

The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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TAX METHODS MAY BE REVOLUTIONIZED

AT OUR RECENT STATE ELECTION, an amendment to the state constitution was adopted which may revolutionize our entire system of assessment and collection of taxes. No new plan is proposed, but each and every county was empowered to devise its own method of assessments and collection of tax moneys. Of course the amount of money required from each county by the state will be fixed by the state board; though the county may choose its own method of collecting the money. The county may exempt specific classes of property from assessment, or it may require every class of property to be listed and valued by the assessor, even to lodge halls and churches.

The idea is held forth by the Oregonian and some others of the state newspapers that this amendment is the forerunner of the adoption of the Henry George single tax method of taxation. Such interpretation, the NEWS believes, is not warranted. The amendment simply establishes home rule on the tax question for the county. The method is dependant entirely upon the voice of the people. The old system may be continued, or a new method may be adopted. Any experiment may be tried which the people may see proper to select.

The only purpose of this amendment, as well as all other laws for collection of taxes, is to cause all classes of property to bear its just proportion of the support of the government. When we see less than \$200,000 of money, notes and accounts reported on the tax rolls in Linn County and, at the same time, know that there are more than ten times that amount which, justly, should be there, the owner of visible property feels that he is being unjustly treated in that he is paying more than is

his just proportion of the tax burden. Nor is it the fault of the assessor that so much of this class of property escapes being listed. Men seem to think that they are doing no wrong if they forget to return the thousands of dollars which they may have in the bank or cashed away in old stockings. They do not think that they are deliberately lying and treating their neighbors unjustly when they do this.

Agents, who look after the paying of taxes for big corporations, are valued in proportion to their ability to cause to be reduced the amount of tax moneys their corporations are required to pay. Knowing this fact, private owners cannot be severely censured if they adopt the same tactics; though down deep in their hearts they know that they are making swindlers of themselves.

But the new amendment need not be viewed with alarm, except it be on the part of tax dodgers; for no new method of levying taxes will be adopted without the sanction of a majority of the people and this majority is composed of the small taxpayers and who are in the habit of paying taxes on all the property which they possess. Nor will there be any change from the present system until the people become thoroughly convinced that a better method is proposed. The only trouble that there is now and will be in the future, is the tax dodger. He will be difficult to eradicate. Moreover, his example is and has been contagious. The property owner who escapes the tax collector in whole or in part, encourages others to adopt the same tactics and this increases the tax burden upon property which cannot escape.

A PROGRESSIVE COUNCIL

FROM CONVERSATION with the various members of the newly elected city council the NEWS man is persuaded to believe that the new council is to be progressive. Not that it will be extravagant and pile up a burden of indebtedness against the city without an adequate return; but that all reasonable means to promote the welfare of the city will be employed.

Among the steps of improvement which our citizens may expect, will be the drafting of a new city charter, the extending of the city limits and the general improvement of our streets, alleys, cross and side walks. Because of the defective nature of the old charter, a suit for or against the city cannot be successfully maintained. This fact effectually blocks any movement forward, provided that there is an objector who refuses to do his part. Further, to a limited extent, the new council will be a boosting club for the city, insofar as the bringing of new enterprises to town and the encouragement of their development.

One of the chief needs of Scio is direct railway communication with the outside world. We need it so that our products can be taken to market at the lowest possible cost. Second and of no less importance, is the building of a first-class system of wagon roads leading in every direction from town. On tomorrow, December 17, North Scio precinct is to hold a meeting of the voters for the purpose of voting a special road tax. A similar movement is on on the part of South Scio precinct. It is the duty of the new city council to cooperate with this movement in every way possible. We believe it will do so. Especially should our streets, all of them, be placed in a condition which will compare favorably with the proposed new county road system. The NEWS is glad to believe that the new city council is to be progressive, up-to-date, and who will cause our town to become as neat and enterprising in appearance as our neighboring towns. The NEWS will be glad to aid the new development in every way possible.

OUR PORTLAND LETTER

Oregon's financial condition, as shown by the State Treasurer's report, is in excellent condition. There is \$424,913 on hand, with no debts, bonded or otherwise.

Oregon raises the best apples. This is no idle boast for not only has this state won the sweepstakes prize at the Spokane National Apple Show two successive years but also captured the first prize of \$1,000 at the Chicago show this year.

Oregon City has a paper mill that is the third largest in the world.

Wallowa has a startling potato story. One vine, that grew on new ground, is said to have attained the height of 6 feet, 1 inch in height, and produced 40 tubers, the total weight of the potatoes being 16 pounds.

Four hundred boxes of Comice pears, grown near Medford, sold in the London market this season for \$10 a box.

Siberia is buying Oregon apples. One hundred boxes of choice Hood River fruit was recently shipped there for sale.

Rogue River orchardists will plant 1,500,000 pear and apple trees this season. This new planting will cover 20,000 acres and bring the total orchard acreage in that valley to 85,000.

The annual report of the Portland Union Stockyards Company shows Portland is becoming a great packing center. The value of livestock shipped the first year the concern was in operation amounted to \$8,335,000.

A large acreage around Hermiston is being seeded to alfalfa. This is not only a profitable crop for hay but there is money in raising seed, which brings 23 cents per pound.

Estacada, an Oregon town seven years of age, has become one of the most prosperous communities of its size and is attracting much attention as a fruit section. It ranks high in apple and walnut production. Strawberries in the Estacada district yield at the rate of \$200 an acre.

State banks have been prosperous the past year, as shown by the annual report of State Bank Examiner Wright, who found individual deposits in Oregon banks on November 10 totaled \$104,270,300, a net gain since November 16, 1909, of \$14,221,550. Total resources of Oregon banks increased during the year almost \$20,000,000.

If you are needing fence wire, call and get prices on my fencing. I can give you prices, for a few days, on American woven wire fence that cannot be beat.

N. I. MORRISON

"I had been troubled with constipation for two years and tried all of the best physicians in Bristol, Tenn., and they could do nothing for me," writes Thos. E. Williams, Middleboro, Ky. "Two packages of Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets cured me." For sale by all dealers.

FOR SALE—Plenty of fine baled hay at \$12 per ton—V. Cladek

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Write your letter and mail your check, postal or money order for \$3.50 at once as paper starts immediately, so the sooner you subscribe the more you get for your money. If you are already a subscriber, send The Telegram to your friends for a Christmas present.

The Telegram is a superb metropolitan evening newspaper, publishing the full leased wire reports of the Associated Press, furnishing all the news of the Pacific Northwest and the world. Its market reports are unexcelled. Its sports are up to date and written in good style. Saturday it runs a special magazine section and a four page comic, both in colors.

Really, Saturday's issue is equal to any metropolitan Sunday. In 1911 The Telegram will continue to be the greatest paper in the state. No one can afford to be without it.

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