

The Weekly Chronicle.

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THE SALMON QUESTION.

Senator Smith of Astoria has introduced a bill abolishing fish traps and all other fixed appliances for catching salmon. The bill provides that the law shall not go into effect until 1899. It also regulates the length of leads traps and wheels may use.

The bill ought not to pass, for the reason that it is unjust. It pretends to be made for the purpose of protecting the salmon, but in reality it is for the purpose of turning the whole fishing industry over to the fishermen of the lower river, and should be entitled "A bill to prevent persons catching salmon on the Columbia river above Warrendale," for that is what it will do, and all it will do.

It is claimed the fish-wheels catch so many salmon that the industry will be ruined; but it does not provide for limiting the catch at the mouth of the river. Astoria catches all the salmon it can—and all it can can.

If protection of the salmon were the real intention of the bill, it would be only fair to place some limit on the number of miles of net to be used on the lower river. We of the upper Columbia have made no complaint against the methods of fishing followed on the lower river. We have been content to take our chances on what Astoria and the lower river leaves us. The same methods used on the lower river for taking salmon cannot be used here, for conditions are entirely different. There the river has a sand bottom and a moderate current, all well suited to drifting. Here the bottom is rocky, the current swift, and the stream filled with surging eddies. It would be as fair to say to fishermen of the lower river, "You must only catch salmon in fish wheels," as to say to us, "You must catch them only in drift nets." Either proposition is an absurdity.

The lower river has the best of the law now by long odds, and should be satisfied. The fishing season is made in reference to the run at Astoria. It begins at the time the fish enter the river, and it continues until they cease to come in. Originally the season ended August 1st, but a few years ago a big run of chinook was coming in at that date, and to cover a recurrence of that event the season was extended to August 10th. The Astorians have, in an average season, three weeks' or a month's fishing before it begins here, and they fish during the whole time the salmon run. Here the wheels are stopped August 10th, just when the best run is on, and the fish that escape the nets of the lower river in July, nearly all pass the Cascades after the close of the season. We realize the necessity of protecting the salmon industry, but we certainly object to that form of protection that turns the whole business over to the lower river.

WHICH WAS THE SIN?

The story of the American girl, Clara Ward, who was sold to Prince Joseph Caraman Chimay, has something of the pathetic in it, after all. Dazzled by title, urged on by an ambitious and unscrupulous mother, the girl, protesting that she did not love the man, married him. She was warm-hearted, impulsive; he cold-blooded, cynical and heartless. The result was she left him. She left him openly, defying the world's opinion, to take up with a gypsy

musician, ugly enough to stop a clock. One would think from his looks that she ran away with him as a penance for her marriage for title. And yet in speaking of her husband the other day she said with a pathos that would move even the heart of a title-worshipping American: "Yes, he was a kind man; but he was cold and indifferent. I longed to be with my children, to nurse them, to sleep with them, to make their lives a part of mine; but I was a princess and could only see them occasionally. I wanted love, and when I eloped I simply exchanged title for love."

And, again, when her lover wanted to give a grand concert to show that he was not dependent on her money for his support, she said, with fine scorn: "If a prince could marry me for my money, and live on it, why should a Gypsy be ashamed to do so?"

Her life has been wrecked, just as every girl's life must be wrecked that is sold in the matrimonial market. Others have made the best of a bad bargain; but Clara Ward was too high strung to submit and to wear her life away in company with a man she despised. She is an outcast socially, but it is an open question whether she is more of a sinner now than when she was living in legalized shame with her prince.

FOR A PORTAGE RAILWAY.

Hon. John Michell, senator from this district, has introduced a bill in the senate, providing for the construction of a portage railway around the obstructions to navigation above this city. The bill appropriates \$195,000 for the work. The bill is a good one, and ought to pass. It will give a reduced rate on all shipments of grain from interior points, and would save the cost of the road to the producers of Eastern Oregon every year. We know what the Regulator line did for The Dalles, saving this section \$150,000 a year, and this became possible only through the building of the portage road at the Cascades.

The country to be benefited by the proposed road is immeasurably larger and the saving would be correspondingly great. The bill should have the unanimous support of every member of the legislature, and those from Eastern Oregon should bend all their energies to accomplish the passing of the measure.

We realize how hard times are; how illy the state can afford to expend its money; but if the needless commissions are abolished, enough can be saved from that source in two years to nearly build and equip the road. The saving to Sherman county alone at five cents per bushel on its wheat would amount yearly to from \$60,000 to \$75,000, and the other counties would swell this to at least the price of the road. Instead then of being a burden to the people it would prove just the reverse, and would leave money where it belongs, in the pockets of the farmers.

It is useless for the people of the state of Oregon to worry themselves about the legislature. That body may not be able to take care of itself, but the minority can be depended upon to perform that duty for it. That minority has taken the bits between its teeth, and is running away with the legislature band wagon in fine shape. All that can be done is to let it run and gather up the wreck when the end comes. The wreck will be repaired in June, 1898, and the runaways will be left dead in the ditch.

Three masked men held up Manager Hoyt, of the Labor Exchange at Salem yesterday, catching him alone in his office and making him open his safe. From this it might be presumed that Jonathan was not putting up as hilariously as expected. If the policemen do their duty and business men look a little out, the members of the legislature now running wild may be forced to come in.

It is passing strange that our Populist friends worked so hard to elect members of the legislature, and those elected will not serve.

The proposition to elect senators by a direct vote of the people is getting lots of supporters in this state just now.

A MODERN BENEFACTOR.

J. Pierpont Morgan, the eminent Wall street, highwayman, who with his gang, recently elongated Uncle Samuels leg some \$8,000,000 worth, is now being eulogized by the newspapers of the country as a philanthropist. Recently he has donated \$1,000,000 to be used in building and maintaining a lying in hospital in New York.

The gift is undoubtedly generous, the object certainly one beneficial to humanity. It is perhaps the correct thing not to "look a gift horse in the mouth," and certainly the gift should not be refused because the money was obtained by disreputable means. At the same time we fail to see any good and sufficient reason for holding Morgan up to the world as a humanitarian.

Senator Stanford devoted millions to the cause of education, but he robbed the government of the United States out of money in his Central Pacific railway manipulation, and then only gave 40 per cent of his ill-gotten gains to charity. It is true Morgan might have kept all the plunder extorted from the government's necessities, instead of giving up sixteen per cent of it to charity. The magnificence of the gift causes us to forget the magnificence of the plunder obtained by the raid on the treasury.

If we carried the principle down into smaller transactions, it would show its true inwardness more forcibly. Suppose, for instance, some poor devil should steal eight horses, would his crime be condoned by giving one to St. Vincent's hospital? Or suppose a burglar should break into one of our banks and swipe \$20,000, would his offense be condoned and he held up as a public benefactor if he gave \$5,000 to the school fund? We fancy not. We even believe that the men who lost the horses would want the thief prosecuted, and we feel quite certain that the banker who was robbed, would not fall on the burglar's neck, to weep tears of gratitude down his honest back, because part of the money had been devoted to charity. And there you are.

The fact that all the people were robbed of a trifling sum each to make up Morgan's \$8,000,000 fund, made the theft easy to bear. It was nobody's loss, because it was everybody's loss; hence we condone the offense and pat the successful thief on the back for his exceeding charity in giving a portion of his plunder, gathered from the whole country, to his native city.

Americans are full of a maudlin sentimentality; so full that they slop over on all occasions. We hold up our hands in holy horror at the murderer of innocent girlhood, and subscribe money to pay a venal lawyer to defend the criminal. We fill our newspapers with gush about the red-handed criminal; and get up "public sympathy" for him that is intended to, and does, influence the jury that tries him. Our women tear one another's clothes in the wild struggle to present the pure-minded murderer, who has outraged and murdered one of their innocent little sisters, with flowers typical of his innocence. Our courts sit in owl-eyed wisdom day after day, assisting defendants' counsel to find some hair-splitting quibble of the law that will permit trial after trial, until the accused walks forth purified of all sin, and takes to the stage to show, with all the effects of calcium lights, the details of the butchery, that all may see and admire.

The heart of every sensible citizen grows sick with shame at the contemplation of our own dampfoolishness. We need a decided change all around. We need more sense and less sentiment; we need more statesmanship and less politics; more justice and less juggling with law; more punishment and less praise for grand larcenists. We need a few monuments such as made the virtues of Haman famous, and less slobbering newspaper comment in praise of political tricksters, posing as statesmen; magnificent thieves in the garb of financiers, and treasury looters, playing the role of philanthropists.

When we realize this, and get the country back on this basis again, we can build our own colleges and char-

itable institutions, too, and then have millions left over for ourselves.

SUMPTUARY LAWS.

Now that the theater hat has been in some places sat down upon, as it were, other cranks are bobbing up with laws to regulate humanity's clothing. A Kansas woman wants a law passed forbidding the wearing of corsets, regardless of the fact that corsets are great economizers, restraining the American waist. And at the same time it is not beneficial to the American woman who "stays" at home? Another crank wants a tax levied on beards. This fellow is a barber, and evidently has designs on the Populists.

Sumptuary laws are always ridiculous, and the howl about the theater hat has gained a stentorian pitch by what it has fed upon, the condemnation of the fiends who go out between acts "to see a man," treading on everybody's toes, and straggling in after the curtain rises to the disgust and annoyance of everybody else. The theater hat is not a pleasant thing, but as far as we are concerned we prefer to look at the artistic headgear of our fair sisters, even though it cuts off, at times, a view of the stage, than to be walked all over by the man who goes out between acts to get a drink or smoke a cigarette.

Speaker Davis sat quietly in his chair while the Benson house organized, and remained until after it adjourned. In fact he came near being left in jeopardy, for all of his supporters had gone over to Benson. He was not recognized as a part of the new house, and consequently remained in session, where he must have stayed indefinitely if Riddell had not kindly come in and adjourned him.

Work is progressing rapidly on the Astoria-Goble road, and it is expected it will be completed the coming summer. Mr. Hammond has arrived at Astoria, and will personally supervise the construction. Astoria has waited many years for a railroad, and now that she is about to get it, it is doubtful whether or not she should be congratulated on the fact.

According to the Oregonian, the Populists and Democrats in the legislature are an honest, economical, law-abiding and patriotic lot of "anarchists," who have only the good of the people at heart.

The middle at Salem has assumed a different shade; but it remains to be seen whether the political pool is growing clearer.

Jonathan Bourne has the lower house of the legislature "over a barrel," and it is his barrel, too.

Two Opinions.

The organization of the legislature is taking on a new phase. We print here with two opinions on the situation, one by Senator Hoar, and the other by Senator Thurston. They are as follows: "If the Oregon constitution provides that the house of representatives shall consist of sixty members, or provides for a less number, and that the legislature may increase the number to sixty, which has been done, and further provides that two-thirds of each house shall constitute a quorum to do business, my opinion is that two-thirds of the lawfully qualified members of each house may constitute such a quorum, although a less number than sixty have qualified, and a less number than forty are present and act. Therefore, if thirty-five persons are all qualified members of the house, and twenty-five others lawfully elected refuse to qualify, the action of the majority of thirty-five in organizing or electing a senator or other legislative business will be constitutionally valid, at least twenty-four being present. Two-thirds of thirty-five, being all lawfully qualified members, will then make a quorum. This doctrine was settled in the national senate and house during the rebellion, and has been acted upon in those bodies ever since. I have given opinion to Senator Mitchell.

"GEORGE F. HOAR."

"WASHINGTON, Jan. 20.—Hon. J. H. Mitchell, Salem, Or.: Strongly advise the organization of the house with the members ready. Elect a speaker. Notify the senate and governor of the organization. Jointly with the senate agree on a time of voting for senator. If the bolting members hang out, appoint a committee to investigate, report a reason for their action, and declare their seats vacant. There is no doubt about the legality of such a course, and I believe such action would bring absentees in quickly.

"JOHN M. THURSTON."

Foreign Markets.

Broomhall, reviewing the situation, says:

"The stimulus administered to shipments by the advance in October and the early half of November seems to have spent itself. Judging from former experience, it is probable that the reaction will be somewhat severe, and therefore look to see a marked decrease in the quantity on the way, which decrease will not only be rapid at the commencement, but long continued; for as soon as the fleet of Euxine steamers has finished arriving, the Pacific coast sales will commence to tumble in at a much greater rate than they are likely to be added to at the other end; and it seems likely that the quantity on passage will steadily decrease during the second half of the cereal year, and that during the spring it will be at a very low ebb. Indeed shall be surprised if the quantity on passage to the U. K. does not sink to a lower level than has been recorded for many years, lower even than in August last, when it fell below 1,500,000 quarters. As a rule, a second stimulus to shipments is not so easily given, should a second rise in prices occur, sellers will probably be found less complacent than they were last September or October, as then they were very despondent, having a lively recollection of many months of disappointing trade. The next buying spurt, if it come again before next harvest, we find a different class of sellers to deal with. Instead of needy and despondent growers, buyers will in a large degree have to reckon with wealthy merchants, who have taken the stuff out of the farmers' hands, and now hold it in South Russian ports and American elevators, expecting to make a profit on the transaction. Of course, if Argentina should commence to ship heavily in February, and India follow three months later, the whole situation would be altered, but so far there seems to be no likelihood of this alternative taking place. The reports from the River Platte are very bad; cables received in Liverpool describe the outlook as gloomy from the shipper's point of view. Tropical rain has ruined the crop in many districts where the locust had spared it, and the very best authorities are now agreed that the surplus likely to be shipped to Europe will not exceed 2,000,000 quarters. India is a vast country, and it has frequently surprised those who imagined themselves to be most familiar with the actual conditions. The price of wheat there is already more than 100 per cent over its customary level, and before another harvest can be gathered stocks will probably have entirely disappeared; and it is difficult to believe that the export movement, under these circumstances, could recommence at once, even should the next harvest be a moderately abundant one.

France—The agricultural situation, generally, is considered satisfactory; heavy falls of snow have taken place in the East, Northeast and center, and the crops have got their winter covering before the hard frosts occur. The Western and Northwestern regions are still uncovered, but this may be remedied any day now.

Germany—The weather remains seasonable, and reports concerning the crops are favorable.

India—Latest reports from India state that heavy rain has fallen in the Oudh district, and ploughing operations are progressing actively; more rain is expected. Rain has also fallen over Eastern portions of Northwest provinces and parts of Behar and central provinces. General and severe distress it is expected will continue until July or August next. The number of persons on relief work now exceeds 550,000.

Argentina—Our Buenos Ayres agent cabled us on Saturday that the weather continued bad, and that the quality of the wheat will be inferior to last year. Reports are conflicting, for whereas the Times of Argentina estimates that 700,000 tons will be available for export from Buenos Ayres and Santa Fe, several other well-known authorities estimate that only 400,000 tons will be available—less than last year.

Roumania—The weather is extraordinarily mild, being quite exceptional for the time of the year. The crops, consequently are progressing favorably, and, provided that they are sufficiently covered with snow before the hard frosts, there being nothing to fear.

The Popular Minstrels.

The Georgia University Graduates, one of the finest colored minstrel attractions on the road, will give an entertainment full of bright comedy, nice music and side-splitting fun. Among a large number of press notices, all in praise of this attraction, we quote the following from the Yakima Daily Times of March 25th:

"The Georgia Graduates, who greeted a house full of amusement lovers at the opera house on Saturday evening, gave the people of this city the best, cleanest and most entertaining minstrel show ever given here. In fact, many who attended declared that it was the best they had ever seen anywhere. The people who compose the troupe are men

and women of refinement. Their specialties, in which all appeared as first-class artists, were free from the vulgar wit that so frequently jars the sensibilities of modest people. Their singing was fine, being a combination hard to beat. The comedy features of the performance were unusually catchy and mirth provoking. They presented many happy innovations on the old type of minstrelsy and, all round, rendered a most enjoyable program.

This splendid company will show here at the Vogt, Tuesday evening, Jan. 26th.

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