

Crook County Journal.

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NO. 10

LAND LEASING BILL

Introduced by Congressman Stephens.

Now Before Congress.

An Interesting Letter from the Pen of W. P. Keady on Its Bad Features.

EDITOR JOURNAL:

Through the kindness of Senator Mitchell I have received copy of bill introduced by Congressman Stephens, of Texas, providing for "The lease of the public grazing lands in arid states and territories." Careful reading of the bill discloses some provisions and omissions which have not been noticed in the newspapers, at least I have not observed same.

At present the government partitions the Cascade forest reserve among sheep owners for summer range, hence the reserve is "grazing lands" on the arid side of the Cascade mountains. Forest reserves are not exempted from lease in the bill before me. Another omission, apparently designed, is failure to exempt mineral lands of all character.

One section of the bill provides how any person shall make application to the commissioner of the general land office describing the particular lands he desires to lease and specifying which sections are dry and which watered lands. No person shall be permitted to lease more than two sections of watered land and six sections of dry grazing land. By watered land is meant permanent springs, rivers, streams or lakes.

All lands containing permanent water are to be leased for a term of five years, at three cents per acre per annum, and all dry lands are to be leased for a term of ten years at not less than two cents per acre per annum. At the expiration of any lease, the lessee thereof shall have the preference right to again lease the lands theretofore leased by him upon the terms and at prices fixed by law.

The bill carefully specifies how any person shall make application to lease these lands, at the prices stated. Anticipating what is sure to happen should the bill become a law, to wit: Numerous conflicting applications covering the same lands—the smooth gentleman from Texas, always loyal to his clients, the large cattle companies of his state, adroitly slips into the bill, in section 4, this sparkling gem: "And all leases under the provisions of this act shall be advertised by the commissioner in such manner as he may think best, and let to the highest responsible bidder under such regulations as he may think to be the best interest of the United States."

Section 10 of the bill makes it unlawful for any person to fence, exclusively use, occupy, or appropriate by herding or line riding any portion of such lands without first having obtained a lease thereof. Any and each of such acts is made a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred nor more than one thousand dollars. To go upon any of the public lands would be expensive trespass under this proposed law. It

would cause rapid reconstruction of fences. It is a well known fact that settlers must often guess at land lines in running fences, hence often enclosing more land than the claim calls for; when adjoining lands are claimed by another, survey is had and lines adjusted; no one suffers, not even Uncle Sam. But under the Stephens bill, the owner of any fence, enclosing pasture land is liable to be hazed into the Federal courts and fined, unless he has a lease of the ground infringed upon.

I hold that all the public land belongs to all the people, and that legislation designed to concentrate the same into the hands of a few is un-American. The present laws, providing for acquisition by each person of a homestead, desert and timber claims, are ample and the lands should be reserved for such use alone. Let us hope our burdens will not be increased by a land trust.

The government of the United States, through the department of agriculture and the various experiment stations, is and has been for some years securing and propagating cereals, forage plants and grasses adapted to arid lands. These experiments in some cases have been successfully conducted, and the people will soon begin to reap the benefits thereof. Where the soil is sufficiently deep to retain a reasonable amount of moisture, and the rain and snow fall aggregates a total of nine inches, which is about the minimum over the major portion of Oregon's arid regions, the sage brush hills and plains will be converted into profitable fields and pastures. This means more population, more and better school houses, better roads and less taxes. The conditions now controlling east of the Missouri river with reference to farming and stock raising will in a few years prevail west of the Rocky mountains. There will be but little vacant land. Each person engaged in these industries must prepare for restriction to his own line fences. But in Texas settlers are not wanted, and the little holders now there must be crowded out and off if Mr. Stephens has his way.

W. P. KEADY.
HOWARD, Feb. 12, 1902.

New Telephone System.

ASHLAND, Or., Feb. 12.—Ashland is to be the western terminus of a new telephone system which is to reach into Eastern Oregon through Klamath and Lake Counties, and into Modoc County, California. Work is to be commenced on its construction and equipment as soon as possible, and it is to be in operation by August 1. The line is to extend from Ashland eastward across the Cascades, via Klamath Falls to Lakeview, taking in the line already constructed from the latter point to Silver Lake, and also to Alturas, Cal., which will be the eastern terminus, making over 300 miles of line altogether. The promoter of the enterprise is H. V. Gates, of Hillsboro, who was in Ashland today making arrangements for undertaking the work from here. A contract has been made with the Bell Telephone Company for its instruments for use upon the new line, upon which it is also understood the Bell Company has an option to purchase after a given time.

ABOUT SQUAW CREEK

The Future Prospects of Western Crook.

A Fine, Rich Country

It Comprises an Area of 30 by 40 Miles, Nearly all of Which Can Be Irrigated.

The future prospects of the western part of Crook county, known as the Squaw creek country are good. The desert between the Deschutes and Squaw creek comprises an area of about 30 miles north and south by 40 miles east and west, nearly all of which can be irrigated. Part from the Squaw creek and the remainder from the Tumalow and Deschutes rivers. That from the latter river will be mostly by means of pumping, a plant of that kind being already in operation at Cline Falls.

The Tumalow ditch company will complete their ditch next spring and be able to furnish water for a large number of settlers on the desert and be the means of giving homes to a large number of people. Under this ditch is one of the finest bodies of alfalfa land in Eastern Oregon, which will furnish from two to three crops of hay every year.

There is also another feature of this part of the county that is invaluable and that is the outside range for summer in the mountain-adjacent to this place. This is a very handy range as it only requires a day or two to drive from the summer to the winter range.

It has been said that with the advent of settlers this country would be ruined for stockraising, but we believe that on the contrary that with irrigation this country will keep five times as much stock as it does now and more than it ever kept. Domestic grasses will be sown to take the place of the natural grass and this country will then be like the older settled places, produce much more abundantly of everything than formerly.

We have great advantages over Western Oregon in that we have a much better climate for winter feeding of beef.

We have not as yet mentioned the territory on the banks of Squaw creek which is a natural clover and timothy belt and is about 35 miles in length. Already there are some fine fields of clover and timothy, but they are small yet, being scarcely out of the experimental stage.

A great deal of land is being cleared of sage brush preparatory to sowing to clover and alfalfa. Alfalfa has not heretofore been sown in this district in any quantity as it was thought until lately that it would not do well here, but experiments have proven that on soil where there is no hard pan that alfalfa does well and consequently a large acreage will be sown this spring. But a few years will elapse until what is now a wilderness, a more sage brush flat, will be transformed into a succession of beautiful green fields.

J. E.

Ashwood Gleanings.

Mr. Milo Wood's new house is almost completed. The family is moving in.

Max Luddeman, Newt Burges and Charley Durban, of Antelope, were in town yesterday and today.

James Robinson and Ed Harriett returned Sunday evening from a visit to Mr. Harriett's uncle in Fossil.

Mr. Dan Evans has contracted to build 50 feet of tunnel in Gypsy Hill for Mr. Merchant, of Walla Walla.

School is poorly attended on account of colds and inability of small pupils to come long distances through the storms.

The Woodmen initiated six new members last Saturday night. The camp here is flourishing, there being about 30 members.

Dr. Coffene has had three calls during the past week. A man at the Company ranch on upper Trout is reported to be ill with pneumonia.

Dr. Coffene and family arrived in town Thursday. He has purchased the Henry Huston house and Mr. Smith has it almost moved onto the lot next the new store.

Mr. James Wood has filled his ice house with some very good ice, some being 8 inches thick. Benton & Grater also have put up their ice, about 40 tons.

Ashwood has four inches of snow and still snowing. Last Saturday the thermometer registered 6 below zero here and 8 below at some places on Trout creek.

Mrs. Leeman, an elocutionist from Salem, will lecture on temperance Monday evening. Mrs. Leeman is a very well trained elocutionist and an enjoyable evening is anticipated.

Sunday evening a number of the leading people of this place met and formed a Christian Endeavor society. The society meets every Sunday afternoon. Topic for the following Sunday, "Obedience." G. Sutherland, leader.

Thursday evening the friends and relatives of Mrs. Perkins gathered in the new residence of Mr. Milo Wood, and united in wishing her many happy returns of the day. A fine lunch was served, guests amused themselves in various ways, by dancing, cards and games. At a late hour next morning the party broke up.

February 12, 1902.

According to those posted in Wasco county there is a place known as Antelope canyon that drains a large area of hilly country. During the rainy season and when the snow is melting the water rushes down the hillsides into the canyon and then it becomes impassable to travel. At such times the mail from Shaniko is delayed from a few hours to a day or two. We are also informed that a few hundred feet of grade and one bridge of something like seventy feet in length would be all that is necessary to put this canyon in shape for travel at all times of the year. As this canyon is not in Crook county we cannot give the commissioners "Hail Columbia," but we would suggest to those of our sister county that they take the matter up and see if this piece of road cannot be made passable.

Mr. O'Neill, the actor, who started in to become an Elk became a donkey before he got through, and is the laughing stock of everybody.

NEWS BRIEFLY TOLD

Items of Interest Gathered Here and There

Some Stolen, Others Not

Cullings From Our Exchanges
News Notes of the Week
Timely Topics

The English are red-hot after Dewet, but they have been after him the same way for some three years, so there is nothing startling in the fact.

Edwin Stone, manager of the C. & E. R. R., is making an effort to secure some wild turkeys for the Willamette valley, a great game bird worth hunting.

Addison Kidd, the train wrecker, was arraigned before Judge Bradshaw at The Dalles on last Saturday morning. Kidd pleaded guilty and the judge sentenced him to the penitentiary for life.

Senator Mitchell has succeeded in having an amendment adopted to the deficiency bill which provides for the investigation by the secretary of the treasury and the payment of the whole of the Oregon, California and Nevada claims. If this is held in conference, it will mean, when the matter is adjusted, about \$34,000 for the state of Oregon.

Mrs. Nancy Jane Roberts has just died at Sherwood, in this state, at the age of 109 years and was undoubtedly the oldest person in the state. She was born in Missouri, and came to Oregon in 1852. When she was born Washington was serving the first year of his second term as president, and the great French revolution was in progress.

A big sheep deal was made in Umatilla county the other day, the J. E. Smith Livestock Co. buying 15,000 sheep and 30,000 acres of land from C. B. Wade, cashier of the First National bank at Pendleton for \$170,000. The company now owns 28,000 sheep and 40,000 acres of land, indicating that sheep raising in Eastern Oregon is a mighty big industry.

Several young people were contestants in a struggle at the opera house, Saturday night, for a silver medal offered by the W. C. T. U. organization for the best recitation. They were Sophia Hartley, Mamie Starr, Mary Sutherland, Pearl Allen, Guy E. Moore, Mr. Hall and Mr. Allen. Each is a student at the Agricultural College. The medal was won by Guy E. Moore. Mr. Moore recited, "Patriotic Sins of Intemperance." His delivery is said to have been very excellent. The prize awarded is a handsome silver medal.—Corvallis Times.

Dissolution Notice.

Notice is hereby given that the partnership heretofore existing between Frank Elkins and J. H. Wight, under the name of Frank Elkins & Co., is this day dissolved by mutual consent, J. H. Wight retiring. All accounts owing said firm will be collected by Frank Elkins and all indebtedness of said firm will be settled by said Frank Elkins.

FRANK ELKINS & Co.
PRINEVILLE, Or., Feb. 8, 1902.

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