

The Santiam News

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LIMIT OF TAXATION ALREADY REACHED

Last week, in the spirit of fairness, the NEWS published the argument of the friends of Monmouth Normal school, urging the people to consider the importance of maintaining an efficient Normal school at that place. Of course, this same argument can be used to sustain the Normals at Ashland, Drain, Weston, or any other town which may desire to have a Normal school established thereat.

The question is, can the state afford the expense which is likely to be required, if she takes on the Normal schools again? The expenses now required for the colleges at Eugene and Corvallis will average more than \$300,000 annually. If to this is added the expense which will probably be required, if the Normals are taken on again, our college expense will not be less than \$500,000 per year. And even this large sum may be increased; for if we grant the wishes of our Polk county friends in this matter, to be just and fair, we must grant a like request for any county which may desire it, for one county has the same rights as another in this matter. It can readily be seen that should the state be loaded up with a college in each county and they should each be half so expensive as Eugene or Corvallis, she would become bankrupt. Nor is there any middle ground at which to stop, unless we are willing to establish a sort of special class among the counties.

The trouble with our state colleges is, they seem to think there is no limit to the state's capacity to appropriate money. But there is and most people think we have reached that limit now. The tax burdens of Oregon, from all sources, are now heavy and much heavier than in many of the older states. We must not place too heavy a tax burden upon the productive energies of the state. If we do, there is sure to be a rebound in the way of depressed development. When a community pays a tax of three to four percent, upon a cash valuation of property, surely that is high enough; and many cities and towns of the state are thus taxed. There is not much encouragement for men of capital to invest in such towns.

The NEWS is very well aware that most people consider money expended for educational purposes is well spent, and returns a profit to the state in the way of more intelligent citizenry. But there is a limit to, even, good things. The time has surely come when we should call a halt to the increase of state expenditures.

If we reinstate the old Normals, other counties will ask for like schools. Hood River is now agitating this question, and may come with an initiative petition this fall.

Unless taxpayers are prepared to open wide the door in Normal school matters, with the view that each county will, in the course of time, ask and have a right to demand such a school, they will act wisely upon all Normal initiative measures if they vote "no." We know that such action will seem harsh and unjust to Monmouth, Weston and Ashland, all of which have expensive state buildings and equipment, when, at the same time, Eugene and Corvallis are so magnificently cared for. But there is even a higher law and purpose than that of education—which is Self Preservation. We cannot afford to impoverish the people, even for the meritorious purpose of education.

INSURGENCY

Since the last special session of congress, we have heard much talk of and read many articles in newspapers concerning Insurgency. As used in a congressional sense, it means a revolt against the czar methods of Speaker Cannon of the national House of Representatives, and the dictatorial, though different method of Chairman Aldrich, of the national Senate. Speaker Cannon has been supported, in his overbearing and dictatorial rulings, by a large majority of his party, until quite recently, when a combination of the insurgent or revolting members of his party and the democratic members, deprived him of his power, though they did not depose him from the speaker's chair.

The term "Insurgent," as applied to these republican members, is entirely right and proper. The word, as generally used in time of war, means people who are endeavoring to overthrow the ruling power. And this is just what happened in congress. The power of Speaker Cannon to dominate and control legislation is overthrown. The fact that he was not deprived of the speakership, shows that the revolt was not against him personally, but against his dictatorial, czarlike methods, which have gradually grown up since the days of Speaker Tom Reed.

Since Reed's day, the speaker's power had gradually grown until he became absolute ruler and dictator of the House and almost of Congress. He has been the congress; for no measure could become law without Speaker Cannon's consent. No member could address the House nor introduce a bill, without Cannon's permission. The personnel of the various committees were such that he could control the destiny of a measure at will. He could block legislation at any point he desired.

Speaker Reed's offending was only in counting members present and not voting, to prevent a breaking of a quorum, so that legislation might not be retarded. Had he exercised

one-tenth of the dictatorial power which was daily exercised by Speaker Cannon, he would almost have been mobbed. But from Speaker Reed's slight assumption of power, which was then generally justified, has grown the czar methods just now annulled. Speaker Cannon, like Sampson of Biblical fame, has had his locks of power clipped and the whole country rejoices.

The question now arises, Which element of the Republican party now represents the people—the regulars or the insurgents? As the insurgents and democrats now know their power, it is not likely that any very mischievous legislation will be enacted. A second unification will be easier than the first. Had this combination of power been exercised during the tariff debates of the special session, it is doubtful if President Taft's "best ever" tariff, the present law, would have been enacted in its present form, at least.

Undoubtedly the insurgent members come nearer representing a majority of republican thought than do the regulars. In fact the next republican national platform will embody much more of the thought of the insurgents than of the regular republicans. It might be well for Oregon republicans to remember, next fall, that congressmen Hawley and Ellis voted to sustain Cannon first, last and all the time.

THE BATTLE IN THE HOUSE

Many people have wondered why such a climax could come in the House of Representatives as was witnessed there last Saturday. The reason is that there is no other just such body as our House of Representatives in all the world; no other body governed by such rules; no other body where the speaker has such power.

The Senate is composed of two members from each state. Rhode Island has as many senators as Texas, though were Rhode Island pulled up by the roots and placed on the broad back of Texas, it would not amount to "rising ground." By the fiction of a theory the Senate represents the states, where the smallest and poorest has equal voice with the greatest and most populous. Thus in the Senate, Delaware counts for as much as New York. As Daniel Webster, in his most famous speech said: "This is a Senate, a senate of equals, of men of individual honor and personal character, and of absolute independence. We know no masters, we acknowledge no dictators. This is a hall for mutual consultation and discussion, not an arena for the exhibition of champions."

But the House is made up of a body of men that go there as the direct representatives of the people; they are elected directly by the people, while the Senate is only one remove away from the people and is elected by state legislatures. But the people are divided into parties, and that ruling parties may have the power to enforce such legislation as it desires, extraordinary powers have to be given to the man who presides over the House, and at least a moral restriction is put upon members to, on all normal occasions, act with their fellow-artisans. In that way members often vote for measures which they do not entirely approve of, subjecting their judgment to the consensus of judgment of their party. But the Republicans in the present House were elected on a platform which promised the people a new and lower tariff than the Dingley tariff. When the present tariff was submitted to the House, a careful analysis of the different schedules made clear that, while many reductions had been made, on many of the articles which most nearly concern the consumers of the country, and articles which before were amply protected, pronounced increases had been put on. Some of the Republican members were not only bound by their platform, but by direct pledges to their own constituents, and, moreover, their outraged sense of justice caused them to refuse to support the measure. They were at once put down as insurgents. When they tried to be heard the speaker would not see them, and he, working with the majority of his party finally drove the matter through and it became a law. But it left a world of heart-burnings and awakened bitter animations. In addition, the speaker displaced them on committees. So when the House re-convened in December last this antagonism soon revealed itself. The majority of the Republicans in the House, ably backed by the speaker, instead of trying to do away with the antagonism, and seeking to win back the recalcitrant members, tried to crush them. This naturally aroused intensified antagonism, the friction increased daily, until it culminated last Saturday in an open battle, which was a daisy, and resulted in passing an order that new rules for the government of the House should be framed, and that the speaker should have no part in the framing. Then a motion was made to oust (or accept the resignation of) the speaker. A part of the so-called insurgents, having been all the time earnest Republicans, seeing that if that motion prevailed, the logical sequence would be to elect a Democrat—a member of the minority party in the House—speaker, voted against the motion, and thus saved the speakership to Mr. Cannon. But he was too much engaged to appreciate this devotion to party principles on the part of those members, and taunted them with being defeated, which is an indication that he lacks the generosity and courage of a real hero and bodes more clashing in future. But the scrap somewhat cleared the atmosphere of the House, and we will all hope will lead to good results. In our judgment these are days when President Taft should be getting busy.—Goodwin's S. L. Weekly.

The house of representatives has, on four occasions, approved the plan to elect United States senators by popular vote, but the senate has rejected that plan. Democrats and republicans alike favor that method, yet so far as the republican congress is concerned the popular will in this reform goes unheeded. There is, however, a disposition in various sections to put the reform into effect in other ways. In Oregon they have the plan where the people declare their preference and the candidate for the legislature may, prior to election day, tell the people whether he will, in casting his vote for senator, be guided by the popular choice. In Oregon a republican legislature was chosen, but the democratic candidate for senator received a majority of the votes cast at the general election and so we had the novel sight of a democratic senator being elected by a republican legislature. Nebraska has adopted that plan and, unless threats of republican politicians to have the plan declared unconstitutional prevail, that method will be used in Nebraska this year. Where states do not have the Oregon plan a candidate for senator may be chosen by the democratic state convention. That has been done on several occasions in Nebraska and it would be well if in every state senators are chosen this year the candidates for senator submit their claims to their party to be passed upon in state convention.

One of the most important tasks of the American citizen is to reform the United States senate. The senate will be reformed when it has been brought closer to the people. Democrats must work steadily in the effort to make the popular election of senators part of our fundamental law. In the meantime, they can put their theory into practice by requiring their party to nominate the candidate for senator so that the people may know just what they have to expect in the way of a United States senator in the event of that party's success.—Bryan's Commoner.

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