

THE SCIO TRIBUNE

ISSUED EVERY THURSDAY BY
T. L. DUGGER, EDITOR AND PROP.

Entered at the postoffice at Scio, Oregon as second class matter.

SUBSCRIPTION, IN ADVANCE \$1.75
SIX MONTHS 1.00

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I pledge allegiance to my flag and the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SCIO, OREGON, APRIL 14, 1921

Statement of Ownership.

State of Oregon } ss.
County of Linn }
I, T. L. Dugger, being first duly sworn state that I am the sole owner, editor and publisher of The Scio Tribune, a weekly newspaper published in Scio, Linn county, Oregon, and that there are no debts, mortgages or other obligations against said newspaper.
T. L. DUGGER,
Subscribed and sworn to before me, a notary public for Oregon, this 13th day of April, 1921.
R. SHELTON, Notary Public.
(L. S.)

SOME EXPLAINING IN ORDER.

Our county court, reports say, has expended a quarter million dollars in excess of what the 6 per cent law allows and outstanding warrants for this amount cannot be paid from this year's tax funds.

This condition places Linn county in a bad predicament. These warrants were issued by the court in payment for money due and which must be paid in some way. Linn county is not bankrupt and just claims against the county cannot, must not, be repudiated. The courts will enforce payment no matter if the debt was unlawfully incurred.

Our county court is the lawfully authorized agent of the county. In its official capacity the court is administrative. It has power to say what improvement shall be made and at what cost. But the court may not expend more money than is provided by law. In other words, the court is not empowered to incur a larger debt than the money provided will discharge, without violating law and its sworn duty to the people.

In December of each year the county court makes up a tax budget for the probable expense of the year following. It knows how much is due the state, the pay roll for county officials, for schools, for roads, etc. Each separate fund must be devoted to the specific purpose intended and the court commits an unlawful act when it issues a county warrant against a special fund when such fund is exhausted.

Now an honest mistake might be made and a few hundred dollars in warrants issued when the particular fund is exhausted, but it is nonsense to suppose that such mistakes should amount to a quarter million dollars and the court not know it; for our court is composed of men who know the law and can make calculations with figures. Therefore, we are forced to conclude that the court knowingly transcended its lawful authority.

Laws are enacted with the expectation that they will be obeyed, and especially public servants who are sworn to obey the law, should be very particular in this respect.

Now, if an individual issues a bank check and his account at the bank is overdrawn, he is punished severely therefor. Our court has issued warrants largely in excess of the funds provided expecting, of course, the

people will supply the funds to take up the overdraft. But will they do it, or will they hold the court responsible?

It is nonsense to try to hold the county treasurer responsible for the court's error, or whatever it may be called. The duties of the treasurer are purely ministerial and to obey the direction of the court. When a warrant is presented to the treasurer for payment he or she is expected to pay the same. If there is no money in the particular fund, or if there is money which must be applied to the payment of warrants of current year, then the warrant is stamped "Not paid for want of funds," etc.

But Treasurer Powell had money in this particular fund and thought she had no option but pay them. The court should have instructed her as to her duty in this regard.

At all events the county's finances are in a bad muddle and it is up to the court to explain the why and wherefore. The court must do so if it expects any relief by the people at the special June election.

FOLLOWING WILSON'S POLICIES

President Wilson's policies of government must not have been so very wrong or President Harding would not follow them up. President Harding seems inclined to make haste slowly and thereby shows he is level headed. But as congress is again in session it is thought something will be doing very soon.

However, this "following up" is relative to domestic affairs. Our foreign policy may be and probably will differ with that of Wilson's. But the vigorous notes sent by Secretary Hughes will almost compel a ratification of the Versailles treaty in whole or in part, if America maintains her rights as outlined in these notes to England, France and Japan, unless we resort to the rule of force, which is unthinkable.

The 38 or 40 nations which now constitute the league may stipulate that the U. S. must become a member of the league if she insists on having a voice in world affairs.

These other nations have indicated a willingness to modify the league covenant somewhat in order to have America become a member, when, of course, America's voice would be heard and very likely conceded to. But Secretary Hughes' diplomacy will have hard sledding so long as we continue to stand aloof.

However, in another week the Harding foreign policy may become known to the world. Then we will know what this "Yap" business portends.

Secretary Hughes is to be commended for the vigorous declarations in these notes, for every American citizen can see the importance of America contending for her rights in the affairs of the world.

One of the first things congress will do, it is said, is to enact an emergency tariff law. An increase of the tariff rates will add but little, if any, to the government revenue.

It is just a scheme in the interests of the American manufacturer and to make the American consumer pay more for his goods.

Congress, it is said, will enact a "budget" law. Well, if it does not provide for an "emergency board" at the same time a budget law may be of some value. We have a budget system here in Oregon. That is to say the various institutions make estimates of what they will need for the two years intervening between legislatures. The state board which inspects and passes upon these estimates pares them down to a reasonable figure. But the institutions go ahead and spend as much money as their superintendents think proper.

If they spend more than the budget calls for, and they generally do, the "emergency" board is called together and allows the deficiency; the money is spent and this board thinks it can do nothing else but provide for the payment.

So what is the use of the budget law if state employees are not required to live up to it? Turkey dinners to those who live off the bounty of the state cost money. What is law for if officials will not comply with it?

Some day when the bonds mature which the state, counties and towns seem to issue recklessly and for which we are getting small value, payday will arrive. Then Oregon will not be a desirable state in which to own property. In fact, if the present annual increase of taxation continues the county and state will own much of the property. It is a good policy not to kill the goose which lays the golden egg. Hence, tax-levying bodies should be less exorbitant in their demands.

The farm woman in a family of five, who pumps, carries, pours and handles water by hand, lifts an average of one ton of water a day.

The Free Lance Utility.

Although a report circulated yesterday that the Oregon Electric railway was about to go into the hands of a receiver was unauthorized there is no dispute that this and other short rail lines in Oregon are facing a serious problem created by unregulated bus operation.

At committee hearings when regulation of automobile lines was under consideration by the legislature, it was stated by representatives of the Oregon Electric that in 1920 the system paid no return whatever on the investment and, moreover, after paying taxes, showed a deficit in operating expenses of \$279,000.

The tendency of automobile bus operation is toward growth. It is under no form of regulation as regards safety, convenience and adequacy of service, rates, or station facilities. The railroad is regulated in all these particulars. The busses at times use the railroad's station facilities without cost to them. The railroad provides its own right of way and road bed. The bus travels on the free highway, built and paid for by the public. It seeks only the higher-rate one-way travel. It offers no commutation tickets to the resident of the close-in communities, and the effect on these of failure of electric interurban service would be most severe.

It will not be disputed that the automobile bus is a natural development of hard surface road construction and perfection of auto locomotion. But its development ought to be on a basis fair to competitors and fair to the public. It now meets neither of these moral requirements. They will of necessity have to be made legal requirements sooner or later.—Portland Oregonian.

There were two fatalities in Oregon due to industrial accidents during the week ending March 24 according to a report prepared by the industrial accident commission. The victims were Herbert W. Nottor, shipyard worker, Portland, and Sanford H. Hoigate, meat cutter, Astoria. A total of 364 accidents were reported to the commission.

The state has closed a deal whereby it came into possession of approximately 73 acres of land adjoining property now occupied by the penitentiary and state hospital. Approximately 18 acres of the land is of clay soil that will be utilized by the prison in manufacturing brick. The remainder of the land is general in its character and will be planted to berries and other products necessary in the maintenance of the state institutions.

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