

# WEST PLEADS BUSINESS SESSION IN MESSAGE TO LEGISLATURE

### Governor Makes Recommendations to Abolish Boards, Consolidate Departments and Increase Efficiency of State Administration.

### Dwells Upon Prison Policy and Favors Law Enforcing Sterilization for Degenerates and Criminals.



SALJEM, Ore., Jan. 13.—The governor's message in part is as follows: Gentlemen: In accordance with the usual custom, and the command of the Constitution, it again becomes my pleasant duty to present for your information a brief statement of the condition of our public affairs and offer for your kindly consideration a few suggestions which, it appears to me, would make for the greater development of the state and the increased prosperity of her people.

#### Special Reports

Important questions will be presented for your consideration at this session, among them: A compensation act, a revision of our judicial system, an insurance code and the Jefferson street levee and the Columbia Southern irrigation matters. These have been brought to your attention and quite fully discussed through special reports which have been mailed you from time to time.

#### The State's Finances

The state's finances are in a splendid condition. We have no debts, bonded or otherwise, to worry us and there are ample funds on hand to meet all current expenses. Unexpended appropriations and accumulated receipts from license fees and other sources in excess of a million dollars will be available for expenditure during the ensuing year and make necessary a state tax levy of but \$1,000,000 as against \$2,000,000 last year.

#### The State Institutions

You were promised two years ago that the maintenance appropriations made by you for the support of our state institutions would answer the purpose and that you would not be called upon to make deficiencies good. I am pleased to advise you that this promise has been kept.

Our state penal and almshouse institutions have an approximate population of 2700 inmates. Their care has necessitated the hire of 370 employees and an average annual expenditure during the past two years of about \$1,000,000. This is a vast sum of money for the taxpayers of the state to be called upon to pay each year, yet it is a condition which has to be met. These institutions are a product of the times and present day society and until we consent to study the causes which fill them and take steps to remove these causes we may expect to be called upon to meet, not only the present demands, but greatly increased burdens in the future.

Too often these institutions have been used as political footballs, so that their affairs and needs have many times failed to receive at the hands of the legislature the sober, sincere and unbiased consideration which they merited. Inmates have been made to suffer through failure of the legislature to provide adequate funds for their care and support—this due at times to indifference on the part of a superintendent and at others to a desire on the part of some one in the legislature to embarrass him in his work. Politics is not now a factor in the management of these institutions. The present board can say, and without fear of contradiction, that this influence has never in a single instance dictated the selection of an officer or employe at one of them.

The last legislature treated the institutions with fair liberality, and the board, through close attention to their affairs and the hearty cooperation of officers and employes, offers them today for your inspection in a far superior condition than has ever before existed. Should their needs receive the consideration which they merit at your hands, and I am sure they will, the board can promise you two years hence a group of institutions, ranking among the best, if not the best, in the United States, and this notwithstanding that many of the buildings are old and out of date.

#### The State Purchasing Board

The Purchasing Board has proved its usefulness not only in simplifying the purchase of supplies for state institutions and at most satisfactory prices, but in pointing out the advantages which would accrue to the state from a further consolidation in the management of all state institutions.

#### A Single Board of Control

All state penal and almshouse institutions should be placed under a

single board of control and to avoid creating new officials and expense the said board should consist of the governor, secretary of state and state treasurer. The state Purchasing Board should be merged with this board. By this arrangement the management of our state institutions can be greatly simplified and the cost reduced.

#### The Oregon State Penitentiary

This institution had its birth about forty years ago. Added years and population brought it added fifth and added rubbish. For two whole years we have shoveled and scraped and scraped and shoveled in an endeavor to make the institution and grounds clean and sanitary. We have made much progress, but still have far to go. However, this coming year will see such work pretty well taken care of and the institution and properties take on an appearance which will compare favorably with the best of similar institutions in other states.

The superintendent's report presents in detail much information in regard to the affairs of the institution and merits your careful consideration. The institution's problem is what to do with its surplus labor. This question must be met. During the past year we have been able, in spite of unjust criticism, misrepresentation and many obstacles, to keep the men all busily engaged and at occupations which were of profit to the public.

Upon taking office I found scores of idle men in the institution and their ranks were suddenly swelled by the cancellation of the stove foundry contract. Notwithstanding the dilapidated structures and the fifth and rubbish sadly in need of removal, many of these idle men were locked in their cells or permitted to loaf around the prison yard.

To relieve the situation, those whom it was thought could be trusted were sent out to work on the roads and at various state institutions. The balance were kept busy in and about the prison premises cleaning and repairing the building and in clearing and reclaiming waste and unproductive lands.

The people of this state at our recent election by a large vote endorsed the policy of working convicts on county roads and at state institutions. It can therefore be taken as a settled policy and one which will take care of about one-third of our prison population. A similar number can be utilized in the ordinary upkeep of the prison and prison properties. This leaves one-third of the population not provided for. These men cannot and must not be left in idleness. The institution can work out its own salvation if the management is given the right and authority to conduct it on business principles and use institutional earnings to cover operating expense, install additional industries and take care of needed improvements.

Turn to the brick yard account of 1911 and you will find, notwithstanding over one-third of the brick manufactured was delivered to state institutions at \$5.00 per thousand, the sum of \$16,700 was turned into the state treasury. Ten thousand dollars of this amount was profit and the total would have been \$12,000 had full value been collected for brick furnished the institutions.

Then came the critics who attempted to prove that it was unlawful for us to make money for the taxpayers and we were obliged to cease. It was with difficulty that we found a way to manufacture brick to meet the needs of the several state institutions during 1912 and keep within the law as pointed out by our critics.

The total cash earnings of the institution during the biennium was \$40,955.01. Earnings through labor furnished state institutions and counties, figured at 75 cents per day, but not collected, amounted to \$29,615.75, making a total of \$70,570.76 or just about one-half of the maintenance cost of the institution.

What Oregon's prison policy shall be in the future rests largely with you. We have put forth our best efforts in an endeavor to solve the prison labor problem and feel that we have made much progress—in fact far more than was thought possible in the beginning.

With the installation of industries

and the manufacture of articles for state institutions only, the prison can within a few years be made self-supporting. Industries can be gradually installed and paid for out of the institution's earnings if such a course is authorized, but if not authorized then an appropriation of at least 25,000 should be made for the use of the management in procuring needed machinery.

The last legislature appropriated \$11,250 to install 24 new steel cells. Through favorable prices on materials and the use of our own labor we were able to install 48 cells, thus fully supplying the demands of the institution.

#### Educational Institutions

Our institutions of higher education are either needed or are not needed. If needed they should receive liberal support; otherwise they should be abolished. Provision should be made at this time for placing them on a millage tax basis in order that they may be relieved of the necessity of coming begging to the legislature each session.

#### Other Proposed Institutions

##### Drunkard's Home

Our jails and state institutions are crowded with victims of the drink habit. These unfortunates are a continual expense to the taxpayers. A meritorious compensation act which makes each industry provide for the families of its killed and injured is being proposed at this session. In view of this, I can see no reason why the burden of providing for down and out "booze fighters" or their families should not be borne by the liquor traffic. These individuals being the product of the saloon should be cared for by that institution.

#### A Reformatory Necessary

Some day, and in the no distant future, this state must have a reformatory where the better class of prisoners may be placed and thus avoid their being thrown in contact with the confirmed criminals at the penitentiary. Should the recommendation made as to the state training school be followed that institution could be used as a reformatory to accommodate the said better class and overflow from the prison. The lands surrounding the institution could be farmed through the aid of this labor and the products distributed to such institutions as might be in need of them.

#### Home for the Aged

Figures obtained for the year 1911 show \$236,272.23 to have been spent by the several counties in this state in the support of their poor. It is estimated that there are about 600 of these unfortunates now being cared for by the counties. This number could be cared for at a state institution for about one-half the said cost and receive much better treatment than many of them are now receiving. Should the tuberculosis sanitarium be abandoned, the buildings and grounds would afford an ideal location for such a home. The cost of maintaining the home would be apportioned to the several counties upon the basis of the number of inmates charged against each.

#### Home for Wayward Girls

There is a crying need for a home for wayward girls and a request which will be made at this session for the establishment of such an institution merits your earnest consideration.

#### Good Roads

We still need good roads legislation. The people indicated through their votes at the last election that they were opposed to any but conservative action along these lines. We have made some headway during the past two years, and the way is open for further progress through the passage of legislation not inconsistent with the vote of the people at the said election.

The ocean beach from the Columbia river on the north to the California state line on the south should be declared a public highway.

#### Useless Offices

The taxpayers are bearing the burdens of many useless officials and appropriations and should be given relief. The Code contains many out-of-date and useless laws which should be repealed.

#### Appropriation Bills

The practice of the past of submitting for your consideration blank appropriation bills should be avoided. These bills should be reduced to the smallest practical units in order that the members may have a better opportunity for considering the merits of each.

Our constitution should be amended so as to permit the governor to veto any item in an appropriation bill. As the matter now stands useless appropriations are allowed to slip through for the reason that they are included in a bill carrying appropriations of merit.

#### Taxation

Three tax amendments approved by the legislature were submitted to the people at the last election. Of these two were defeated and by a very small vote. Their defeat was not due to any particular opposition, but because of the great number of tax measures upon the ballot and the inability of many voters to dis-

tinguish them from others which they were anxious to defeat.

#### Labor

Most important among the questions which affect the interests of the laboring classes in this state is the proposed compensation act. Just compensation to an injured workman or his family is right in principle. The measure proposed was drafted only after painstaking investigation by representatives of the different interests involved. These different interests each had to give and take a little in order to construct a measure which would work for the common good. It is easy to find fault with a measure of this kind, but so long as it is founded upon sound principles minor objections should be waived in order that the bill may become a law and given a trial. Its shortcomings, should any exist, will develop and can easily be taken care of in the future.

A minimum wage bill will also be presented for your consideration. The bill is aimed primarily to protect the working girls of this state in a living wage. Such a law would fill a long-felt want and would go far to remove conditions which often drive deserving, but helpless, girls to lives of shame.

It appears that the eight-hour law passed at the last election was without an enacting clause and will therefore be of no effect. I would, therefore, suggest that a new bill covering the eight-hour feature of the said bill be passed at this session.

The labor commissioner in his report has called your attention to the needs of labor in this state and I hope you may find time to look carefully into his recommendations.

#### Widow's Pension Bill

A measure providing for the pensioning of widows will be presented at this session. The bill appears to possess much merit and deserves your earnest consideration.

#### Auditor of Municipal Accounts

This state needs an auditor of public accounts. A good man in this position would each year save the cost of his office many times over. As matters stand today millions of dollars are being expended annually by public officials and practically without supervision. This failure on our part to throw proper safeguards around such expenditures opens the way for waste and graft. Legislation providing for a uniform system of accounts throughout the several counties should be passed and measures along these lines will be offered for your consideration.

#### State Forest

Aided by the state land board I have been negotiating with the Federal government for the exchange of all scattered school sections within the boundaries of the Federal forests in this state for a compact body of timber. Should the trade now under negotiation be carried through, it will result in the state securing title to some very desirable lands, and will go far in making our state school of forestry rank with the best of the nation. A plan for the administration of this state forest will be submitted for your approval.

#### Sterilization

Degenerates and the feeble-minded should not be allowed to reproduce their kind. Society should be protected from this curse. Our asylums and our prisons are being populated afresh through such parentage. We confine the vicious and the irresponsible for a while, only to send them forth to blight the future by

the creation of defective children that grow into the criminal or the imbecile.

Society is crying for protection and this protection should be given. False modesty, in the past, has caused us to speak softly and to handle this subject with gloved hands. Recent disclosures have emphasized the fact that the time has come to speak aloud.

The state has been shocked by the recent exposures as to degenerate practices. But this is an old story to those who deal with our jails and our asylums. Should you gentlemen desire to investigate this subject I would refer you to the superintendents of the penitentiary and the asylum.

But do not delude yourselves with the idea that these conditions are confined within the walls of our prisons or asylums. These degenerates sink, in all their infamy, through every city, contaminating the young, debauching the innocent, cursing the state.

Two remedies are needed—one of preventions, another of cure. We have from session to session been considering the first. We should now act upon the two.

Sterilization and emasculation offer an effective remedy. I would recommend, therefore, that a statute be enacted making it the duty of our state penal and eleemosynary institutions to report all apparent cases of degeneracy to the state board of health. It should be made the duty of the said board to cause investigation to be made and, if the findings warrant, to cause such operations to be performed as will give society the protection it deserves.

#### Fire Arms

The passage of a law throwing restrictions around the carrying of concealed weapons would do much to prevent crime in this state.

The man who carries a revolver usually does so because he expects to have occasion to use it and if he continues to carry one it is only a question of time until he does use it. To reduce the number of revolvers carried means to reduce murders and hold-ups.

#### Appropriation of Property For Public

The constitution says that private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation. By just compensation is meant the value of the property. The law also says that such property shall be assessed at its full cash value. Yet we find the state and municipalities called upon in condemnation proceedings to pay for a needed piece of property many times its assessed value.

This condition of affairs should not be allowed to exist. The assessed value should be more of a guide to the price which the public should pay. It should not under any circumstances be obliged to pay more than double the assessed value and the passage of a law to this effect would result in a great saving for the taxpayers of the state.

#### Panama Exposition

The committee appointed in accordance with an act of the last legislature to select a site for Oregon's buildings at the coming San Francisco Exposition met with kindly treatment at the hands of the good people of California. Oregon was especially favored in that she was given the first choice of the offered sites and it is to be hoped that there will be erected thereon a building which will be admired by all.

# PAPER RAILROAD FROM BLUE LEDGE TO GRANTS PASS

PORTLAND, Jan. 14.—Articles of incorporation have been filed for the Portland & San Francisco Railroad company, the expressed purpose of which is to build a stretch of railroad from Marshfield, Ore., to Trinidad, California, connection to be made there with the San Francisco & Northwestern Railroad company.

The incorporators are C. N. Chester, Portland, representing eastern interests; H. N. Tinker, president First Trust company, Portland; J. G. Riggs, banker, Grants Pass, Oregon; Henry A. Davis, attorney, First Trust company, Portland. The new company is capitalized at \$2,000,000, stock being divided into 20,000 shares, of the par value of \$100.

Incorporation articles also provide for a branch line road from Grants Pass up Applegate river to the Blue Ledge mining district.

"The Portland & San Francisco Railroad company contemplates the expenditure of about \$14,000,000 in construction work," said Mr. Chester this morning. "I am not at liberty just now to say who is backing the proposition, though it is largely eastern capital. An order has been placed already for a spring delivery of steel, and preliminary surveying and clearing for the new road is under way. There are billions of feet of standing timber tributary to the company's right of way, and the hauling of this product will be made a feature of the road's operations."

"The branch line into the Blue Ledge mining country is also planned because of the apparent returns which would follow the opening and development of that country when transportation facilities are offered it."

Mr. Chester says that the San Francisco & Northwestern line running from Trinidad south, is within 80 miles of San Francisco, so that completion of the proposed Portland line and its connection with the San Francisco & Northwestern road will give practically direct coast line connections between Portland and San Francisco.

Mr. Chester said that the proposition is being undertaken independent of any of the large railroad corporations.

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