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The Red Ears



An Appeal In Favor of Millage Tax for Educational Institutions

(Continued from last week)

Classroom conditions at the college and university are almost impossible. It is natural that they should be when it is remembered that the buildings of 1913 were even then insufficient, and that the number of students has increased ten times faster than classroom space. Out of the dozens of possible illustrations there is room in these two pages for one or two only. At the university the sciences have the laboratory and classroom facilities sufficient for an institution of about 700, instead of one of 1745. The university library was built when the studentbody numbered 400, and has study facilities for 211 at one time. At the Agricultural college students are shifted all over the campus to find room at all, then are constantly crowded into wholly unsuitable quarters. The teaching efficiency of the two institutions is fast being broken down by lack of classrooms and laboratories.

The cost of living has risen probably about 90 per cent. in Oregon since 1915. Faculty salaries at the university, college and normal have advanced about 20 per cent. since that time. The result has been a steady loss to the state from its best faculty material. Teachers cannot be expected to stay on indefinitely out of loyalty when they have to borrow from banks, or dip into previous savings to keep their families supported. At the agricultural college alone there have been 45 faculty resignations since July 1919. Some go to the branch of industry in which they are specialists, for one of the great lessons of the world war was the unreal value of the technical training of the university and college professor. Others go to states that have already met the crisis in their higher educational institutions by providing more adequate funds.

Yet it is vitally important that many of these faculty members be kept in the state, and in particular the technical specialists. Professors of agriculture, horticulture, dairying, animal husbandry, education and child study, journalism, commerce, engineering, forestry, and such practical branches come to their highest worth in a state only after years of service. New men cannot learn Oregon in a season or two.

Higher education puts dollars into the pockets of thousands of Oregon citizens. The feat of the agricultural college in increasing the grain output per acre has alone added more to the wealth of Oregon for each year than the entire cost of higher education for the same year. So has the work of the college in reducing the fruit pests. So has its achievement in raising the milk-laying average and in improving the livestock. In a less visible but no less direct way the university and the normal are making their contributions to the wealth of the state.

Higher education is a safeguard against anarchy on the one hand, and against aristocracy and reaction on

the other. Nearly all the inventions that helped win the war were contributions of college professors or college-trained men. Educated men and women produce more and save more. The arrival in the business and industrial world in the last fifteen years of a great number of young men of broad university training has helped make America the business and industrial leader of the world. It has helped bring the worker and the employer closer together, and to improve the social and financial positions of the former. Higher education in Oregon has been one of the strongest factors in bringing in settlers to populate a vast region that at the present average only nine persons to the square mile.

Assessed valuations in Oregon usually vary from one-third to two-thirds of the so-called "cash valuation," which in its turn is generally lower than the "asked price." A man paying on \$1000 of assessed valuation would have \$1.26 added to his annual statement. As the prevailing tax levies run, including the special levies for roads and towns and local schools, his increase would usually range from one twenty-fifth to one-fortieth.

That is, it would add from two and one-half to four per cent to his annual taxes to have the agricultural college, the university and the normal of his state placed on a footing that would let them remain the equals of the higher educational institutions of neighboring and middle west states, and make it possible for him to educate his boy and girl at home, without going to the far greater expense of sending them away from the state.

Imagine yourself to be responsible for the carrying on of higher education in Oregon. The institutions for which you have this responsibility have been created by the people for the education of their boys and girls, for the spread of good citizenship, for education of the republic's free institutions.

Suppose that you have been provided by the people with what they expected at the time would be an adequate millage income. Unexpectedly to them and to you, however, the income fails to meet growth, fails to meet the unforeseen conditions created by a world war. In fact, the income stands almost still.

Meanwhile your costs begin to go up, up. They double in seven years. Your dollars become worth 45 cents of their old buying power. Your buildings are depreciating. Your equipment is wearing out.

And, on top of it all, your student enrollment jumps one hundred and fifty per cent.

Would you close up your doors? Or would you let your whole educational system break down?

Or would you go frankly before the people, make the facts known to them, and ask for the increase in income that has been necessary in every other activity.

If you would do this last, it is then your consistent duty to vote for the Higher Educational Tax Act.

The Hornbook.

The hornbook, invented in 1450 and used up to the close of the eighteenth century, was the usual text book of the elementary schools. A thin slab of hardwood was covered with parchment, on which was the printing. A thin sheet of transparent cow's horn kept out moisture.

Prevents Dampness.

The best way of preventing a bed from becoming damp if left for a few weeks, is to "moke" it and then put a blanket all over the top. Take it off before using the bed, and you'll find it quite dry.

Accommodating Lightning.

Sometimes lightning performs rather comical freaks. It has been recorded that a certain mansion in Wales had been struck by lightning, which saved the servants the trouble of lighting a fire! The chimney was struck and the fuel laid in one of the grates was ignited.

Crabshell Barometer.

The Archaic of Chile use a crabshell as a barometer. In dry, fair weather it is white, but when rain is approaching red spots appear on it, and when excessive moisture is in the atmosphere it becomes red all over.

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