

Oregon City Enterprise

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PUBLISHING ASSESSMENT ROLL.

In an editorial indorsement of a law that proposes the publishing of the assessment roll of each county before the same is presented to the board of equalization, the Oregon Law School Journal says:

"If newspapers of each county would publish a list of each taxpayer's property, as given to the assessor, it would strike many a good and well meaning citizen with consternation, and we would find that the tax-roll of next year would be increased many fold over that of our present year. Publicity is the only remedy to bring about a true reform in this matter. Adequate laws may be enacted upon any subject, yet if they are improperly enforced or executed they will not accomplish the purpose for which they are intended. If the people are kept in ignorance as to the manner in which an officer performs the duties imposed upon him by law, and the people are also kept in ignorance of the evasion of such laws by those whose duty it is to observe them, then favorites, ward strikers, political bosses, and unscrupulous persons will evade our laws with impunity. Darkness is a most favorable place to breed microbes and foster deadly germs of disease, and sunlight is their deadly foe. So secrecy in our body politic tends to produce an unhealthy condition and creates a most favorable opportunity for the breeding of fraud and corruption, and their unrelenting foe is publicity. Turn the sunlight of the facts upon public abuses and the people will force its perpetrators to desist. The people demand an honest administration of public and private affairs, and fraud and corruption cannot long exist when brought in view for public inspection.

"Tweed and his gang bribed judges and legislatures, laws were passed in their interest, public treasuries were pillaged by them, and decisions were rendered in their favor, and no such complete and extensive plan of fraud and public spoliation was ever devised in any country yet publicity brought about the downfall of this powerful ring. It was through the columns of the New York press that this vast system of fraud and corruption was exposed and broken up, and "Boss" Tweed, who was more powerful than any king, to languish and die in a felon's cell. The newspapers are the moulders of public opinion. It is through the columns of the newspapers that public and private abuses are disclosed, frauds unearthed and great reforms are brought about. It was Napoleon who said, "Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than ten thousand bayonets."

"We would therefore recommend complete publicity as a certain remedy against the practice of "tax-dodging." The assessment of each person liable to assessment in a county should be published, as is done in several other states, before the county board of equalization meets, in the leading newspapers published in the county. The state of Illinois now has such a law, and its effect is magical. Each person is made aware of his neighbor's list of property given in to the assessor, and if such neighbor omits any of his property subject to assessment he is compelled to hasten its correction. This law has brought about a revolution in that state with regard to equal and just taxation, and it is almost impossible for one to escape his just proportion of the taxes."

THE special session of the state legislature that met at Salem this week was a decided credit to the state. Only legislation of general concern to the state's interests was considered and such business was expeditiously transacted. The majority party acted wisely in holding a caucus and determining on such matters as required and deserved action at the extraordinary session. The total cost of the special session will not exceed \$7500 while the benefit that will accrue to the state from the legislation that was enacted, will far surpass the cost. The record made by the special session was a credit to each individual member and to the state at large.

COUNSEL for Prescott Kalbfleisch, who was found guilty in the justice court last week of obstructing a highway, complain that the local item in the Enterprise of last week's issue, failed to state the case properly. If the facts in the case were misstated, it was unintentional, for the only interest this paper has in any matter is the giving of the news. The road over which the trouble resulted, is the celebrated Fanton road, concerning which there has been litigation in the courts for the last five years. As originally laid out the road in controversy joins the Mol-

alla road near Carus, and by a short turn in its course passes about the farm of Mr. Kalbfleisch, the defendant. On the strength of a petition that was recently presented to the court, the establishment of the road across defendant's farm was ordered. It was in attempting to open up this road that the pending trouble resulted. Before it is finally constructed, the road will likely cost the county several hundred dollars while it will not be in any respect any advantage over the present course of the highway. These road squabbles are unpleasant things, and the average citizen before signing should make an investigation of the contents of any petition that may be presented to him and determine whether the thing prayed for is deserved and will serve the convenience of the public, or whether the main thing to be accomplished in the laying out of a road is the penetration of a neighbor's farm. Mr. Kalbfleisch will appeal his case.

A HAPPY New Year!

ANOTHER rare opportunity for the ladies—Leap Year is here. And there are doubtless many that will embrace the opportunity.

WITH the thermometer 40 degrees below zero in Minnesota, and 60 degrees above in Oregon, it is quite evident that this state is a hundred degrees better to live in, comments an exchange.

SOME people insist that there is everything in a name. But we cannot agree. For instance, Pleasant Armstrong, the Baker county murderer, has finally been sentenced to be hanged on the 28th inst.

FOR a city with a boasted population of 15,000, the people of Salem have been busy since the annual municipal election in December explaining how it happened that with the liveliest contest the Capital City has witnessed in years, the total vote polled was only 1310.

THANKS to the members of the two houses of the Oregon legislature, the work of the special session was as commendable as was the session appreciably brief. There was more actual business transacted in the three days that the special session was convened than the average legislative assembly transacts in three weeks.

THE arrest and fining of a local saloon man last week for selling liquor to a minor will probably have a good effect. It is reported that some of the saloon men have been careless in this regard. In addition to being liable to a fine for the offence, selling liquor to minors is also punishable by the revocation of the liquor dealer's license.

IT now develops that because of the absence of the emergency clause in the act re-instating the \$300 tax exemption, this feature of the tax law may not take effect until after the time for making this year's tax levy and extension of the roll with the result that the exemption clause will probably not apply on this year's tax roll.

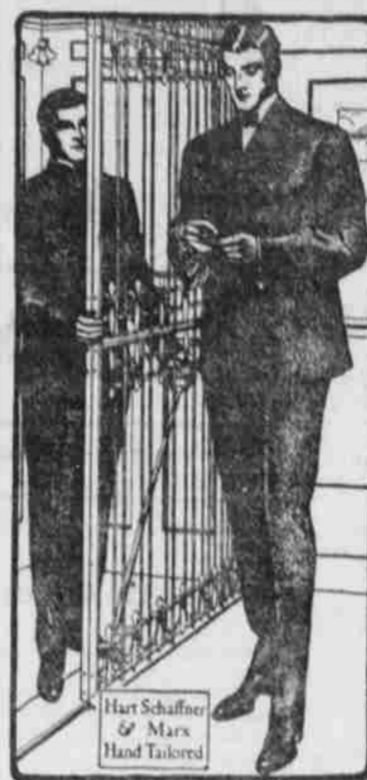
WITH the beginning of this, another New Year, the Enterprise wishes for its readers a full 366 days of prosperous conditions, even surpassing those of the year just ended. Bounteous crops and labor plentiful at remunerative compensation gave abundant cause for thanksgiving and produced a universally contented state of affairs. May the same conditions prevail in a greater degree during this year, and may each share in proportionate measure these greater blessings.

THE day for making resolutions has arrived. Rather than subscribe to a number of pledges that he knows he will break on the morrow, the individual had better make no promises at all. Renew the best of your last year's resolutions, even though they were many times broken and, backed up by determination, live up to them. Strive to make the world better and happier for your having lived. Don't be a pessimist. Be bright and cheerful, and you will not only make those about you happy, but you will also enjoy to the fullest degree the pleasures and good things of this world.

FARMERS are very generally displeased with the action of the special session in enacting a law prohibiting the killing of Chinese pheasants until September 1906. It is a notorious fact, they assert, that city sportsmen without regard for the law, have annually slaughtered this game bird until legislation prohibiting the further massacre of this bird has become necessary to prevent its extermination. They claim that the enforcement of the old game law would have been more satisfactory and at the same time given to the farmers, who raise the birds the privilege of killing a bird occasionally.

THERE is nothing particularly surprising in the announcement that the proposed law, making gambling a felony in this state, was stolen from among the records of the state legislature at Salem last week before it was finally acted upon by the Senate. Few people seriously believed that the measure would ever be enacted as a law and if such a result did follow the introduction of the bill, there was a still smaller number of persons who believed that the law would be enforced. It seems strange that any effort to legislate against gambling and kindred evils is invariably thwarted and the vices practiced more vigorously than ever. There is a state law against gambling in many forms and these practices are prohibited by city ordinance also, but there is made no attempt to suppress the practice which is carried on in open violation and apparently in defiance of the law, in almost every city, not excepting Oregon City. These laws should either be repealed or the provisions of the statutes enforced.

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An Empire Lost For Want of the Right Sort of Riding Habit.

An old legend which makes no pretense to truth tells how a kingdom was lost for want of a horseshoe nail. But a volume of sober historical and biographical purpose, written by Count d'Herrison, makes it appear that the Empress Eugenie, after the battle of Sedan, lost the chance to preserve the empire of her husband by not possessing exactly the right sort of riding habit. It was the evening of Sept. 3, 1870.

The news of the surrender of the French army and of the Emperor Napoleon at Sedan had spread about Paris. The city was excited, and there was talk of a revolution and the banishment of the imperial family. At this juncture Emile de Girardin, a man who was trusted by the empress and who had had no little experience during the previous changes of government, arrived at the palace of the Tuilleries. "If your majesty were to appear on horseback in the midst of the people," Girardin said, "and announce the abdication of the emperor in favor of the prince imperial, your own assumption of the title of empress regent and the appointment of Thiers as prime minister, the empire might be saved. Something must be done to turn the tide."

The empress accepted the advice. But when this leader of the world's fashions sought for a proper costume for her performance it could not be found. The only riding habit in the Tuilleries was a fantastic one of green, embroidered with gold and silver, made for a festival hunting occasion, and the hat was a not less fantastic three cornered affair of the epoch of Louis Quinze. The empress felt that it would not do to appear in this garb on such an occasion. Her appearance in it might have the opposite effect upon the people from that which she intended. The plan had to be given up, the empress and the prince imperial were banished, and the Napoleonic empire was at an end.

Still More Untimely.

"Do your neighbors sing the latest songs of the day?" asked the landlord. "I shouldn't object to that," answered the sad eyed tenant; "their specialty is the latest songs of the night."—Washington Star.

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