

West Shore

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1900.

THE squabble in Central America has been going on for a month now and seems no nearer settlement than at the beginning. As more light is thrown upon it the true nature of it is revealed—simply a many-sided contest of various leaders seeking political power for their personal gratification. Spanish-American republics are noted for their revolutions, and yet scarcely one of the many upheavals has been founded upon patriotic motives and a desire to reform an evil, or to institute a better system of government. Personal ambition is the moving power behind them all. This is notably the case in the present war in that country. Not only was it precipitated by the desire of Barillos to become president of a confederacy, which was in a fair way to be defeated by the seizure of the government of San Salvador by Ezeta, but lesser leaders in both Guatemala and Salvador have seized the opportunity to start their own little booms by getting a handful of followers to aid them in a revolution. And thus it goes from one end of Central America to the other, and that unhappy country is being torn up by these contending factions, simply to gratify the personal ambition of a few men. This ought to be stopped. In the interest of humanity, good government and the people of those republics themselves, the United States should stretch out her hand and put an end to the whole wretched business. It is only a few months since representatives of those republics met representatives of our own government in Washington, and endorsed the principle of international arbitration on this hemisphere. Now let the United States make them put it into practice. All she has to do is to call a halt and tell them they must arbitrate and it will be done. She has the power to enforce it. The nations of Europe view that region with covetous eyes, and the longer this cut-throat warfare is permitted to continue, the more difficult it will be to prevent their interference with the hope of gaining a foothold there. It is a duty the greatest nation in America owes to the lesser ones to stop such needless strife.

Of all pension advocates Gen. Russell A. Alger, who has just retired from the office of commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, is the most ultra, though it is well known that his radical speeches on the subject are of the demagogic order, looking towards the presidential chair. At the reunion in Boston, in his annual address, he said that the last pension act grants a pension to every person disabled, whether as the result of his service or not, or whether he have a fortune or not, and that it was a good law, "though they have not given us all we ask." General Alger is a millionaire. If by any chance he should become physically disabled he could draw a pension from the government, notwithstanding his wealth. What more than this can be asked? It is utterly absurd. The entire theory of our

pension laws is wrong. Disabled soldiers who are unable to support themselves should be supported by the government, and no others. General Alger's radical position on the pension question may avail to secure him the republican nomination, though that is a matter of great doubt; but he should remember that the voters of the nation are as thirty to one to the members of the Grand Army, and they have become sick, tired and disgusted with this demagogic, conscienceless and unpatriotic outcry by pension agitators.

Last week the members of the Oregon Press Association were entertained by the citizens of Portland in so pleasant a manner to both hosts and guests that the bonds of fellowship between the metropolis and the rest of the state must have been drawn closer and made more secure. The association contains 115 members, representing eighty papers, and is a body of extremely able and energetic men. At the business sessions several important questions were discussed and harmony of action upon them secured. Much good will result from this interchange of thought upon subjects of vital interest to publishers, as well as from the more friendly sentiments engendered by the social intercourse. The association selected Mr. L. Samuel, publisher of WEST SHORE, for the honorable position of president of the body for the ensuing year, and re-elected Mr. E. C. Pentland, of the Independence West Side, secretary. E. Hofer, of the Salem Journal, D. I. Asbury, of the Canyon City News, Mrs. E. C. Casey, of the Pacific Farmer, C. S. Jackson, of the Pendleton East Oregonian, and S. C. Beach, of the Lakeview Examiner, were elected vice presidents. S. S. Train, of the Albany Herald, was chosen treasurer, and R. J. Hendricks, of the Salem Statesman, sergeant-at-arms. The next session will be held at Astoria.

It is one of the boasts of this country that every native born youth who follows the plow, handles the saw and hammer, sets a stick of type or twists a brake on a freight train has a chance to become president of the United States. Of such have a majority of our presidents been made. But the conditions that have made this possible are rapidly disappearing under the influence of tradesunionism, which uses its power to curb individual effort as injurious to the interests of others and to reduce all to the level of the average. A great deal is said about the honor and dignity of labor, but when the laborer of to-day ceases to be the gentleman of to-morrow, when gentlemen are born as such and laborers are born and remain laborers, the main support of the dignity of labor—the self respect of the gentleman who was once a laborer—will have been destroyed, and the distinction of class and caste will be sharply drawn. The union of tradesmen for mutual benefit and help is susceptible of much good, but when those unions are dominated by the headstrong, the selfish and the ignorant, as is often the case, they become engines of destruction that do their greatest damage to the cause of free labor itself.

A few days ago 300 men deserted from the Chicago and the Atlanta in New York harbor. The navy seems to be a sharp rival to the army in the matter of desertion and offers a splendid field for investigation. The popular opinion is that it is composed of czars and serfs, and it is little wonder the latter desert.

In impugning the quality of enumerators in an Oregon county a correspondent says one of them was "a democrat and drunk half the time." It does not appear which he considers the worse offence, democracy or drunkenness.

It is a matter for congratulation to Oregon and Washington that political wrangling has not killed the river and harbor bill.