

HAPPENINGS HERE IN OREGON

SAVES STATE \$5,000.

Result of Private Investigation by State Land Commissioner West.

Salem—By conducting a special investigation on his own account, State Land Agent Oswald West saved the state some \$5000 last week. Last spring the State Land Board sold a section of newly surveyed land at auction and the successful bidder offered \$14.25 per acre. The land was heavily timbered and was favorably located. As soon as the sale had been made it became known that several persons had filed homestead claims upon the land and claimed to have made settlements before the land was surveyed. If they made actual settlement before survey they could hold the land and the state would lose it, being entitled to lieu land instead. As the land is valuable and had been sold at a good price, Mr. West undertook to establish the state's title. He made inquiry as to the persons who filed the homestead entries and from what he learned of the occupation and place of abode he had reason to doubt whether they had made settlement at the time alleged by them. He learned further that the men had been voting in Albany during the time they claimed a residence back in the mountains. With this information in his possession he met the homesteaders with the suggestion that they cease to assert a claim to the land. They demurred at first, but when West gave them a hint of the evidence in his possession and backed this up by filing contests in the General Land Office, they came forward with relinquishments, thus leaving the state with clear title to convey to the purchasers at auction sale.

Mr. West's experience shows what can very often be done in the way of overthrowing homestead entries made by speculators if some one interested will take the trouble to investigate the facts regarding the entry and the term of residence.

STOCK OUTLOOK IS BRIGHT.

Mild Winter in Malheur Has Enabled Cattle to Keep in Condition.

Ontario—Now that there is prospect for a "break-up" in the weather, stockmen are beginning to discuss their prospects for 1904. The heavy loss of stock last spring on account of the weak condition of the animals, occasioned by scarcity of hay and feed, combined with the high price paid for hay last fall and the low price of stock caused gloomy forebodings as to the year 1904.

But the winter has been mild, allowing the stock to consume the hay without waste, and to put on flesh rapidly, so that when spring opens they will be well prepared to pull through the mud to do their feeding on the new pastures. There will be good reasons to expect large increase with little loss.

The mildness and short duration of the winter weather will result in considerable hay left uncut and to be sold by the stockmen to other buyers. With 1903 hay on hand the ranchers will sell the new crop of hay at a lower price than last fall. The cattlemen are expecting an advance in prices, so that with all these conditions in their favor the future is much brighter than it was last fall.

SELLING GRAND RONDE APPLES.

Many Carloads are Now Going East—Good Sale in Oregon.

La Grande—The fruit growers of the Grand Ronde who did not dispose of all their apples in the fall are now disposing of them in large quantities at from 35 to 40 cents per bushel for the Eastern markets. The Blue Mountain Fruit Company, of La Grande, now has a large force of packers at work, and many carloads are being shipped East, while many of them are being sold in Oregon. The Oregon apples are in great demand in the Eastern markets.

Many of the fruit growers in the valley are preparing to set out young apple trees this spring, and most of them are of the winter varieties, including the Jonathans, Roman Beauties, York Imperials and Yellow Newtowns. L. Oldenberg, one of the biggest fruit growers near La Grande, set out 3500 young trees last fall, and the remainder of the order, 2000 more, will be set out in the spring. This amount will cover 120 acres.

Will Build Mill at Paradise.

Enterprise—James Winters, who lives in the Paradise country at the extreme north end of this county, was in Enterprise recently, stating that persons in his vicinity are making preparations to build a new flouring mill at Paradise the coming spring. They expect to have the mill completed by harvest time. This will be a great convenience for the people of that section, as they have been heretofore compelled to haul their grain 40 miles on a wagon to get it to a mill, some bringing it to Lostine and Enterprise, while others haul to the mills at Asotin and Lewiston.

Plows are Started.

Pendleton—Because of springlike weather many farmers have already started their spring plowing. This is nearly two weeks earlier than in previous years. Very little spring wheat sowing will be done this year, as a large acreage was planted last fall.

GRASS IS GROWING IN GRANT.

Winter Has Been Very Mild—Miners Expect Early Clearing Off of Snow.

Canyon City—The cold storm that prevailed so generally near the Pacific section during the past week was hardly perceptible here. Although much snow has fallen it has been mostly on a rising temperature. Grass is growing nicely on the protected slopes, and a large number of horses are still running on the range. Some of these are thin, but many of them are in good condition. All danger of a serious feed shortage has probably past, but stablemen and others who must buy are compelled to pay \$16 per ton.

Grazing, farming and mining will probably have one of the best seasons for a good many years. Old miners say that there is now more snow in the mountains than they ever saw before at this season of the year. In the near-by mountains it lies on the ground at a depth of 1½ feet, and on the higher ranges is four or five feet deep. As it is mostly loose it is likely to melt early in the season, and miners expect to be able to start operations earlier than for several seasons past.

EXPENDITURES WERE LESS.

The Secretary of State Hears From All the County Clerks.

Salem—Secretary of State Dunbar has received the last of the annual reports of County Clerks, showing the expenditures of the several counties for the year 1903, except for road purposes. The reports show that in the state as a whole the expenses were \$100,000 less than for 1902, the decrease being due largely to the absence of election expenses, the repeal of the scalp bounty law, and a reduction in miscellaneous expenses.

In 1902 Baker County's expenses were swelled by reason of the acquisition of the Panhandle country from Union County. Morrow County had an expense of \$47,634 in 1902 for a new court house and has \$10,000 expense on the same account in 1903.

In 1901 Wheeler County had an expense of \$11,000 for a new court house.

Baker's School Exhibit Ready.

Baker City—The school exhibit for Baker City, to be sent to the St. Louis Exposition, has been made up. It is said to be the best exhibit ever sent to any exposition by the schools of this city. Baker City schools captured a medal at the World's Fair and the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo, and the members of the school board and Superintendent Churchill have good reason to hope that when the medals are awarded at St. Louis this fall the Baker City schools will not be overlooked. The exhibit will be sent to St. Louis some time during next month.

Reorganizing State Granges.

La Grande—J. Voorhees, of Woodburn, Ore., is in La Grande for the purpose of organizing a grange for the State of Oregon. Mr. Voorhees' intention is first to make a complete canvass for membership and at a later date call a meeting and complete organization. Twenty years ago there were four prosperous grange organizations in Union County, and Mr. Voorhees intends to re-establish them.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Milling quotations: Walla Walla, 76c; bluestem, 80@81c; Valley, 79@80c.

Barley—Feed, \$21 per ton; brewing, \$22; rolled, \$22.

Flour—Valley, \$3.75@3.85 per barrel; hard wheat straights, \$3.90@4.10; clears, \$3.55@3.75; hard wheat patents, \$4.20@4.50; graham, \$3.75; whole wheat, \$4; rye flour, \$4.50@4.75.

Oats—No. 1 white, \$1.10@1.12½; gray, \$1.07½@1.10 per cental.

Millstuffs—Bran, \$18.50@19 per ton; middlings, \$26; shorts, \$19.50@20; chop, \$18; linseed, dairy food, \$19.

Butter—Sweet cream butter, 32½c per pound; fancy creamery, 30c; choice creamery, 25@27½c; dairy and store, nominal.

Butter fat—Sweet cream, 31c; sour cream, 29c.

Poultry—Chickens, mixed, 12@12½c per pound; springs, small, 14@14½c; hens, 12½@13c; turkeys, live, 15@16c per pound; dressed, 18@20c; ducks, \$8@9 per dozen; geese, live, 8c per pound.

Cheese—Full cream, twins, 14c; Young America, 15c.

Eggs—Oregon ranch, 26@27½c per dozen.

Vegetables—Turnips, 80c per sack; carrots, 80c; beets, \$1; parsnips, \$1; cabbage, 1¼@2c; red cabbage, 1¼c; parsley, per dozen, 25c; tomatoes, \$1.50@2.00 per crate; cauliflower, 75c@\$1 per dozen; beans, 15c; celery, 65c per dozen; pumpkins, 1c per pound; cucumbers, \$2.45 per dozen. 1.75 per sack, growers' prices.

Potatoes—Fancy, 75@90c per sack; common, 60@75c; sweets, 2¼c in sacks, 2¼c crated.

Hops—Choice, 27@29c per pound; prime, 25c; medium, 24c.

Wool—Valley, 17@18c; Eastern Oregon, 12@15c; mohair, 32@35c.

Beef—Dressed, 6@7½c per pound.

Mutton—Dressed, 6@7½c; lambs, 7½c.

Veal—Dressed, small, 8@9c; large, 5@6½c.

Pork—Dressed, 6½@7c.

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BATTLE AT HAND.

Armies of Japan and Russia Massed on Yalu River.

Chefoo, Feb. 20.—Many wild rumors are current here, but there is a dearth of reliable news and there is consequently much anxiety felt as to the latest developments in the war. It is believed that there has not been a clash of the opposing land forces, but news of one is hourly expected. The two opposing armies are now face to face and it is simply a question as to which will attack first.

Owing to the fact that the two armies are unaccompanied by war correspondents, there will probably be some delay in getting the news out after the battle actually occurs. The Japanese commanders have made numerous promises to the correspondents, but passes to the front have not been forthcoming, and they are all under guard and likely to remain there, according to present indications. The Russians, of course, want no English-speaking correspondents with them and grant no passes. The result of this absence of trained observers from the front explains to a great extent the lack of reliable news and the repetition of old news. There is no way to get news through the same day and, even after it has passed the censorship, in many cases it is held up and laid aside by official direction.

The report that Russian forces are in possession of Wiju means that they are in strong force on the Yalu and that the Japanese' advance will probably soon be checked. The Czar's forces in Manchuria, it is now believed, have been underestimated, and it is believed here that there are enough under arms to compel the Japanese to put forth their best efforts to gain even a slight advantage in the first battle. That this is realized in Tokio is shown by the fact that transport after transport is discharging its quota of trained warriors in Northern Korea and that the Japanese are holding their advance until the majority of the troops arrive.

CHINA COMPLICATES SITUATION

Belligerents Are Warned Not to Disturb Tombs of Ancestors.

New York, Feb. 20.—The Sun's London correspondent cables as follows:

"A communication of the utmost importance which may add fresh complications to the Far Eastern situation has, it is said, been handed to the various governments by the Chinese Ministers in Washington and the European capitals. The Chinese government has addressed both Russia and Japan, reiterating its intention to maintain strict neutrality, but declaring that the sanctity of tombs of the ancestors of the Chinese dynasty at Mukden and elsewhere must be respected by the belligerents.

"China's communication states that she has troops at Mukden and other points in Manchuria, and in case either Russians or Japanese desecrate the tombs, or in other ways does injury to them, orders have been given to the troops to vindicate the honor of China and meet force with force."

HAY WROUGHT UP.

Russia's Attitude to America is Very Aggravating.

Washington, Feb. 20.—Secretary Hay is disposed to request an explanation from Russia if the fact is determined that Russia is detaining American vessels in Chinese ports and preventing Consul Miller from protecting Japanese interests in Niu Chwang. He is much dissatisfied with the indications of irritation felt by the Russian government at the attitude of the United States and the preparations being made for retaliation. No instructions have been sent Admiral Evans, the intention being to await the report on his inquiry now under way.

If it is proven that American ships are being prevented from leaving Manchurian ports, Secretary Hay will carry out his intention of addressing some pointed inquiries to the St. Petersburg government.

British Steamer Detained.

Shanghai, Feb. 20.—The British steamer Hsi Ping, from Chin Wang Tao for Shanghai, arrived here today. The captain reports that she was fired on by the Russian ships and forts when seeking shelter in the outer roadstead of Port Arthur, and that she was then ordered to Dalny, where she was detained four days, in spite of the captain's protest. The Russian gunboat Mandjur has not gone up the river to be dismantled, as reported. She remains at Shanghai in defiance of the orders of the Chinese officials to leave this port.

DID NOT WAIT FOR WAR NOTICE

Japan Attacked the Russian Fleet Before Relations Were Broken Off.

New York, Feb. 20.—The Herald's St. Petersburg correspondent cables as follows: "The fact is now known to all foreign nations that, according to careful calculations made, allowing for the difference in time, the torpedo attack upon the ships at Port Arthur took place one hour before M. Kurino called at the foreign office to announce that diplomatic relations had been broken off."

RUSSIA PLAYS EVEN

WILL BAR AMERICAN CONSULS TO NEW TREATY PORTS.

Uncle Sam is Deemed Too Friendly to Japan—Strained Relations Are Sure to Follow—Opening of Korean Port of Wiju Will Further Irritate Czar—Niu Chwang Situation Grave.

Washington, Feb. 19.—It is said Secretary Hay has received dependable, although unofficial information, that Russia is preparing to retaliate against the United States for what is considered to be the open friendship manifested for Japan. This may not go further than commercial discrimination, but there are indications that relations between the United States and Russia may become severely strained before the Far Eastern war is terminated.

Much irritation is felt at St. Petersburg, according to the information said to have been received. The first method in which it will be formally displayed, if advices prove authentic, will be barring of the American Consuls recently accredited to Dalney, Mukden and Antung. These ports were recently proclaimed by China as open to trade. When the Consuls reach these places erequaters will be refused and no recognition will be given them. What action this Government will take in such an event has not yet been determined.

The making of Wiju a free port by Korea, as announced today by Minister Allen from Seoul is believed to have resulted from representations made by Japan, and is expected still further to irritate the Russian government. It was apprehension that Russia might not receive the Consul to Antung that influenced Secretary Hay to seek the opening of Wiju, which is directly across the Yalu river from Antung.

Consul Miller is looking after Japanese interests at Niu Chwang. A number of Japanese women are reported to have been outraged by Russians and the possibility of serious trouble over this matter is admitted by the State Department. Mr. Miller's instructions are not to recognize Russian authority at Niu Chwang as superior to that of any other power. This has led to considerable dissension in the past and will prove more irritating in the future, as Russia is supposed to have occupied the latter port.

Niu Chwang is recognized by the United States as belonging to China. The gunboat Vicksburg is at that port. She carries 175 blue-jackets and 40 marines, who can be landed to protect Consul Miller if trouble arises.

FRAUD IS FOUND.

Western Land Deals Result in Indictments.

Washington, Feb. 19.—As a result of investigations that have been conducted before the Federal Grand Jury in this city for some time past, indictments were returned today against Fred A. Hyde, John A. Benson, Henry R. Diamond and J. H. Schneider, the four principal figures in the famous licu land ring. These men have operated extensively all over the Pacific Coast, and especially in Oregon and California. The four men are indicted for conspiring to defraud the Government.

It is understood that William E. Valk and Woodford D. Harlan, clerks in the general land office, and Forest Supervisor B. F. Allen, of California, who were the principal witnesses against the members of the ring, will not be prosecuted, it being the intention of the Government to build up its case against the ring on the testimony of these and other witnesses. Valk and Harlan, as previously stated in these dispatches, were the clerks in the land office who admitted having "leaked" information to Benson and Hyde, which enabled them to operate so successfully on the Pacific Coast. These men, through a cipher furnished by Benson, said they were in constant communication with the main office of the ring in San Francisco, and both have fully described to the grand jury the methods by which they received bribes for their work.

Will Name Canal Board Today.

Albany, N. Y., Feb. 19.—Governor Odell will nominate to the senate tomorrow an advisory board of five expert engineers to carry out the plans for the enlargement of the state canals, authorized by the act of the legislature and ratified at the November election.

The plan contemplated the expenditure of \$101,000,000 in the construction of a 1000-ton barge waterway. State Engineer and Surveyor Bond will be chairman of the commission and will resign his state office to accept the position.

Panama Canal Case Adjourned.

Paris, Feb. 19.—The hearing of the case of the Republic of Colombia against the Panama Canal Company, in which the former seeks to prohibit the Panama Canal Company from ceding its property rights to a foreign government, to compel the company to admit the representatives of Colombia to its future meetings, was adjourned today until March 9.

AROUSED TOWARD AMERICA.

Russia is Finding Great Fault With The Note of Secretary Hay.

New York, Feb. 18.—The Herald has the following from St. Petersburg:

At the foreign office here the American note continues to excite much anger. An influential member of the Council of the empire said:

"The American note is considered in official circles as dealing with Manchuria as well as the rest of China, notwithstanding different interpretations by the French and German press. It is believed, at any rate, that the note has been issued to make Russia believe America wants to re-establish Chinese sovereignty there.

"It is considered as a measure of intimidation, and an official intimation beforehand that the United States, even after Russia's victory, will strongly oppose our point of view regarding Manchuria.

"If America steps into Japan's place Russia cannot but adopt toward the United States the very same firm but conciliatory attitude which she has shown toward Japan."

ABANDONED TO ITS FATE.

Russians Will Not Attempt to Save Port Arthur.

New York, Feb. 18.—The Sun's London cable, dated February 17, says Port Arthur is to be left by Russia to stand or fall by herself.

A dispatch to the Daily Mail from St. Petersburg says that military circles recognize that relief from the responsibility of maintaining the long line of railway in Manchuria will simplify Admiral Alexieff's task.

Port Arthur can be safely left to take care of itself, while with Harbin securely garrisoned preparations may continue for gathering an overwhelming force for a southward advance when the weather is favorable.

The World's comment on this is: The tone of the above cablegram indicates a plan of campaign on land. At the beginning they boasted of Port Arthur as impregnable. The Russians have determined to abandon the defense of the railway between Port Arthur and Harbin.

TRY TO SEIZE RAILROAD.

Japanese Attempt to Take Manchurian Line Near Kinchau.

London, Feb. 18.—According to Port Arthur advices received by the London Times, a Japanese landing party which attempted to seize the Manchurian Railway near Kinchau, was driven off after severe fighting with heavy loss.

That the battle was of a severe character is indicated by the fact that the Russian officials admit their loss was not less than 70 killed. The Russians allege to have captured 150 Japanese prisoners.

A report reached here last night from both Tokio and Shanghai to the effect that the Russian fleet, now at Jibouti at the end of the Red sea, and which is declared to be preparing to await the arrival of the rest of the Russian war fleet now en route from home waters, will be bottled up there by a Japanese flying squadron.

Fortification Appropriation Bill.

Washington, Feb. 18.—The fortification appropriation bill was reported to the house today from the appropriations committee. It carries a total appropriation of \$7,222,292, which is less by \$447,239 than was appropriated for fortifications at the last session of congress. The estimates on which the bill is based aggregate \$21,573,297.

Severe Weather in East.

Baltimore, Feb. 18.—Today was one of the severest of the winter. The temperature was as low as seven degrees above zero, and all day long a gale blew through the ruins in the fire district at a 40-mile gait, making the conditions dangerous for all within the lines. A number of tottering walls were blown down and debris sent flying in all directions. The extremely cold weather had also the effect of freezing up the whole devastated area, and most of the streets are now covered to the depth of two or three inches with ice.

Russians Increase Guard.

New York, Feb. 18.—The Russian authorities have taken every precaution to protect the arsenal, cables the Port Arthur correspondent of the Herald. The usual guard of 600 men has now been increased to 2000.

At Kinchow, Tallenwan and Bidsevo, the forts and garrisons have been replenished threefold.