

tariff bill against which the whole country is in revolt. Congressman Bennet is making his campaign as a Taft-Roosevelt candidate.

Inasmuch as the strong progressive current now running through the country in both parties is felt in Mr. George's district, it is believed that his prospects of election are more than fair, notwithstanding the traditional complexion of the district, and that unless political signs are all at fault he will be a member of the next Congress.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

OREGON RAILROAD AMENDMENT.

Portland, Ore., October 12.

Bearing witness to the care, skill and rare intelligence with which a legislature does its work is the pamphlet issued by the Secretary of State of Oregon, containing copies of all measures submitted to the voters at the November election.

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At the urgent request of citizens, newspapers and commercial bodies, the legislature proposed an amendment to the Constitution authorizing the creation of railroad districts and the purchase or construction of railroads, or other highways, by the State, counties, municipalities and railroad districts.

It is an amendment to Article XIX, but when it came out of the legislative mill it was labeled an amendment to Article IX; so the Attorney General has had to make a note of that blunder for the information of voters and to keep the record straight.

The proposed amendment is the result of the bottling up of Oregon by the Harriman roads—the Oregon Railway & Navigation Co. and the Southern Pacific Co. Harriman himself was often appealed to, but was indifferent, except to say on one occasion: "If Oregon is so anxious for more railroads, why doesn't Oregon build them?" At least, that was the substance of his contemptuous reply to the request for more railroad facilities. That was in 1908, and, taking him at his word, during the legislative session of 1909 the Portland Chamber of Commerce and other associations of business men stormed Salem, and after many urgings, persuaded the legislature to submit this amendment, which gives the people of Oregon freedom to throw the railroad monopoly off their backs.

Remember this, for subsequently the newspapers and associations of "business men" experienced a change of heart—or was it pocketbook?

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The effect of the submission of that amendment by the legislature was marvelous, for within a few weeks the railroads suddenly discovered about 50,000 square miles of Oregon that have no railroads, and began to take great interest in "developing Oregon."

Naturally, the first development began in the newspapers, and since February 19, 1909, the day the amendment was submitted, the newspaper linotypes have been laying track in this State at the

rate of about 42 miles a day. Verily, the linotype is the greatest track-laying machine ever invented. The woods, plains and valleys of Oregon were suddenly jammed with engineering corps running railroad lines faster and closer than ever spider ran her lines, and for the same purpose—to catch flies. It is, and has been, mostly political track-laying.

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The flies were caught. Judge Lovett, head of the Harriman system, came to Oregon with a special car and his solemnity; James J. Hill came with his wacry against "extravagance"; and Louis Hill came with his motor car. They talked "development"; the newspapers and business men who made a holler for "State railroads" shut up tighter than a clam at low tide; and when the time came to file an argument for the railroad amendment, and have it printed in the Secretary of State's pamphlet, so as to make votes for the amendment, they really didn't see the necessity for the amendment.

However, an argument was filed by Col. C. E. S. Wood, W. S. U'Ren and other men, not in favor of building State railroads, but asking the people to take into their hands the power to build them—to have that power ready for any future emergency. For that is all that the amendment proposes.

The Constitution of Oregon does not prohibit the building or owning of roads by the State. There is no such prohibition in any State constitution. What the Constitution of Oregon prohibits is the creation of a State debt of more than \$50,000, or the partnership of the State with any private corporation. The purpose of this amendment is to remove the prohibition against the issuing of bonds by the State for railroad purposes; it permits the issuing of bonds for highway purposes, and none other; it does not permit any sort of partnership between the State and a private corporation, nor will the State be able to alienate any of its highways.

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"The amendment is but one more step in line with the people's resumption of those great fundamental powers which naturally belong to them," says the argument filed in favor of the amendment. "The great mistake was made when in the beginning, by reason of the strangeness of the situation, railroads were permitted to be owned by private parties. It was the first time in the history of the world that any nation ever turned over to private interests its whole system of highways, the great arteries of commerce which take toll from every one."

The railroad interests have not seen fit to file an argument against this amendment, but here and there various objectors have asserted that a State should not go into the railroad business because it would impeach the wisdom of the forefathers—especially those who never heard of railroads, but Lincoln advocated State ownership of railroads by Illinois; that it is a new departure—which isn't true and wouldn't be an argument if it were true; that the experience of other States in the railroad business has been disastrous—which is a "short and ugly word," in view of Georgia's experience with the Western & Atlantic, not to speak of the successful

State ownership in other countries; and that it will bankrupt the State—which is an assumption that if the amendment is adopted the people of Oregon will build more railroads on the ground than the corporations have built here on paper since this amendment was proposed.

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One beautiful argument against State ownership of a railroad is that it will bring the State railroad into politics, which of course would be a dreadful thing, seeing that privately owned railroad corporations so religiously refrain from mixing in politics.

It is objected, also, that privately owned railroads would parallel the State roads; but as that would give two railroads instead of one, the sufferings of the people would not be very acute, and the output of indigestible insecurities might be materially lessened.

However, the "capitalists"—those benevolent gentlemen who sit up nights to tuck the dear people into bed and save the country against panics—might have some hesitancy in sowing the seed for new "melons" to be cut at stockholders' luncheons.

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Anyway, if the people of Oregon adopt the pending tax amendments, they will have power to sprinkle some land value tax salt on the tail of the railroad monopoly, and that will ruin the "melon" crop in this State.

But will an application of that salt solve the political and economic problems due to private ownership of highways? Well, would even the most radical application of the land value tax have solved the problems due to chattel slavery—to private ownership of what is by its very nature not a proper object of private ownership?

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Behind every plot against the political rights of the people are the private owners of Special Privilege, which is the incubator of corrupt politics. The railroads are in politics because they are under private ownership. The way to take them out of politics is to take them out of private hands; for public highways in private hands are the political and financial tools of public highwaymen, with which they dynamite the public rights and burglarize private pockets.

W. G. EGGLESTON.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

TEACHERS WITH ITCHING EARS.

Bowman, N. D., October 12th, 1910.

In a late number of *The Public* (September 23), you comment upon a recent statement of Lyman Abbott's in the *Outlook*, in which he says: "No man has a right to take part in governing others who has not the intellectual and moral capacity to govern himself."

I have tried to procure a copy of the *Outlook* with the article containing this statement but have been unable to do so.

However, I wish to call your attention to another

statement made by Mr. Abbott, some years ago, in one of his published sermons entitled "The Divinity in Humanity." After saying that "faith in man is the inspiration of all human progress," he asks as follows: "Now is there any ground or basis for this faith in man? . . . Have we a right to think that man can govern himself, or must we go back and say with Carlyle and Ruskin and Voltaire that the great body of men are incompetent to govern themselves, and a few wise rulers must govern them"?

Mr. Abbott's answer to these questions, implied in the argument, is that the great body of men are perfectly competent to govern themselves better than a few wise rulers can govern them, and this because "man is made in the image of God."

Now the teaching of this sermon is splendidly democratic, but what about this new doctrine published in the *Outlook*? Methinks it has a strongly aristocratic flavor. Is this a case of another "Perplexed Philosopher"? Has the subtle power of Privilege also captured Lyman Abbott? If so, what a tremendous force it must be when it compels "Free Land" Spencer, "Free Trade" Roosevelt and "Free Men" Abbott to all reverse their doctrines.

Which reminds me of the warning an old man gave to a younger brother over 1900 years ago: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but . . . shall heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth and shall be turned unto fables."

GEORGE A. TOTTEN.

NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article, on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before, continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Tuesday, October 18, 1910.

The Republic of Portugal Becoming Settled.

The little new Republic of Portugal (p. 968), established since the 1st of this month, is getting into order. The provisional President, Theophile Braga, reiterated on the 11th the provisional government's intention of administering affairs only until it is able to hand over control to a properly elected assembly. He added that the assembly would be elected by universal suffrage and that he saw no reason why women should not vote as well as men, they being equally interested in the nation's well being. Official announcement was made on the 11th that Brazil had recognized the Republic. It was also announced that the government had exempted the Irish Dominican monks and nuns, who have conducted a school in Lisbon for many years, from the order of expulsion against religious orders promulgated on the 8th (p. 969).