DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS.

Application will soon be made to the several towns in the valley from Ashland to Grants Pass for franchises for electric railways. If granted upon the terms asked, the roads will be constructed together, with each station at the ends of the streets of the various towns to be as the population would warrant the same. The privileges to be asked for in the various towns are such as would make it possible to install a power line along the road and rapidly increase the population surrounding the towns. The country to be traversed by the line has at this time not sufficient population to make the investment one that will bring any returns to the investors, but it must be built with an eye to the future.

To be profitable an electric railway will have a population of one thousand per mile. Those building a line with less must undertake it with a view of developing the country.

The granting of franchises in towns is often opposed by citizens who do so conscientiously from an exagerrated idea of the value of the franchise. The facts are that electric lines in cities of less than fifty thousand do not pay. The street car lines of Portland, when its population was much larger, turned a profit though several successive companies at that time failed to produce a profit. The same is true in the transportation line. A great loss of property to the successive owners before they began to pay operating expenses and maintenance. Even if the city has a potential market as a line of Portland will return no profits to stockholders for years, because of the expenditures for improvements and construction.

For many years in San Francisco there has been a street railway system which passed through the bankruptcy of several companies. Condemned by the city of twenty thousand people, this system does not pay.

There are many hundreds of fields more inviting for the electric railway builder in this valley, both in the way of greater population. Investors are seldom controlled by sentiment. They look for dividends and profits. In cities that have no market a population line as soon as operation becomes profitable. Such franchises have great value, but those who compare the value of a franchise in towns of one thousand or twenty thousand with one in Seattle, Portland or San Francisco do so without proper understanding.

Until a town reaches a population of one hundred thousand its inhabitants do not pass the walking distance. The franchises in small towns possess no value except as a means of transport or as a vested right. Expansion is necessary to make it a possible profitable undertaking. Operating without a proper control of such systems, they fail not to produce a profit in cities of less population than fifty thousand.

No one can blame a franchise for submitting to unreasonable restrictions for a franchise in cities of less population, for the simple reason that it is not a high-class investment. There are a number of such franchises or vest-pocket franchises in too many communities inviting such investments along liberal lines, and offering encouragement and assistance. Too often have honest investors been driven away from communities that imagined they were destined to become great cities, and never returned. The towns languished until the proper terms to an investor, who was looking to the possibilities of the future, would have resulted in an activity that would have wounded into an increasing and permanent prosperity.

THE ROUT AND DEFEAT.

The defeat of Henny and election of McCarthy in San Francisco cannot be welcome news to the upright citizen. It is not so much the defeat of Henny as the character of those who prevail that surprises and depresses and pause and reflect. Civic honesty has been run over by the offal cart. The result speaks in disparagement of the standards we hold as our own, and those we prove in some parts of the country our politics is still of the jingle.

It is not only from San Francisco, but Cleveland, where Johnson, after years of self-sacrifice that took him from affluence to poverty while he was making the best government in America out of Cleveland, and New York and other cities come the news that the barbarians are still strong and powerful.

The result is one come back to the conquers of the Huns and Vandals. Was it not Macaulay who said that the Huns and Vandals that would destroy us would come from our rear? Are we to start from the other end of the Gate, under the leadership of Ruef and Schmitt?

We may look for revolutionary times in that country. Politcal dénouement triumphing under the conditions then existing may be expected to turn upon those it calls its