

The Punta Gorda Herald

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Believe us, things are stirring in and around Milton, the county seat of Santa Rosa county, these days. Wednesday of last week, according to news dispatches, a great big black bear, a tremendous wildcat, a huge water moccasin and an eight foot gator were chased, caught and killed in or near the town.

Somebody had better look after those pioneers of Wauchula. They appear to be getting too gay and festive. A headline in last week's Wauchula Advocate reports one of them as "celebrating his fifty-fourth wedding." Seems as if any man ought to be satisfied with twelve or fifteen weddings, at the most.

Whether you vote for or against the proposed constitutional amendment providing for reapportionment, if you are interested in the schools, vote for the amendment authorizing the voters of special tax school districts to increase the millage that may be levied within the districts for the benefit of their schools. To vote for adoption of this amendment is not to vote for an increase in taxes. If the amendment is adopted, there can be no increase in taxes unless a majority of the freeholders of the special tax districts vote for an increase. The proposed amendment merely gives the taxpayers the right to pay more taxes if they decide it is necessary or desirable so to do.

While the scientists are tormenting us with countless repetitions of the charge that the mosquito is the sole conveyor of malaria, they ought to tell us where the mosquito gets the malaria, and why one kind of mosquito can get it where they get it and other kinds of mosquitoes, built by the same model and fitted with the same accessories, can't get it at the same place. An old man living here says that he had chills and fever all during the years 1877 and 1878, and, during that time and since, discovered positively that malaria originates in rotting vegetation and timber. He says that if this rotting stuff is destroyed the mosquito will have no malaria to distribute, and therefore need not be feared.

A few days ago the DeSoto County News took to task one or two other papers for crediting to the News statements made in other papers. Now, unless we are mistaken, the News is itself guilty of this offense. It says: "We believe," opines the Punta Gorda Herald, "that Senator Etheredge, in advocating the adoption of the proposed constitutional amendment for reapportionment will find it is not in accord with a big majority of his constituents." Senator Etheredge may find this to be the case, and he may not. Anyway, the Herald did not make the statement credited to it, unless it slipped in as a "filler." The Herald takes about the same view of the matter as Senator Etheredge and Governor Hardee and will vote for the amendment. If it is defeated it will not be because of any logical, convincing argument advanced by the press, but because of confusion created in the minds of the voters by its clamor, which will cause many people to pass up the amendment proposition without voting either way.

To furnish the basis for a boast about further "economy" and "savings" in the expenses of the Government, the new director of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing at Washington requires the employees of the plant, men and women, married or single, to take a vacation of one or two days a week, without pay. This plan, its author has announced, will "save" a couple of hundred thousand dollars in the course of a year. What these employees are compelled

to forego in wages will help pay the salaries of the numerous experts of the U. S. Shipping Board, even if the subsidy bill is delayed for a few months longer. The necessity for this reduction of the pay roll of the Bureau of Engraving becomes apparent the minute it is known that of the several hundred officials of the Shipping Board forty-seven alone receive an aggregate of \$599,800 a year as salaries. They get an average of nearly \$13,000 a piece, or nearly twice as much as a senator or representative, several hundred dollars more than a member of the cabinet and almost as much as an associate justice of the U. S. Supreme Court. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing is one of the Government plants for making money. Just why the Harding administration doesn't keep it going at full pressure while the Shipping Board needs so many millions for salaries is not explained.

ITS "UP TO" S

Punta Gorda and Charlotte county have more than a fair share of natural advantages that have been bestowed upon Florida generally. This is an undisputed and indisputable fact, but Punta Gorda and Charlotte county have not grown and are not growing as are other towns and counties with no more if as many advantages. That is another undisputed and indisputable fact, and the sooner we recognize it and face it, the sooner will this town and this county begin to develop as they have a right to by reason of their location and advantages. There is a reason or reasons for everything. What is the reason or reasons for our failure to develop as rapidly as other sections? What is the reason or reasons for the phenomenal development of these other towns and counties?

Less than eight years ago, what is now looked upon as the most progressive and rapidly developing county in the state, had about the same population to the square mile but a relatively smaller assessed value than Charlotte county. The two principal towns of that county had been dragging along for nearly a quarter of a century, one of them growing a little each year and the other one growing a little one year and sometimes losing the next. The whole outlook for that section at that time was a hopeless one—to most people. Everybody, or nearly everybody, seemed to have a hopeless case of blues, so far as any expectation of the country ever amounting to anything was concerned. But there, as almost everywhere, were a few men and women who had faith in their towns and their county. They saw possibilities that others could not see, and in spite of the general indifference, preached progress at every opportunity. Good roads, they said, was the thing needed to develop the country; paved streets, sewers, lights, and other modern improvements the things needed to develop the towns, and good schools to develop both towns and country.

Finally an election was called and a small bond issue for roads voted. It was soon evident that the few miles of good roads built with the first bond issue were not enough, so more bonds were issued and more roads built. By this time the county had begun to attract the attention of home-seekers and investors, and the people generally came to see that their money had been well spent. More roads were built and still more, the towns were paved, sewers were installed, schoolhouses built, while settlers of the best class poured in by the thousands from every section of the country, and they are still coming and will continue to come. Before this era of development and progress began, mention of bonds for any purpose was the signal for a chorus of despairing groans from an element of the population. "They are fixing to tax us to death and bankrupt the country," they moaned. Instead of the country being bankrupt, property in that county is worth five and ten times as much as it was worth eight years ago; that county's bonds are in demand by all bond buyers at par or better—and as evidence that the people are not being taxed to death for all the improvements that have been made, a newspaper calls attention to the fact that it has not published an average of more than one sheriff sale notice a year for the past six years.

The things that have transformed this county and these towns and many others in Florida—good roads, good schools, good streets, sewers, and other modern improvements—are the things that are needed and the things that we must provide if we expect this town and this county to develop as they should. Our failure to provide them is the answer to the question asked in the beginning.

Are we going to progress? Do we WANT to progress? The way is clear. Nature has done her share and it's up to us.

CLIPPED COMMENT

"God forbid," says Dr. Frank Crane, "that I should ever own a

newspaper or attempt to manage one! It takes vaster quantities of both courage and tact than I possess." What a queer man this Dr. Frank Crane must be, to confess that he lacks capacity to run a newspaper. Most people seem to think that running a newspaper is just the easiest thing; they firmly believe that they could do a much better job of it than is being done as matters are arranged now. What does Dr. Crane mean, anyway? Courage and tact—what have they got to do with running a newspaper? Dr. Crane must be kidding us.—St. Louis City Journal.

Reapportionment Sure to Come

Governor Cary A. Hardee has so far fulfilled practically every pledge he made to the people of Florida when he made his campaign for the State's chief executive. Governor Hardee is not a disappointment to his friends and he has had a difficult task at Tallahassee in trying to make the people of Florida and of the United States forget his predecessor in office.

Among the pledges made was one which stated in effect that he would do everything within his power to secure for Florida a proper and a just reapportionment of representation in the State legislature. He is tremendously sincere in his advocacy of the amendment to the State constitution to be voted on at the general election on November 14, which amendment provides for reapportionment on a basis that is meeting with determined opposition in many sections of South Florida. It may be a long fight for amendment advocates and winning fight for the opposition but there is this much that is very clear and decidedly positive—the governor will not allow the matter to drop but will use his best endeavors to get before the Florida legislature a reapportionment measure that will pass the gauntlet of both the upper and lower houses. Governor Hardee is not a quitter and in this instance he is undoubtedly determined to see that justice is done to all parts of Florida in the matter of representation in the legislature.—Lakeland Telegram.

School Tax Amendment

There is some danger that in the multiplicity of amendments which the voters will have to consider at the coming election the school tax amendment may be slighted and overlooked, and so meet with defeat. It would be a calamity if that should happen. The Miami Herald does well to call attention to the importance of this amendment, and clear up any misapprehension that may exist in the minds of the voters regarding its scope and purposes.

It says in a recent issue:

Strenuous opposition to the adoption of the proposed amendment providing for a new reapportionment of the representation in the state legislature, should not create any confusion in the public mind as to the advisability of supporting the amendment, to be voted upon at the same time, which will permit special tax school districts to impose a tax of 10 mills upon the dollar of valuation, instead of 3 mills as at present.

There is some misapprehension as to the effect of this amendment if adopted. It does not, as some suppose, impose a tax of 10 mills upon anybody. It simply permits special tax school districts to vote upon a proposition to increase the millage

from 3 mills up to any figure not exceeding 10 mills.

In each special tax school district, every two-years, there is held an election to choose the trustees for the district. At the same time the people are called upon to fix the special school tax for that school district. It is all in the hands of the people, themselves, within the limits stated; not less than 3 mills and not more than 10 mills can be imposed if this proposed amendment is adopted.

It is a singular thing that the constitution of the state makes no limitation on the amount that the people may tax themselves for any purpose, except maintenance of public schools. Just why the original framers of the constitution thought the people were not to be trusted in the management of their most important affair, is not known. But they did limit it and the proposed amendment is one of the movements tending to enlarge the liberties of the people in saying what they will and what they will not do in educating their children.

Dade county not only needs the additional money that would arise in this increase of taxation, if the districts vote the maximum limit, but it is one of the foremost counties in the state in using every means to advance the interests of the public schools. It may be assumed, therefore, that the people of this county will approve this proposed amendment by a large majority.

The Herald hopes to report that they did, the morning after the election.

The same necessity exists in all the counties of the state, and The Times joins with the Herald in urging the adoption of the school tax amendment.—Tampa Times.

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