

MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

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GEORGE PUTNAM, Editor and Manager



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SWORN CIRCULATION. Daily average for eleven months ending November 30, 1911, 2781.

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MEDFORD, OREGON.

Metropolis of Southern Oregon and Northern California, and the fastest-growing city in Oregon.

Population—U. S. census 1910—2260; estimated, 1911—10,000.

Five hundred thousand dollar Gravity Water System completed, giving finer supply pure mountain water, and 17.3 miles of streets paved.

Postoffice receipts for year ending November 30, 1911, show increase of 19 per cent.

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COLVIG AND THE GOOD ROADS BILLS.

PRESIDENT Wm. M. Colvig of the Medford Commercial club is out with a broadside against the good roads measures proposed for initiative action by the state good roads association. All eight measures are sweeping-ly condemned, upon the ground that they centralize power in road matters and legislation.

It cannot be too clearly set forth that, in opposing the good roads legislation, Judge Colvig speaks only for himself and not for the Medford Commercial club. His attitude is not necessarily the attitude of the club, on this subject, any more than it is on other subjects upon which he is in the habit of airing his opinions—such as politics, mining, railroad rates, etc.

The character of the interview would lead a stranger to infer that Judge Colvig spoke for the commercial club, and voiced the prevailing idea of its membership. It will probably be printed as such in the Portland Oregonian, creating the impression throughout the state that the progressive citizens of Medford are fighting good road legislation, whereas these bills have never been brought before the club.

Only a short time ago, Judge Colvig as president of the commercial club, repudiated in an Oregonian interview the proposed initiative railroad rate bill promulgated by the Medford Traffic bureau—and at the next meeting the commercial club almost unanimously endorsed the measure. He openly opposed railroad rate agitation, and yet the Medford Traffic bureau's vigorous crusade for more equitable rates has already resulted in nearly a 40 percent reduction, and more are on the way, and it will make possible the growth of the city as a distributing center.

Judge Colvig's remarks show that he has not read any of the eight bills, but is taking the knocking Oregonian's word for them, and the Oregonian is his bible. He says: "The reason why I advise opposition to the proposed acts is that I believe the people of the counties of the state should keep the power of expending money for good roads in their own hands and not make themselves dependent upon any commission or bureau at Salem. The people of Jackson county know the kind of roads they need. They understand the climatic and other conditions which have a bearing upon such work.

"If there is any money to be paid out for good roads there is no more reason why the state highway commission should have the balance of power than that it should have the power to say where we should build our streets. I believe in home rule for the building of roads in the several counties of the state. We need no state supervision in the matter, and I hope the people of Jackson county will assert their right of self-government and sit down very hard on the proposed bills, as espoused by the Oregon Highway association, and only support the enabling act, which gives them the right to control without any strings on their endeavors."

Judge Colvig's argument is merely an echo of the Oregonian's, which opposes progress along all lines. Counties have been spending their own money for half a century—and still we have no good roads. Most of the money has been wasted. Every county commissioner, every county court in each of the counties, thinks they know more about road building than the United States government—and 57 different brands of highways—none good—have been the result. When a few counties have attempted to hire road engineers—politics, not efficiency, has governed the appointment—and it will ever be so. State highways should be under state supervision and constructed along uniform lines. If the state can aid the county, can put up dollar for dollar, the aid should be accepted—even if it made local graft impossible.

Examine these bills in detail and see that Judge Colvig's objection applies to none of them, observe how little study he has put on the subject.

One is for amendment of Section 7, Article 11 of the constitution and provides that the state may incur indebtedness for permanent road building. This would make possible the building of state highways. It would legalize the Crater Lake highway appropriation. It would enable the state to cooperate with counties in road work. What objection can there be to this bill?

Two other bills are for the employment of local and state prisoners upon highways, instead of keeping them confined in prisons—sensible, humane and economical. No progressive citizen can object to these bills.

Another bill is an enabling act, permitting county courts to call road bond elections. It would have legalized the Jackson county election last fall. Judge Colvig thinks special elections should not be permitted on account of cost, but action should be taken at general elections—making counties wait two years for road improvements. At the same time Judge Colvig is heading a movement requesting the governor to call a special session of the legislature to enact just such a bill. Consistency, thy name is Colvig!

A fifth bill is an act permitting the creation of a state bond issue for the building of permanent roads. It authorizes the expenditure of \$2,000,000 a year for ten years in permanent highways. This is the bill that has aroused the opposition of every mossback in the state—including the Oregonian—twenty million dollars for highways! And yet California is spending \$38,000,000 in one lump!

A sixth bill provides for the creation of a state highway fund, makes a distribution of the license taxes derived from motor vehicles, and provides for its apportionment among the counties for the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, counties being required to spend an equal amount, the entire work being done under jurisdiction of the state highway commissioner.

A seventh bill defines state aided highways, as being those paid for wholly or in part out of the state highway fund, and enables any county court to avail itself of state aid in road construction or repair work.

The eighth bill is the so-called "centralization" measure. It establishes a state highway department and authorizes the appointment of a state highway commissioner at

\$5000 to supervise all work paid wholly or in part by the state.

There is nothing in any of these measures preventing "home rule" or interfering with the supervision of the expenditure of county funds other than by county authorities. The state exercises jurisdiction only upon highways where the state is paying, wholly or in part, for the work. If Jackson county wants to spend its money, it can, but if it wants the state to put up dollar for dollar, the state will insist upon supervision.

What is there about any of these bills that any progressive citizen can object to? They cover the road situation in a thoroughgoing manner, and make the state bear the share it should bear in its own development—something the state has so far failed to do. They solve the highway problem, local and general, as well as the prison problem.

MUTT AND JEFF COMING



"Mutt and Jeff," which will be the attraction at the Medford theater commencing February 22, is described as one of the funniest plays ever written. It is a dramatization of the cartoons of Bud Fisher of the same name, which have been attracting the attention of the entire country for the last year or so. This new play was constructed by Gus Hill, the well known New York producer, who has spared no expense or time to make it one of the best musical comedy productions ever sent on tour. The play is described as a musical comedy of a very high order, containing a laugh in every tick of the clock, and to be filled with all the laugh provoking situations the public has been led to expect. Fisher's "brain people" present very broad opportunities for a play of more than ordinary interest, and no lack of graphic these opportunities will be found when the play visits this city for the first time. More than 50 people will be cast in the production, including a chorus of the prettiest girls a big city has to offer. The antics of "Mutt and Jeff," while the object of interest, they will not be missed when not on the stage, as the play has been constructed so as to be sufficiently interesting without having to depend entirely on these two funny fellows. The best and most famous theatrical mechanics have been busy for months on the scenic production, which will rival in beauty anything that Broadway has seen in years. Frank Hayden had several hundred people working night and day on the costumes, which are from the original designs furnished by A. Edel, of Paris.

"Mutt and Jeff" is a little bit on the order of "Little Johnny Jones," but will be presented on a much more elaborate scale.

Seats on sale beginning Saturday.

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