

# West Shore

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Saturday, February 1, 1890.

CONGRESS has been asked to increase its annual militia appropriation from \$400,000 to \$1,000,000, and there is little doubt but that the proper action will be taken. Heretofore the money has been apportioned according to population, which has resulted in giving the lion's share to those populous and wealthy states the least in need of it, and doling out to the states less able to properly support a serviceable militia the scant portion of the lesser animals. A more judicious use ought to be made of the money. Those states upon the border of the nation, which should be the best equipped to repel invasion, and which will be the chief sufferers in the event of a foreign war, should be specially considered, and enough apportioned to them to render them adequate assistance, irrespective of their population. It is safe to assert that Oregon and Washington to-day maintain a larger militia organization in proportion to their population than any other state in the Union, having about 1,500 men each, or one to each 300 of population. California has as many as both of them, but has also more than their combined population. These three states border the entire coast line on the Pacific, exclusive of Alaska, and should receive special attention from the government. Were Oregon and Washington to be considered simply in the light of their population, their share of the appropriation would be very small in comparison with such populous and geographically less important interior states as Illinois and Iowa. Our senators and representatives should make a strenuous effort to have this matter equitably adjusted in the appropriation bill, so that the money may be apportioned in such a way as to best accomplish the desired end of placing the nation in a condition to repel invasion.

In January *Arens* Henry George suggests a way of disposing of the "rum power" in its relation to poli-

tics. Its political prestige, he claims, is *solely* due to restriction. His argument is, take away all restriction and liquor becomes so cheap the political saloons can not be maintained, and consequently the traffic will have no object in securing legislation, nor will it try to fashion politics, from the town caucus to the United States congress, to its own liking. He admits there might be more drunkenness for the time being, but he cites incidents in France and elsewhere to show that the cheaper the article is the less it is sought as a medium by which to compliment each other. To remove all restriction, then, would be to eliminate the saloon from politics. As to making people more temperate, Mr. George concludes this can be done by the bettering of social conditions. He is doubtless right here, but many will differ from him in his concluding that poverty is the source of drunkenness among the poor, and that to make us all comfortably poor or comfortably rich would be to give us wings! One thing may be said in conclusion: In removing all restriction we would take the responsibility off the government and place it upon the individual, where it ought to rest with the weight of a millstone!

At Olympia the merry autograph album went round, and numerous solons, eager to "put themselves on record," inscribed their names upon the party-colored and delicately perfumed pages. It has since transpired that these legislative souvenirs are the property of ladies not recognized by respectable people, and who exhibit the signatures of their "dear friends," the solons, with great satisfaction. The solons all seem to know this, and are sorry they are "on record," but just how they obtained their information and just where they were while obtaining it, is a secret not to be divulged.

A correspondent takes exceptions to the comment made by the WEST SHORE upon the existence of the color line in the G. A. R., and states that in the Portland incident referred to the colored soldier was excluded for other reasons than because of his color. The truth of this is accepted upon his statement, but it is unfortunate for the G. A. R. that the general public acquired the impression at the time that the source of contention was the color of the individual.

Candor seems to be one of the virtues of the lawgivers at Olympia, and, being a virtue, it is well to speak of it, since the credit side of the account should have some entry other than "P. and L." The resolution to adjourn asserts that the legislature is costing the state \$1,000 a day for nothing. If "to know thyself" is the acme of wisdom, then are these men solons indeed.