

THE GATE CITY JOURNAL

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REDUCE FARM ASSESSMENTS

Is it fair to city property owners to reduce assessments on irrigated land and not on city property, asks the Vale paper, in commenting on the suggested farm assessment cut. The Journal cites the oft-repeated statement that "What is helpful to the farmer will help city taxpayers indirectly," for the reason that all Malheur county depends upon agriculture.

It was claimed that the big end of the farmer's tax is drainage. This is not questioned by the farmer whose lands are within a drainage district. When low land within an irrigation district became water logged, it decreased in value and disaster threatened. Drainage canals were constructed at heavy expense and the farmer assumed the load. The need for drainage and the resulting drainage tax is a contributing factor in the decreased value of farm land. This load should be considered.

However, the point stressed by the farm delegation that

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appeared before the equalization board is that the assessed value of land is out of proportion to its real value, or cash selling value in many instances. Where it is not, well and good. Where it is, there should be some reduction in assessments.

The law provides that assessments shall be based on the sale value. Members of the delegation say that numerous farms are offered for sale, with no buyers, at a price equal to the last assessment.

This is the argument that was carried to the board by taxpaying farmers and they still contend that a reduction in assessments on irrigated lands will ease the burden and ultimately help all Malheur county. If farm values come back, the board is given the privilege to increase assessments when an increase is considered equitable.

ROADS VERSUS DOLES

It is generally believed in America that the only feasible cure for the unemployment problem is to provide jobs—and not doles. The experience of England, riddled with debt largely because of its out-of-work penions has not been missed by thinking citizens of this country.

Stimulated public works on the part of the states is being advocated on all sides. Foremost among such activities is the building of roads. In many cases eighty cents of the road dollar goes to labor, which most needs it, and building materials are extremely cheap at the present time.

As a consequence, a number of states, among them Oregon, are planning intensive road programs for the winter. Few localities have sufficient improved road mileage. We have developed great trunk highways between main centers of population—while, for the most part, five or ten miles away, in farming areas, roads are subject to vagaries of weather and the seasons. This is the case with our valleys and communities which would be served by the I. O. N. and Central Oregon highways.

It may be that more good feeder roads will be a prime factor in alleviating the need for an American dole. And every dollar we spend on them now will produce many dollars in the form of more efficient transport, easier disposal of farm produce and similar benefits.

BACK TO THE FARM

The city, as a paradise, is a blasted hope. The trek of the country to the town has ceased. With 6,000,000 unemployed in the cities, there is a reverse movement. In the country one can at least eat. The land may make little money. At least it guarantees a living. Farms are now to be bought cheap—not given away, but one-third their boom price. Again there is a possibility of having a farm and making it pay for itself. The farm offers, when it is paid for, the best security these times can promise. The fact begins to be noised abroad. Now and then a smart citizen goes down into his sock and buys a fertile bargain. The land man brightens up. By the gloom of the cities one glimpses a gleam of light on the land.—Ex.

AN IMPORTANT WEEK

Nyssa citizens are not expected to make a fuss over it, but they are earnestly invited to join in the spirit of one of the most important weeks of the calendar. That is "Fire Prevention Week", and it is observed throughout the nation the week of October 4 to 10.

Everybody, everywhere can participate in this celebration. If you are a property owner, celebrate by seeing to it that your flues and chimneys are in proper shape for winter, and that cellar and garret are free of rubbish and inflammable material. If you rent your home, then make sure of the same thing. If you are in business, clean up all the dark corners where a match, accidentally tossed by a smoker, may start a conflagration. If you are a school teacher, lecture the pupils on the danger of playing with fire or matches. If you hunt or fish, or work in the open, practice the proper use of matches in fields and woods. No matter what your occupation, and even if you haven't a job at this time, you can join in celebrating this week by pledging yourself that no fire will ever originate through your own individual carelessness.

Don't forget "Fire Prevention Week"—and don't forget to observe it. It's a form of protection that costs no actual money, only a reasonable amount of time, and that pays huge dividends in preventing disasters.

Nyssa high school lads were champions in baseball last year—not football, but they are champions nevertheless and we blush with pride.

It is all right to preserve wild life in the forests, but what to do with it in the cities is a serious problem.

Noting that cholera killed 1,500,000 pigs in this country last year has started us wondering if there isn't some way of giving cholera to road hogs.

In some cases, a belle in the choir takes more young men to church than a bell in the steeple.

Memory also carries us back to the time when the higher a man's collar was the higher his standing in the community.

Automobiles wouldn't be so dangerous if the horsepower of the engines was in proportion to the horse sense of the drivers.

A bumper crop did not originally mean a crop that bumps the fellow who raises it.

Reading the ads in the magazines a fellow wonders how the girls used to keep kissable before they took to smoking cigarettes.

Most people do very little worrying about foreign relations. It's the relations right around home that give them most concern.

Voice of the Press

DARK UTOPIA

Residents of Moscow awakened the other morning to see snow on the ground, the first snow of winter. The dispatch telling of this adds:

Householders found in the morning paper a decree forbidding all citizens to heat their homes without special authorization by the municipal government.

This is just a sidelight on Utopia. One can go on from that beginning if one will. One can picture a mother, holding her baby under her coat, starting out for the "municipal government." No doubt it is the theory in Moscow that a person can get warm just as easily and much more cheaply by running around from one official to another seeking a permit than by lighting a fire. The only trouble is that every Moscow breadline and most other lines at most other bureaus require considerable standing in one spot—often for hours.

There is a terror about this dominance of government that we of America are utterly incapable of understanding. Our fathers and our fathers' fathers have enjoyed the independence that comes of individualism. Freedom of a kind unknown to Russia either under czarism or communism has been to us like the air we breathe. We have had it without thinking of it, but the first attempt to take it away from us would result in the stiffest backbones in the history of mankind.

The sharp criticism of a traffic policeman, the slow movements of a clerk in a county office, a "don't walk on the grass" sign on a postoffice lawn, the failure of an office holder to answer a letter—and of the little pomposities of officialdom make us red in the face. If we were told we couldn't light a fire to get the baby warm there would be murder. There should be.—Oregonian.

FARMHOUSE BURNS IN APPLE VALLEY

Apple Valley—The farm residence on the Joe Watkins ranch burned completely Monday morning at 8 o'clock. The house was occupied by the Watkins brothers, who had prepared their morning meal and left for work. It is believed a defective flue caused the blaze.

Mrs. Gooling's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cox and children of Cody, Wyo., are here with a view to locating in this section.

Mrs. R. Snyder of Portland is visiting Mrs. Chas. Willis and Parma friends. Mr. and Mrs. George Daly have returned to their home in Bend. They brought Mrs. Ed. Copeland's mother

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Mrs. Young from Bend and spent a couple of weeks visiting here.

Mr. and Mrs. John Boston, Raymond Boston and Miss Mary Mickelson went deer hunting.

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