

The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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T. L. DUGGER
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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"WOULD BE UNWISELY EXPENDED"

The above caption is the opinion of our county court in the matter of appropriating \$500 in aid of the Linn County Fair located at Scio. This, we are told, is the decision of the court in response to a petition filed some weeks ago, requesting the appropriation.

The agricultural, stock and dairy, vegetable, horticultural and poultry interests, are the chief sources of wealth of Linn county and the Willamette valley. Permit these interests to languish or deteriorate and all other enterprises will deteriorate. If, on the other hand, these sources of wealth are stimulated; if better grain, better stock, better dairy cows, better poultry and better fruit are produced, a corresponding increase of cash return results. Therefore public money expended, in a reasonable amount, which will tend to bring this prosperous condition about, cannot be "unwisely expended." In the end it will increase the value of the holdings of the producer, consequently, will increase the tax revenues.

No better plan has ever been devised to generate a spirit to excel among producers, than that of a friendly competition in the way of public exhibitions. Only by comparison, can the grower see wherein he excels or fails in the quality of his product. And, it has been found, that prizes or premiums is the best method of exciting this emulation. In bringing about competition in all fields of production the County Fair has resulted. As fairs are not given for profit and all the money received from gate receipts, entrance fees, etc are used entirely to promote the best interests of the fair, even then the premiums which can be paid therefrom, are inadequate to reimburse the grower for the trouble and expense of preparing his exhibit. Knowing this fact, the legislature of Oregon at its last session made an annual appropriation of \$1000 for the Linn County Fair to be paid, exclusively, in premiums to generate a friendly competition among the stock and agricultural interests. It considered money thus appropriated as being "wisely expended." In fact, the legislature deems the state's money "wisely expended" in aiding agricultural fairs, including state, district and county exhibitions, in all parts of the state.

Lane county has appropriated \$1000 in aid of the Lane-Douglas district fair and Douglas county will, probably, if she has not already, appropriate a like sum for the same purpose. These counties, evidently deem money so appropriated, as being "wisely expended." They think money expended in improving the agricultural, horticultural, stock and dairy interests, a good investment. They believe in progress and the county courts of those counties are progressive courts. They are willing to help build a greater Oregon and do not intend that their counties shall fall behind other portions of the state in the march of progression.

It is difficult to see wherein our county court should deem money "unwisely expended" that would help to make a greater success of an enterprise which is of benefit to all parts of Linn county as well as this central portion of the valley. The increasing interest exhibitors are manifesting each year, the increasing area from whence exhibits are brought, is evidence that the popularity of the Linn County Fair is now and is destined to be, one of the leading fairs of the state. It is now and will continue to be of benefit to Albany as well as every other portion of the county. Last year the vegetables grains and grasses exhibited, excited the admiration of all visitors, and the exhibit for this year, now promises to far excel that of last. While an appropriation from the county of \$500 is greatly needed and would have been applauded by a vast majority of the progressive people of the county, the Fair will be given just the same. If the court believes \$6,500 wisely expended for an armory at Albany, a purpose beneficial almost exclusively to Albany, it is difficult to understand, how it can view an expenditure of \$500 for a purpose which is of acknowledge benefit to the entire county as being unwise.

Again the forks of the Santiam pays about one-third or more of the taxes of Linn county, and, therefore will pay fully one-third the cost of the armory as well as \$166 of the \$500, had it been appropriated, leaving only \$333 for the balance of the county to pay. The people of this part of the valley do not think that they have been treated just fairly in the matter.

The News is not disposed to oppose the armory appropriation, for, sometimes, a large building such as the armory will probably be, is needed for large assemblies of the people. In this respect the appropriation may be considered

A six mill tax on the commercial value of the coal lands of Pennsylvania would pay all the state, county and municipal taxes of that commonwealth. Oregon has natural wealth held out of use and untaxed in the same proportion.

A MERITORIOUS ENDEAVOR

When the Scio school board enlarged the public schools to embrace a four-years high school course of study, it placed within the reach of the boys and girls of the vicinity of Scio and the forks of the Santiam, an opportunity to obtain, what is regarded, as a college education of the lesser grade.

Nine-tenths of our boys and girls, heretofore, when they had completed the eighth grade work in the public schools, were inhibited from any further educational work, by lack of a convenient college or high school. But the main reason was, they could not afford the expense and, anyway, their services were needed at home on the farm.

The Scio high school supplies this deficiency. Being centrally located and within an easy distance, a large number of our eighth grade graduates, can attend and secure the additional four years course, yet be at home mornings and evenings or can, at least, spend Saturdays and Sundays around the home fireside and under home influences.

If it is true, as shown by statistics, that only five per cent of our boys and girls attend college, that fact is due to the inconvenience of location of college and the expense involved. The creation of the county high school plan overcomes both of these difficulties.

There is less difficulty now in the way of a Linn county country boy or girl obtaining education in the medium higher branches of study, than ever before because, so to speak, the opportunity has been brought to his door. The reason no longer exists preventing the parent of mediocre or even straightened financial circumstances, from giving his boy or girl the much coveted advanced education. The Scio school board has provided the means by which that laudable desire can be satisfied. Nor is there any reason to prevent other Linn county towns and communities from providing like privileges. The same law applies to all. The initiative, however, rests with the people of the town or community.

The state should be responsible for providing the very best public school facilities, including the high school, possible. Public money can be equitably expended in schools of this character. The state college is, only, available to a comparative few of our boys and girls, while the high school can be placed within reach of them all.

The initiative measure through which Linn county adopted the County High School plan, originated in Scio. It is, therefore, eminently proper that Scio should have one of the leading high schools of the county. The location is excellent and our school board has not made a mistake in taking up this progressive movement.

Grange after Grange have resolutely against the proposed republican assembly plan. Now the state grange, the highest authority of this farmers' order have pronounced against it as well. Not all farmers are members of the grange. But wherever an association of the order exists, the influence of the grange is very great, even among non members. So our assembly friends, need not feel surprised if they hear something "drap" next November, if the assembly insists upon nominating the state republican ticket. As the grange is, practically, the father of the primary law, in this state, it cannot be expected to surrender the spirit of the law at the behest of expolitical bosses and disgruntled politicians. If the republican party shoulders the load, it may expect to loose a large part of the rural vote, where the primary law is generally popular.

Briefly stated, the position of the Oregon State Grange on the matter of taxation is this: That the farmers is unjustly burdened with taxes; that present tax laws are not enforced but should be, and that the entire question of taxation is one deserving of earnest thought and careful consideration. All of this is undoubtedly true.

While there are men in Oregon trying to destroy our primary law, including Statement One, there are men in a number of other states endeavoring to have the Oregon plan of electing United States senators, adopted for their states. The Oregon plan is growing in favor.

The Liberal party of Manitoba has adopted a demand for the initiative and referendum. Oregon advertised again. The city council of Winnipeg resolved some time ago to submit to the people any measure demanded by five per cent of the qualified voters.

The Woodburn Independent very sensibly observes: "The Granges of this state should devote some of their attention to bettering the condition of the farmers of Oregon by attempting to break the combination of the Portland commission men.

If the statement of Stenographer Kerby is true, President Taft has been made a cat's paw of by Secretary Ballinger. One cannot read this exposure without lesing respect for Taft and concluding that Ballinger is a schemer of the first water.

With the increase of the output from the condensery, orders keep right abreast of the supply. When the public learns that a brand of goods can be absolutely relied upon, there is no trouble to sell the article.

When Secretary Ballinger undertook to have himself vindicated, even with the president's aid, he stirred up a hornets nest, from which he will emerge somewhat the worst for the scrimmage.

When the proposed assembly meets to dictate the personnel of the Republican state ticket, it will find the Granger Republicans conspicuous because of their absence.

of public benefit. But it cannot be considered a revenue producer for the public as money expended in developing the agricultural and stock interests would be.

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