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OREGON PRESS COMMENT

Newspaper Expressions as to Allowing Women to Vote

If any one in this land of liberty is entitled to vote, is it not the devoted mother who brings the boy into life and guards and nurtures him and shapes his character and directs his thoughts?—East Oregonian, Pendleton.

Most of our people favor equal suffrage for man and woman and will vote that way next June. We never could see what there is about a woman that justifies her disfranchisement.—Fossil Journal, Fossil.

The equal suffragists are circulating a petition asking for a change in the constitution of the state permitting women to vote at our elections. This is only another step in the march of progress that Oregon has been making of recent years. The amendment should be made.—Leader, Loring.

Who is it that says American-born children can vote, but that an American-born American cannot if it happens to be a woman?

What do you think of a man who says a woman has not brains enough to vote—isn't it funny where he got his?

Do women come under the laws? If so, do they not have a right to help make those laws?—Globe, Gold Beach.

The Independent is in receipt of a circular letter from Los Angeles, Cal., in which the writers bowls long and loud of what will happen if the women of Oregon are given the right of suffrage, and gives several mighty poor reasons why they should be beaten at the polls next June. In the first place, we have precious little use for any one, man or woman, who will send us assigned letter through the mails, especially when its mission is to do injury. In the second place, it goes to show that the "ants" are becoming very much alarmed when they have to send to another state to get some one to do their dirty work for them. "Truth compels" never you fear.

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and they will find that out next June. —Hillsboro Independent.

We believe the women of Oregon are intelligent enough to make advantage of the new use of the ballot, and that much good would result from giving them the privilege of electors.—Review, Jefferson.

The equal suffrage amendment to the constitution of Oregon bids fair to be adopted by the voters with practically no opposition. There are so many reasons why women should have access to the ballot equally with men, and so few reasons why they should be deprived of it, that it appears superfluous to discuss it. If every man in Oregon will vote his sentiment in June, it will receive a larger majority than Roosevelt received for the presidency.—Record, Arlington.

The equal suffrage question begins to warm up in Oregon. Those who oppose the move are flooding the country with circulars, saying that only a small number of the women want the right to vote. Maybe so; but why not give that few the right? They couldn't make politics any more corrupt, and there's a good chance that they might improve on them.—Enterprise, Newberg.

The equal suffrage amendment to the constitution of Oregon will in all probability be adopted. There is no good reason why women who are taxpayers and those who care to exercise this privilege, should be denied access to the ballot, and there is practically no danger of any unwilling subject being dragged to the polls on election day as a matter of duty.—Review, Bhanier.

Another object lesson has been given on the need of equal suffrage. The Mississippi senate has defeated the bill to forbid child labor, by a vote of 20 to 8. The women of Mississippi have worked hard for this measure of protection for the children. Is it likely that it would have been defeated by a vote of two to one, if the mothers of Mississippi had the ballot?—Herald, Coquille.

There is no use denying that woman suffrage is gaining ground in this state and will carry at the election. The Independent will not place any obstacle in the pathway of progressive women. Let the news go east that we honor our women, and trust to their high intelligence, by permitting them to vote.—Independent, Woodburn.

The question of whether or not women need the ballot, or whether they would improve conditions if they had the ballot, is not the point. The question is, have they a right to the ballot? Should persons who are governed by laws have a voice in making those laws? These are the only pertinent questions to be considered in the discussion of woman suffrage. All others are merely side issues advanced for the purpose of clouding the main issue.—Milton Eagle, Milton.

CONTROL OF GRAZING ON THE PUBLIC LANDS

Successful Permit System Now in Force On Reserve Ranges Improves Pastureage Etc.

Now that the government grazing policy is in successful operation on the national forest reserves the question has arisen whether the same or some similar policy might not be applied to the open public range.

The policy of the forest service is not to hold the reserves out of use but to secure their fullest and most permanent use. To this end grazing under proper restrictions is permitted. Happily, these restrictions have thus far met with general approval.

From the first, the importance of fitting the regulations to local conditions has been recognized. Rules occasioning needless hardship to stockmen have been modified and emergencies demanding instant action have been promptly met.

When a new reserve has been proclaimed all stock grazing upon it is allowed to remain during the first year; if, afterwards, this number is found to be too great for the resources of the range, it is gradually reduced. Stockmen are aided in effecting a satisfactory distribution of their stock upon the range and in securing from it the most profitable and permanent use. Small stock owners living in the vicinity of the reserves are given such preference as will protect their interests. First occupants of the range and farmers owning improved lands adjacent are also preferred. The rights of large owners based upon the range custom of the past are recognized, and reductions in the number of their stock are required only when necessary to protect the range or the grazing rights of bona fide settlers. Necessary range divisions between

owners of different kinds of stock are made, and controversy between sheepmen and cattlemen is promptly ended. Where necessary, the construction of drift or division fences is also allowed provided the area fenced is not greater than the needs of the stock owner.

Outside the forest reserves, however, is an area of public land, estimated at 400,000,000 acres, which has no present value except for grazing purposes. On this land grazing is wholly unregulated by law. Commercial interests, great and small, have competed for its use, and the result has been a use of the range. Millions of acres have been recklessly overgrazed and practically ruined. In his last annual message the President says: "It is probable that the present grazing value of the open public range is scarcely more than half what it once was or what it might easily be again under careful regulation." Some stockmen have to the exclusion of others, possessed themselves of the strategic positions—that is, the lands controlling the streams, springs and other watering places, and by this means have secured temporary control of the adjoining grazing lands. Charges of fraudulent entry have led to litigation. Great areas have been illegally fenced. Again, stock owners, notably sheep and cattle men, have defended their conflicting claims by force of arms, causing serious loss of property and even of life.

Obviously such conditions should be corrected by law. The remedy would seem to be to apply to the open public range the regulations already governing the forest reserves. This conclusion is strengthened not only by the success attending the forest reserve policy, but also by the effect of fencing the public grazing lands. Though illegal, this fencing has in most cases greatly improved the condition of the area enclosed. Care, however, must be taken to avoid the application of

sweeping and iron clad regulations to an area so vast and to conditions so different. The investigations of the public lands commission show that immediate application of any inflexible rule to all grazing lands alike, regardless of local conditions or grazing values, would be disastrous, and that improvement must be sought through the gradual introduction into each locality of such form of control as is specifically suited to it.

In his message, already referred to, the President says:

"The best use of the public grazing lands requires the careful examination and classification of these lands in order to give each settler land enough to support his family and no more. While this work is being done and until the lands are settled the government should take control of the open range, under reasonable regulations suited to local needs, following the general policy already in successful operation on the forest reserves."

Should the policy thus suggested be established by law great good would undoubtedly result.

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