

Address Delivered by President Barratt Before the Convention of the Oregon Wool Growers Association at The Dalles on December 7

To the Officers and Members of Oregon Wool Growers: Greetings:

Fellow members of the Oregon Wool Growers: I congratulate you today upon the success of your business during the last year, and am pleased to announce to you this morning that, notwithstanding the other woolgrowing states of the Northwest are jealous of their reputation, the Oregon Wool Growers stand at the head of the list for business sagacity, and improvements in all lines for the betterment of their business.

The Oregon Woolgrowers are the only ones, as a whole, to hold their wool until after shearing, and they are being well repaid for so doing; and, while we have been censured somewhat by the press for attempting to build up a home market in Portland, and have been dubbed as greedy speculators, without souls or consciences, we deny the allegation, and contend that all products of staple articles in War times, at least, should not go into the hands of manipulators, but from the producer direct to the manufacturers; thereby eliminating the Middleman, and dividing his profits between the producer and consumer. This can only be done by adopting better methods of preparing your wools by classing them somewhat after the pattern of the Australian system, in order to meet the requirements of the manufacturers. There are now some 15 million pounds of Oregon wool stored in Portland, which have been so classed and are held by individual owners, not for speculation, but for the purpose of hindering speculation on the part of the real speculators.

Oregon staple is quoted in Boston today at \$1.80 per scoured pound. Why? Because it is the best wool grown in the Northwest. Again, why? Because Oregon Woolgrowers, from the very nature of their cramped ranges, have kept closer to the Merino blood, and have paid more attention to select breeding, while other woolgrowing states have gone more into the mutton breed, and mixed their flocks in such manner from cross-breeding that their stock now has no individuality or type, and are little less than mongrels. Hence, their wool does not now command the high standing that it once did.

The Oregon Woolgrowers are the first on record to pledge their support and tender their wool to the government for War purposes, which shows conclusively that we are not afraid of being robbed by the Government in the event it did take over our wool. The fight is on between the Grower and the Speculator, and will, I hope, be fought to the bitter end, with a view of getting in closer touch with manufacturing concerns and opening up an avenue of escape from the old way of doing business.

And I want to go on record here and now, and I believe that I will have your support, to suggest to the Wool interests, in order to stop the upward trend of wool prices in America, regardless of how much the wool market soars, to place a price on their holdings, and agree to sell to either Government or manufacturer, according to shrinkage and quality, for the price established, and no more.

Then, I believe, there is not a Woolgrower, who is now holding his wool, that will not comply with the same agreement, although his wool has cost him all that he received, to raise it.

The World is short of wool, and it is time to put a ban on further speculation in it, and our wools should now be in the manufacturers' hands; but it is not fair to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel—it is not fair to make a goat of the woolgrower for holding a little dab of wool, in comparison to the hundreds of millions of pounds held in Boston and other centers for speculation, that would net their owners at the present prices, one hundred per cent. on most of their purchases; and I hope that this matter will be more fully discussed and threshed out before this meeting comes to a close.

After some ten years of perfect freedom from scab in Eastern Oregon, it again appeared in Morrow county last Fall, thru a shipment of bucks that were infected from the Portland stockyards, which infected some eighteen thousand ewes, thereby causing a loss to their owners of some fifty thousand dollars. These sheep were all dipped thoroughly under official supervision, and cured; but scab has, unfortunately, broken out in two other bands belonging to a neighbor, owning an adjacent range. These sheep were, undoubtedly, exposed in the Spring, and carried it to the mountains, where it lay dormant until this Fall, breaking out after the first rains. They were brought home and dipped promptly. This, however, infected one of the main trails, which had to be closed, thereby causing great inconvenience, and loss of stock having to travel so far around, showing conclusively, the great need of more trails through the Forest Reserve. We hope that this will be the end of scab, but if it should again break out, there should be an enforced general dipping for the district infected next Spring.

The Livestock Sanitary Board, through the courtesy of Representative Clark, of Gilliam County, introduced a Bill that was given with a view to making the Scab Laws more stringent; and giving the said Sanitary Board more power to enforce the Scab Laws. This Bill passed, and now, by going after the parties who have so persistently propagated scabies from year to year in the Willamette Valley and Southern Oregon, and making more stringent rules in regard to the disinfection of stock cars used for shipping stock to Eastern Oregon, it should not be hard to keep scab from being brought in.

It is unnecessary for me to go into detailed account of the Woolgrowers' business for the past year, for you well know that your business is in better shape than ever before, and prices for both wool and mutton have increased almost one hundred per cent since our last meeting.

But, fellow members, a word of warning will not go amiss at this time, when war is rampant throughout the world, and prices for all commodities have advanced as much or more than the products we are raising. We should not get intoxicated with the wealth we are handling, for, with money at only one-half its purchasing value, with most of our competent help drafted into the Army, and wages doubled for the ones that remain, with war taxes and voluntary contributions constantly demanding your aid, the strictest economy should be practiced. To the end that we may give more liberally to the all-absorbing cause, and the mightiest problem that mankind has ever been called upon to solve. You will call to mind that it is just ten years since the Oregon Woolgrowers assembled in this beautiful city, at a time when the prospects for this business were somewhat clouded by those periodical dark blots which have, from time to time appeared upon the horizon, and rendered it difficult for sheepmen, as well as the agriculturists to guess far into the future; at a time when panic was rampant throughout the land, and the memorable holidays were proclaimed by Governor Chamberlain to save the State from financial collapse.

My friends, we have again met in this city to transact our annual business, and to mingle again, socially, in a far different atmosphere, financially, than at that time. For, since the year 1907, our business has been improving, from year to year, until, in this year of grace, nineteen hundred seventeen, it has reached beyond the dream of expectation. So much for our condition financially; but let us not forget that a far more serious problem confronts us today than financial conditions, or business successes. President Wilson, after almost three years of patient and long-suffering diplomacy, tried, in every way possible, for the mind of man to conceive, to avert being drawn into the terrible whirlpool of destruction, right up to the point of having this country's honor and flag trampled in the dust, along with innocent American women and children murdered on the high sea, and intrigues that threatened to shake the very foundation of Liberty and Democracy of this country and the world, broke of diplomatic relations with the enemy of freedom and declared war, and threw in our lot with the nations who were fighting for Liberty and Humanity, so dearly prized by all American institutions.

We are about to plunge the flower of American manhood into the vortex of that awful universal struggle. Let us remember that we have a duty to perform to the boys who will go to give their lives by the thousands, in order that we may live in this land of peace and plenty. We who have passed the age of active service can look back thru the years that have passed, and must say that, when compared with the struggles of our forefathers, we have been blessed by our lots being cast in the most luxuriant and peaceful period that the world has ever known. Shall we allow our boys to go and fight and endure hardships worse than death in order to maintain for us a condition that exists today? And not do our part in every way possible to brace them up for that gigantic struggle of physical endurance which they must undergo? No, no, my friends, we must give the boys at least a chance for their lives, that are sweet to all of us. By going down deep into our coffers, and give and give and give, and then—give some more. Make all of the money we can from our legitimate business. We are entitled to it, from a business standpoint; but let our business be a secondary consideration, as against the soldier or

sailor who is fighting our battles. They are the ones who will have to bare their breasts, and act as the bulwark to stem the tide of battle which has been ebbing and flowing for the past three years among the nations of Europe. They are the ones that must now throw in their lot and fill up the gaps of our brave allies who have been fighting and dying to uphold and maintain the same principles that the founders of this country upheld, when they uttered those famous and world-renowned words, "Give us Liberty, or give us Death."

My friends, the time has now come, and history is going to repeat itself, only on a more gigantic scale. The peace-loving nations of the world for the past forty years have been sleeping by the wayside or following the byways of least resistance, while an Octopus has grown up in their midst in the form of a military organization, whose tentacles have spread throughout the length and breadth of the world. The brains of which have ever been active in conceiving, and are now carrying out the most diabolical cruelty that has ever been recorded in the world's history. The hand of which has ever been at the throttle of their political machinery, to the end that they may carry out the all-absorbing dream of world power; the eye of which has never slept in order that they may not have overlooked the shortcomings and unpreparedness of the subject of their prey.

Fellow citizens, the time has come, and, in my estimation, is long overdue, for every loyal citizen of this nation to wake up to the enormity of his obligation to this country, whether he be foreign born or otherwise. The time has come for every man to begin to enquire into the character and standing of the "other fellow." The time has come for every man to find out who he is for, and who against. And, while every man is presumed to be innocent until he is found guilty, the papers, by their daily reports, constantly tell us of the degradation and destruction of valuable property so sadly needed in these times of stress, which would indicate that the enemies of this country have not all been rounded up. And the man, or body of men, who willfully, by word or deed, attempts to obstruct, or hinder, the work or plans now being carried out by this Nation to the end that the war may be brought to a successful termination, is a tool of our enemy and a traitor to the country which feeds him, regardless of whether he be a man high up in the political scale or in the lowly walks of life. This is the time for men with good red blood in their veins to support no man with their vote, whether he be of their political faith or not, who is a light-weight or cheap politician. But on the other hand, if the men who are now in high command are men who have made good, and shown by their administration of affairs in these critical times that they are men of force, keep them there, for its poor policy to swap horses in the middle of the stream. But we should weed out the lightweights, and put men in office who are willing to give their time, money and life, if need be, in order to back up this Government, the Nation and the Flag.

During the last six months, I have had the honor to go out and solicit funds for several worthy causes, such as for the Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., and such like. And, while the people of Oregon in the main are liberal to the core, I am sorry to say that I have met with some who are not doing their bit. Men who, it would seem by their actions, would rather see this country defeated, and pay tribute to foreign power, if it would be the means of saving them from parting from their almighty dollar. Such people are an abomination and a blight to the country in which they live. I am proud to say, however, this does not apply to the Woolgrower.

While the world, at the present time, is out of joint, and all Europe and parts of Asia are suffering, bleeding and dying from the terrible scourge of war, and America is soon to be in mourning for her sons who will never come back; yet it is my belief that, in the end, much good will come out of it all. In the first place, it is going to be the means of putting down the mighty autocrats from the positions of power, and replace them with men imbued with a spirit of humanity and justice. It is going to emancipate the Christian Armenians, whose blood has been crying to heaven for the last twenty-five years, and liberate them from the tortures and sufferings they have undergone from the diabolical Turks. It is going to adjust the differences of Poland and other small nations, who have been held in bondage, under iron rule. And, although the present state of Russia looks dark and forbidding, she will emerge thru the course of time to be a republic that will be a credit to the world. Little Belgium will be recompensed and reinstated with honor and thanks from the whole world for the noble and heroic stand that she made to stem the tide of invasion; likewise, that little Emerald Isle, so dearly loved and sung about, will surely come into its own. And, last, but not least, it is going to be the means of forging a chain across the mighty ocean, the links of which will never be broken, that will bind the peace-loving people of the Old World and the New in that bond of fellowship to the end that men will not live for self alone, and by so doing, will hasten the time that it is said will surely come, to-wit: The fellowship of God and the brotherhood of man.

Now, friends, I know that this is not much like an address that might be expected at a meeting of this kind, and it is not intended as such; for your business is in a flourishing condition, and, with care and economy, will stand alone; and I take it for granted that every sheepman subscribes for the National Woolgrower. Such being the case, he will find within its pages more information pertaining to his business than anything that I can supply. Its articles are interesting and reliable down to the last page in the last issue, stating that it is out of debt, owned by the woolgrowers of this country, edited and managed by Dr. McClure.

While human life is uncertain in these days, I am sorry to announce the taking away of at least one member of this association, Brother Geo. Perry, a pioneer of Eastern Oregon, and a Woolgrower of long standing. George was a man who most of you knew and were glad to meet, because of his genial and goodnatured disposition, his glad hand of fellowship will be missed from our streets, which serves to remind us that we are all on the border-line of that undiscovered country, whence borne no traveler returns.

And now, fellow-members, the meeting is yours. You have assembled to do your annual business, and adjust your grievances, if you have any. And, while this meeting like any other meeting must be governed by certain rules in order that it may be successful, every member here is entitled to the floor, and is cordially invited to voice his sentiments on any subject that may be brought up. During my incumbency in this office it has been my pleasure to serve you in my humble way, and while I have not been called upon to do any arduous duties, owing, no doubt, to changed conditions, I feel that this Association's membership roll is not increasing fast enough in comparison to the wealth that it represents, and every effort should be made during the coming year to build up a stronger organization, so that Oregon wool and Oregon woolgrowers should have stronger representation in any emergency or propaganda that may appear.

Thanking you, one and all, for the honor that you have conferred, and for the support that you have given me for the past two years, I respectfully submit this report for your consideration, and in conclusion, would again admonish you to stand by your army and navy, for on them depends the hope of victory. Stand by the President and his associates in command, if they be men of force, for they will be called upon to sweat drops of blood in order to meet and cope with the issue of the times. Stand by the Red Cross and every other worthy cause that will help to keep the home fires burning for the boys on foreign soil; and last but not least, stand by your COUNTRY and also by your FLAG!

The Flag that's First and Last and Best,
Whose Stars ascended in the West,
Where'er it floats, sweet Freedom roams,
And spells Protection to our Homes.

It sheds its light of Freedom through
The Stars assembled on the Blue,
And blazing glory marks the stripes,
Reflected in the Northern Lights.

This Flag now floats above the guns
Intrusted to Columbia's sons,
For Freedom's cause, again, once more,
Will brave the withering blasts of War.

Then do your duty, with your might,
To keep it floating for the Right
On land or sea. When once unfurled
Brings Liberty to all the World.

Having secured the services of three Skilled Decorators, we are now prepared to do all work with neatness and dispatch in all parts of the county.

Upbuilding Industry

It is the policy of the Farmers & Stockgrowers National Bank to fit in with and lend co-operation wherever and whenever it is consistent with good business and safe banking to do so. To farmers and stockgrowers particularly, we believe such a financial connection will appeal.

No matter the size of that account—we shall appreciate it.

FARMERS & STOCKGROWERS NATIONAL BANK
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Irrigon Jonathan Apples

Can be had at all leading grocers in the county.

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Surpasses all qualities of the "real stuff"—except the "kick."

La Doble Fruit Farm
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STANDARD OIL COMPANY (CALIFORNIA)

PERFECTION OIL HEATER

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Pure -:- Delicious -:- Refreshing
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