge can be learned even in a short apprenticeship to make flight possible. Roger Sommer first sat in the seat of an aeroplane on July 3. On August 7 he made the world's record flight of two hours twenty-seven minutes and fifteen seconds.—Owen Wilson in World's Work.

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