

THE CONSOLIDATION BILL.

The citizens of Multnomah may be a little slow about awakening to the importance of projected enterprises; or, rather, a large number of them may have been slow in the past, but any one who doubts their present activity has only to attend a meeting like that held at the tabernacle on last Saturday evening, to be convinced that the term "mossback" fails to fit the Oregonian of the period with its former aptitude. The meeting was a rouser of the old-fashioned campaign sort, and was called to order by our efficient mayor, Hon. Van DeLaashmutt, a man noted for his partiality to public enterprises, as well as his deep regard for shrewd women, rapid horses and Cœur d'Alene mines. Our mayor knows the value of a business proposition and grasps the ins and outs of it at a glance. Like all men of affairs who have made it their business to handle and amass great fortunes, Mayor DeLaashmutt sees strength in consolidation, progress in expansion and power in union.

A few years ago Portland was a provincial town, East Portland an unimportant suburb and Albina a howling wilderness. Of course we had the old O. S. N. company among us, with its noble representatives of grit and go-aheadiveness like Captains Ainsworth and Thompson, Messers. Couch, Flanders, Dekum, Thompson, Lewis, Ladd, the Corbetts, Failings, and a score of other active financiers, whose enterprise brought them coin and curses, property and vituperation, and in the end immense riches. But the vim of these men was in a great measure gone when their vast personal and corporate accumulations crowned their far-seeing efforts with triumph. Our mayor belongs to a somewhat younger coterie of enterprising men than those just quoted, but he is as widely awake as any of them concerning all matters pertaining to the future of Oregon, and he had the history of the state's past and present realities before him when he mounted the boards and in a stirring speech set the walls of the tabernacle to ringing with an ardor of enthusiasm that in no wise cooled when Hon. John McCracken followed with courtly style and persuasive speech, showing that as a member of the Oregon legislature he was holding his power fully up to the high standard required of him by Multnomah's taxpayers.

The incubating metropolis sits serenely at the head of tidewater navigation, near the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette, creating a focal center of commercial promise and gigantic probabilities, of which, at this early period in the progress of electrified and steel-belted Oregon, it is hardly possible to frame a prophecy big enough to fit the outlook. Colonel McCracken has watched the triplet villages that grace the evergreen shores of the Willamette from the days of Dr. McLoughlin's vigorous prime, and the date of his own boyhood, to these times of rush and roar and competition and trickery, all of which belong to the feverish, formative period that may make or mar the fortunes of a mighty commonwealth. Like all the other business men of these busy times, whose breadth of comprehension led them to the mass meeting to make speeches, clap hands or clatter canes, heels or umbrellas, the colonel favored the consolidation of the three cities, and he made his influence felt as he contrasted the quietude and provincialism of the past with this modern era, when ocean and river steamers vie with local and transcontinental railways in feeding the growing metropolis, and motors vie with trolley-ways in relegating the horse-car period to the ox cart days of the receded past. But why dwell upon the mass meeting at the tabernacle, which was only a prelude to the work in hand at Salem? There are too many enterprising men interested in the great scheme of consolidation to make personal mention of the forieth of them a possibility. Suffice it to say that a delegation of Multnomahs, filling two Pullman cars and extending into the day coaches, left Portland on the morning of the tenth, charged by the eager multitudes left behind them with the important duty of checkmating the political bossism, of which, as these lines are penciled, it is not yet certain—though we hope to the contrary—they are not to remain the victims for an indefinite period. Conspicuous among these gentlemen were Hon. M. C. George, colossal, gracious and logical; George B. Markle, Esq., whose financial acumen is sufficiently expansive to perceive the whole situation at a glance, and whose volubility never fails him at a critical moment; Hon. George H. Williams, whose advancing years add dignity to a demeanor never undignified; representatives of the *West Shore*, *Oregonian*, *Telegram* and other city papers, including those of East Portland and Albina, the whole forming a jolly, argumentative, but by no means noisy, crowd, which reached the capital city in gay good humor, and proved to their recalcitrant representatives, as they marched to the state house in a body, that they had no intention of submitting tamely to the dictation of obstructionists, at whose bidding it was openly alleged audacious filibustering to defeat consolidation was going on.

A meeting of the citizens' consolidation committee was called at the library of the state capitol at 1:30 o'clock, and Hon. George H. Williams was made chairman and Herbert Bradley secretary. Messers. Beach, Lombard and Walker were appointed a committee to invite the Multnomah delegation to a conference, to which the Honorables came, with the one exception of Mr. J. B. Montgomery, who is, unfortunately, ill at home. Two o'clock was the hour appointed for special consideration of the consolidation

bill, but there was an ambushed lion in the way in the couchant form of a great state printer, who could not possibly (?) get the bill, with its many amendments, ready for final action before the following Thursday, when it was confidently expected by obstructionists, that some of Multnomah's taxpayers who favor the creation of a great metropolitan and cosmopolitan city would be gone. Many and deep, but not loud or declamatory, were the expressions of condemnation heard on all sides as the citizens of Multnomah county who pay a large proportion of the public bills, departed from the scene of delayed action, prepared to return, if need be, on the morrow, to resume the contest and spur lagging legislation along its lines of duty.

The passage of the amended East Portland charter bill was considered a good omen, as one serious obstacle, over which grave legislators would swap votes as school boys swap jack knives, was removed, diminishing the complexity of the fight. As the *West Shore* must go to press before the final vote is reached, it is only possible at this date to prognosticate the final vote of the consolidation bill. But, whether success shall be hoped for triumph of the consolidation bill. But, whether success shall crown the movement now or not, it is quite certain that until the cosmopolitan city is born, which it is in the power of the present legislature to create, the great state of Oregon must sit supinely in the swaddling clothes of babyhood, looking on in puerile helplessness while Seattle enlarges her borders and embraces her adjacent lake shores, and Tacoma spreads the aprons of her suburban enterprise in the lap of Payallup ready to begin, with confidence of consolidated opportunities, the steep ascent of Mount Rainier. In the meantime, Olympia, having embraced Tumwater, Swan Town and both sides of the headwaters of Puget sound, is rapidly forging ahead, while Yakima and Ellensburg are fast coming together after the style of Minneapolis and Saint Paul; and Spokane Falls, profiting by the example of Chicago, is ready to receive within her chartered environment every village that bobs up its head beyond her borders and coquetishly whispers "Let me come in." It rests with the legislature and governor of Oregon to decide whether or not we are to have a single metropolitan city in the state before the close of this generation. With Portland enlarged to include her sister towns, we shall, at one successful stroke of public policy, secure advantages that other cities, such as The Dalles, Grant's Pass and scores of other local centers will be proud to emulate.

ABIGAIL SCOTT DUNIWAY.

The new Spokane smelter is now practically completed. The only work that remains to be done is the connecting of the blast pipes, and the laying of the railroad track. It is pronounced by smelter men who have visited it as being the equal in every respect to the big smelters of Colorado.

The Blue Bell mine, on the east side of Kootenai lake, sends out flattering reports through its manager. Development work has been done to the extent that 600 tons of ore are now taken out daily at a net profit of \$20 per ton. Ben Tibby, of Butte, has been secured as general manager of the mine and its smelting works.

The Badger mine at Gam, on Canon creek in the Cœur d'Alene country, is another example of extensive development paying big dividends. This mine was originally bonded for \$60,000 by seven Helena capitalists. A year ago this month it was accepted. During the past year it has paid for itself and produced \$100,000 net profits. At present there is enough ore in sight to last a year without further development work. The ore is silver and lead, and the present rate of work makes the mine clear \$35,000 per month profits. Its ore is shipped to the Globe smelter at Denver.—*Spokane Spokesman*.

Although it has been kept secret and is still trying to be, we have known for several days that coal of good quality has been discovered near the Deschutes. On M. D. Adams's place, near the head of the grade the other side of the Deschutes free bridge is a well. It has been noticed for some time that when the water got low in this well stock refused to drink it. The Adams boys concluded to examine into it, and in cutting through a ledge of red rock, discovered an excellent quality of coal. It is impossible to say yet how valuable their find is as they have not cut through the vein, but the coal is there and tests show that it burns freely. This is the most important discovery ever made in this section, if the quantity is there, and there seems to be no doubt of it.—*The Dalles Chronicle*.

A national guard bill has passed the senate in Idaho and will doubtless become a law. Although the \$50,000 appropriation for the first year will not accomplish much towards the equipment and maintenance of the guard, the passage of the law lays the foundation for an effective service in the future. The military spirit is rife in the state and several new companies are being mustered in.

A new sash and door factory has been located in North Yamhill, Oregon.