

The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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PRIMARY NOT THE CAUSE

IT IS COMMONLY asserted by the assembly boomers, that the direct primary law is responsible for the inharmonious and factionalism now prevailing among the leaders and bosses of the Republican party. This assertion is not true. Many years before our present primary law was ever thought of, these same factional dissensions prevailed, even in a more intensive form than at the present time.

Since the state elections of 1870 and '74, there has been a gradual but sure growth of the Republican majority of Oregon. The state, on state issues, was Democratic in both of the Grover campaigns, but since those campaigns, the Republicans could always elect any state officer upon whom they could agree and give a united support. But from 1870 to 1908, a period of 38 years, the office of governor has been filled a little more than two-thirds of the time by a Democrat. This was not due to a lack of Republicans who wanted the office, but rather to the fact that too many of them wanted it. A growth of factional spirit was the result.

This factional spirit, however, has been due more to dissensions generated in the election of United States senator, than in those arising from the contest for governor. True, no Democrat has been elected U. S. senator until last year, yet the contention was so warm for this high office at one time, that no election by the legislature was made and Oregon had but one senator for two years. It is, also true, that because of these contentions, factions, men have been elected to that high office who were, in no sense, fit men for the place. They were, practically, nonentities and of no use to either state nor nation.

It was because the people had grown supremely disgusted with these factions and the corrupt practices of the Republican machine in Oregon, that the direct primary law was enacted. Nor have these factions been more determined to rule or ruin since, than before the advent of the primary law. In the past 38 years, nine men including Governor Benson, have filled the state executive office. Two of these, Governor Chadwick, Democrat and Governor Benson, advanced to the governor's chair because of the election to the United States senate of Governor Grover and Governor Chamberlain, both Democrats. Now during these 38 years, because of united action, the Republican party has carried the state at every presidential election. Three of the five Democratic governors were elected to a second term. The Republicans have held this office by election, only twelve years and neither of those elected could secure a renomination; yet every other state officer, aside from governor, since 1878 has been a Republican. No one doubts, if that party had been united for governor as for these other offices, the governor would have been elected as well. But the factional spirit, which the Oregonian holds the present primary law responsible for, existed then as well as now. There was no reason to arouse the factional spirit in the presidential elections, hence the state has given regular majorities for the Republicans at those elections.

We may, therefore, conclude that the filing of the office of governor by Democrats for 26 out of 38 years, is due to Republican dissensions rather than to the popularity of the Democratic candidates, though most of these Democratic governors were exceptionally good men. But as these Republican quarrels and dissensions were even more bitter in the old convention days than now, we cannot see any just grounds for holding the direct primary

responsible. Nor will the proposed Republican assembly heal these political sores. When it comes to a show down, it will be found that the great mass of that party—men who are not saying anything—are staunch supporters of the direct primary, including Statement No. One.

The real cause of Republican defeat is gubernatorial elections, is the rapid growth of the independent vote. In the elections during the 70s, a scratched ticket at the polls was a rarity. Now, to find one which is not scratched is equally rare. In the old time the man who scratched his ticket, was off color with his party. Now he is looked upon as a man who thinks and has the courage to vote with his conviction. Voters, now-a-days, look at the man rather than the party politics he represents. If they are convinced he is honest and true and that he will continue to be so, they care very little what political color he wears.

This independent political action may be and probably is, destructive to the dominant political party; but it will be the salvation of the country. Nor is this independence of political action confined to any one political party. The people have just as much reason to sit down upon Tammany New York, or the Smith-Ruef grafters in San Francisco, as they have upon the Republican bosses and factions in Oregon. It is all an effort on the part of the people to purify the dirty stream of politics.

When ever the Republican party will figuratively, kill off these old corrupt machine bosses and convince the people that its candidates for state and federal offices will stand true to the people's interests, then will these factions cease to exist. Patriotism must replace factionalism, partyism and greed for office. Another feature. The people must know that the Republican party is willing to trust the people before they are willing to trust the Republican party. The present plan to take away the unhampered right of the people to nominate and elect to office the men they wish, rather than those the bosses wish, from constable to United States senator, is not a very good way to convince the people that the Republican party is willing to trust them.

So the true reason for these factions, dates back many years before the direct primary was thought of. Instead of the direct primary causing a disruption of that party, the factions quarrel and greed for office of that party has caused the adoption of the direct primary.

A GLANCE BACKWARD.

WHEN THIS ISSUE of the NEWS reaches many of its readers, the year 1909 will be numbered with the past. Whatever the year has brought to each of us, whether of joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, is now beyond recall. We can only profit in the coming and future years by the experience we have gained in those which have passed.

Generally speaking, 1909 has been a year of prosperity to the citizens of Scio and vicinity. Fair crops of all kinds were raised and which brought good prices when placed on the market. Sickness and death has visited some of our homes yet, as a rule, good health has prevailed. While other and neighboring communities have been visited with epidemic diseases, our community has not been so afflicted and at the present time, we can boast of a very clean bill of health.

Building activity in our city, during the year, has been limited to the construction of two or three residences, barns and repairs to others, though in the surrounding country new residences and barns can be counted by the dozen, some of which are quite expensive.

Our city public improvements are the completion of the light and water plants and the building of a handsome steel bridge, replacing the old covered wooden structure, which add much to the beauty, comfort of our city.

Among the semi public improvements are the building and successful operation of the milk condensery, the cleaning out of the mill race and the construction of a new dam at the head thereof and the repairing and successful operation of the Scio Planing Mills.

The condensery was completed and commenced operation about April 10. By conservative management, the company has established an excellent name for business and for the splendid quality of their product and expect to work the condensery to its fullest capacity during the coming season. The recent high waters damaged the new dam of the Scio Milling Co., so that it will have to be practically rebuilt during the coming year. The planing mills, which had been idle during the previous two years, have been kept busily employed during the entire summer and fall. During the past few weeks, a preliminary survey for an electric or motor railway line reaching from Scio to Munkers, has been made. It is the intention of the promoters, providing the right of way is secured, to take up a tentative construction of the line sometime during the coming spring.

The Linn County Fair Association give the third annual fair during the early fall. That the association is now established upon a sound and permanent foundation, is stating a fact. The

annual appropriation of \$1000 to be used in paying premiums only, releases the fair receipts for the other expenses, which insures the association to come out on the right side of the ledger every year. With direct railway connection into town, the fair will more than double what have, heretofore, been the gate receipts.

So, while the closing year has treated us kindly in the main, our eyes and minds are directed to the future, with the hope and expectation that our prosperity has just begun. Realizing that if prosperity comes to us, we must shape it and bring it about ourselves, there is a disposition on the part of most of our citizens to take hold of these public improvements with vim and energy, so that Scio will keep pace with her sister towns in the march of progress.

Therefore, Old Year, we feel thankful for the kindly manner in which you have treated us and bid you an affectionate farewell, we trust that your young brother has even better things in store for us. With our hearts yet filled with the Christmas spirit, let us congratulate our neighbors in their prosperity of the past year, and express to them our best wishes for the future. In keeping with this spirit, the NEWS wishes its readers a most happy and prosperous New Year.

Possibly, some of our farmer folk are getting tired of the discussion of political questions, almost continually, in the newspapers. But when we consider that these political questions concern us all most vitally, both now and for the future, then does the reason for keeping the public's attention directed towards these matters become apparent. It is a matter of vital importance that every voter shall be made aware that the lords of finance are continually planning how they may enslave the producing classes of the American people, in a slavery more abject than African slavery ever was. It is the duty of the newspaper to keep the people wise upon these matters—to show how men who do not produce nor add a dollar to the nation's wealth, are plotting how to absorb the lion share of the wealth produced by the workers. It is because of the ignorance of the people and the lack of the study of politics, that these financial bloodsuckers have secured a strangle hold upon the nation's wealth. The people need to study these questions, now as they never have before, if they would bequeath to their children, a reasonably fair opportunity in the battle of life. Whenever the lot of the common people become such, that the labor of the father, mother and children become necessary to get a mere living, and the expense of sending the children to school and subscribing for the family newspaper cannot be afforded, how much better than the wage slaves of Europe will they be? Our only protection against the encroachment of these undesirable conditions is for the people to vote right and to vote right, these political questions must be kept before the people.

Our neighbors, over at Stayton, must have a sort of Baron Munchausen reporter, judging from the character of the news items published in the Mail, lately. The latest is that Scio had raised \$20,000 towards the building of the North Santiam bridge near Shelburn. If a subscription paper for this purpose has ever been in circulation in Scio or vicinity, or even thought of, the NEWS has heard nothing of it. Whenever this bridge is built, the cost will be defrayed by Linn and Marion counties, just as the Stayton and all other joint bridges have been built. Evidently our neighbors are getting badly frightened, else they would not grasp at such nonsensical straws.

As the facts are being developed concerning the defunct Oregon Trust & Savings bank, it is being shown that the bank deposits were invested in any old thing which would provide the officers a rake off. Savings banks are supposed to be absolutely safe. That is to say, the funds of such banks are supposed to be invested only in gilt-edged securities. This Oregon Trust concern, seems to have been the least trustful of any of the banks of the state we read about. That the officers, all of them, knew that the bank was buoying shaky securities, is now a fact patent to all and nothing short of a good round term for each of them in the penitentiary, will satisfy the public.

Congress has been in session for a month. What have the members done except draw their salaries? It begins to look as if the Cannonites and insurgents were playing for the advantage of the start. Neither side seems willing to disclose its plans nor the amount of its strength.

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SCIO, OREGON

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