CORONER FEES TOO LARGE

DISTRICT ATTORNEY WRITES A LETTER TO COMMISSIONERS.

He Asserts That Many of the Charges Made Are Unwarranted by the Statutes.

District Attorney Chamberlain yesterday submitted a letter to the Board of County Commissioners expressing the opinion that many of the fees charged by Coroner Rand in his June bill are unwarranted by statute and ought to be disallowed. The amount of the bill is $250. The District Attorney points out what he considers the discrepancies or overcharges, and criticises the method pursued by the Coroner in holding inquests. He suggests that the Sheriff should serve subpenaes on witnesses, which would save expense. The latter also defines what inquests are required by law, and substantially says that many of the inquests which have been held were unnecessary.

If the advice is followed it would appear that the fees of the office will be materially decreased. The communication is as follows:

"Portland, July 9.—Hon. Board of County Commissioners—Gentlemen: You have placed in my hands a letter addressed to you by Dr. D. H. Rand, Coroner, with reference to the amount of fees he is entitled to for holding an inquest under the statute, and you desire my opinion thereon.

"Section 1027 of the Code prescribes the duties of the Coroner as follows: 'A Coroner has power, and it is his duty—(1) When he is informed that a person has been killed or dangerously wounded by another, or has suddenly died, under such circumstances as to afford a reasonable ground to suspect that his death has been occasioned by criminal means, or has committed suicide, to inquire, by the intervention of a jury, into the cause of the death or wound, and to perform the other duties incidental thereto, in the manner prescribed by statute; (2) to execute any process in any action, suit or proceeding, when the Sheriff is a party as prescribed in the title; (3) to exercise the powers and perform the duties conferred and imposed upon him by other provisions of this code or other statute.'

"It will be observed that the statute imposes upon the Coroner the duty of holding an inquest in four classes of cases as follows: (1). When he is informed that a person has been killed, or (2) dangerously wounded by another; (3) has suddenly died under such circumstances as to afford a reasonable ground to suspect that his death has been occasioned by criminal means, or (4) has committed suicide.

"During the month of June the Coroner held inquests in 16 cases, and presented bills therefor as follows:

June 1, Myra E. McNeill, was riding bicycle, died from syncope and heart failure	$ 16 05
June 2, Naomi Moss, murdered	20 05
June 3, Riley Moss, suicide	16 55
June 5, D. Ludowich, organic heart failure	14 00
June 5, Lou Hin, gonorrheal authritis	13 65
June 5, Louis Chee, tuberculosis	13 75
June 7, Gustav Aug. Stoldt, acute peritonitis	14 05
June 8, Gin Fou, tuberculosis	13 65
June 9, James L. Rounds, suicide	15 00
June 11, George K. Dean, suffocation	15 80
June 14, Granville T. Patterson, cerebral hemorrhage	19 25
June 15, Daniel Collins, accidental drowning	14 85
June 15, Nikeyi Tanaka, tuberculosis	14 00
June 25, Frank Schaffer, heart disease	15 80
June 25, Harriet Emma Clark, murdered	19 00
June 30, Anna O'Brien, self-inflicted strangulation	15 05
Total	$250 50

"The bodies of each of the persons above named were taken to the morgue. In the cases above referred to where the death ensued from violence at the hands of another, or was self-inflicted, there can be no question but that it was a duty incumbent upon the Coroner to hold an inquest, but because death happened to be sudden, the Coroner is not, because of that fact alone, necessarily required to hold an inquest. In such cases, it is only incumbent upon him to do so when he has reasonable grounds to suspect that the death has been occasioned by criminal means, and the practice of holding inquests in cases of every death which happened to be sudden ought to be discouraged as entailing an unnecessary expense upon the taxpayers.

"Where inquests are necessary, the statute expressly points out the mode of procedure, and prescribes the fees which the Coroner is entitled to charge.

"Chapter XL of the code provides that when it becomes necessary the duty of a Coroner to make the inquiry mentioned in section 1027 supra, he must go to the place where the dead or wounded person is and forthwith summon six persons to serve as jurors to inquire into the cause of the death or wound. He must swear the jury. He must subpena and examine the witnesses, inspect the body and give professional opinion as to the cause of death. For the purpose of subpenaing witnesses, compelling them to attend and testify, and punishing them for disobedience, he is clothed with the power and authority of a magistrate. The testimony of the witnesses must be reduced to writing by the Coroner or under his direction.

"When he holds an inquest upon the body of a stranger or pauper, and no relative or friend appears to claim the body for burial, the Coroner must cause the same to be plainly and decently buried and the expense thereof must be paid by the county. He must return to the County Court a written statement verified by his own oath of the expense of any inquest or burial held or made by him, which account must be audited and paid to the person to whom the items thereof are due, in the same manner as ordinary claims against the county.

"These several steps, and others pointed out by the statute, constitute the holding of the inquest. Section 2345 of the code prescribes the fee to be charged by the Coroner and is as follows: 'Section 2345. The fees of the Coroner shall be as follows: For taking an inquest concerning the death or wounding of any person, $5. A Coroner, when acting as Sheriff, is entitled to the same fees as a Sheriff.'

"Section 2354, of the code as amended (see acts 1889, page 247), provides in substance that 'every officer or person whose fees are prescribed in this chapter who shall be required to travel in order to execute or perform any public duty, in addition to the fees hereinbefore prescribed, shall be entitled to mileage at the rate of 10 cents per mile in going to and returning from the place where the service is performed.' There are no other provisions of the statute applicable to the matter under consideration.

"From these it follows that the Coroner is entitled, in each of the cases above referred to, to make the following charges: For holding the inquest, $5. For mileage at the rate of 10 cents per mile in going to and coming from the place where the service is performed, and at the same rate where he travels to summon a jury.

"He can call upon the Sheriff or any Constable to serve subpenas upon witnesses, and require of these officers the same services as can a magistrate. He can have the bodies of the dead carried to the morgue in proper cases, and can have the testimony reduced to writing by a competent person, but these are charges which he must return to your board under oath, with the names of the parties entitled to the same, so that your board can audit and pay the same in due course.

"It appears from the bills presented in the cases above, that the Coroner charges for the following items of service: 1. Holding inquest. 2. Summoning jurors. 3. Administering oath to jurors at the rate of 10 cents each. 4. Summoning witnesses at the rate of 25 cents each. 5. Administering oath to witnesses at the rate of 10 cents each. 6. Mileage for summoning witnesses at 5 cents per mile. 7. Mileage of Coroner viewing corpse at 5 cents per mile. 8. Deposition of witnesses at 10 cents per folio. 9. Bringing corpse to morgue.

"All of these charges, with the exceptions hereinbefore noted, are unwarranted by the statute, and it is my opinion they should be disallowed. It might be well to state in conclusion that the Coroner only acts as Sheriff in the cases provided for in subdivision 2, of section 1027 of the code, and when he acts thereunder he is entitled to such fees as the sheriff in similar cases would be entitled to charge."

TO MANILA VIA PORTLAND.

Trans-Pacific Shipment Pulled This Way by One Man's Exertion.

There will be delivered in Portland in a few days over the Oregon Short Line and O. R. & N. nine carloads of beer which will go on the next steamer of the Portland-China line to Manila, via Hong Kong. This beer is shipped by a brewing company of Milwaukee, through their Coast representative, J. Silvestone, of Portland, and the fact that it goes from Portland by steamer is due entirely to the efforts of Mr. Silvestone. The brewing company made one shipment in 1898 of 67 carloads direct to the Orient, which was trans-shipped at San Francisco and Vancouver, and since then they have been making regular shipments, all of which have had to go via other ports, on account of their inability to secure space from Portland.

The present consignment of nine cars is only part of their order, and the remainder will go from San Francisco for the same reason. A few months ago a Portland-Manila steamship line was almost assured, but it fell through, due to the failure of the steamship people to carry out their arrangements. There is no question that had this line been established at the time, Portland would now be sending full cargoes regularly to the Philippines. However, with a few men working for Portland's interests, as Mr. Silvestone has in this case, Portland may reasonably expect additional steamship facilities which will enable her to handle some of this tonnage.

EXHIBITS FOR THE FAIR

MERCHANTS' COMMITTEE TO ARRANGE FOR THEM.

Wholesale and Retail Stores, Manufacturers and Others Will Be Asked to Come In.

A committee representing the merchants of Portland, and consisting of H. D. Ramsdell, of Lipman, Wolfe & Co.; Julius L. Meier, of the Meier & Frank Company; J. G. Mack, H. C. Breeden, Albert Feldenheimer and John Gill, met with the managers of the Portland Street Fair and Carnival last night for the purpose of taking action looking toward securing exhibits at the fair. It was decided to district the business portion of town and have members of the committee visit all the merchants and manufacturers, explain the purposes and advantages of the fair, and determine how many exhibits will be made.

It is the purpose to have all exhibits prominently located on the avenues through which the crowds will pass, and house them all in attractive booths, so that the goods displayed will not be damaged in case of rain. Various plans are discussed, and D. Solis Cohen, who has lately returned from a visit to the St. Paul street fair, told how exhibits were made there, and of the thousands of people who visited them daily.

All the gentlemen present reported that they had met with great enthusiasm on the part of the merchants. Every one feels assured that the novelty of the fair and the many attractive features which it will combine within its limits will make it the greatest means of drawing crowds to Portland that has ever been adopted in the city. It was stated that Elks' lodges in all parts of the Northwest will come to Portland in a body, some of them to remain during the entire fair. Many merchants have already applied for space, and others have signified their intention of exhibiting. In some cases men who have applied for space already have increased their orders, having become convinced that the fair will furnish the opportunity of a lifetime for advertising. The interest which all the large retail stores have taken in the enterprise is a guarantee that they will all be represented, while manufacturers, dealers in agricultural implements and wholesale merchants are beginning to learn that they must be represented if they desire to keep up with the procession.

As it is important that the plan for the grounds be laid off very soon, in order to give time for the designing and erection of buildings, the work of visiting the merchants will begin at once. Members of the merchants' auxiliary committee will go out in pairs, and every prominent firm will be visited and given an opportunity to say what they expect to do.

With more than 100 business exhibits, a Midway fairly alive with star attractions, great buildings filled to the brim with products showing the resources of the state, and many beautiful booths typical of the cosmopolitan character of Portland's population; the fair is sure to be the greatest carnival that has ever been held in the Northwest, and to fill Portland to overflowing with visitors.

Before the meeting adjourned, the names of W. B. Ayer and A. H. Devers were added to the auxiliary committee. Both are well-known manufacturers, and it is believed that they will do much toward bringing to the fair a valuable class of exhibitors.

Children's Entertainment.

This afternoon, beginning at 2 o'clock, the children of Elks will give an entertainment at Elks' Hall, Marquam Building, for the benefit of the Carnival fund. Following is the programme: Piano solo, Miss Carrie Solomon; song, Little Lida Schacht; recitation, Miss Ella Houghton; piano solo, Mr. George Oetzen; club swinging, Carrie Harris; song, Bessie Huffard; mandolin and guitar, Allison Sisters; piano solo, Edith Shapri; song, Bessie Kelly; quartet, Fitzgerald Brothers and Habekost Sisters; piano solo, Leo Shapro; a cake walk, composed of Master Richmond and Frances Fitzgerald, Miss Carrie Harris and George Fitzgerald, Misses Clara and Netty Habekost, led by Drum Major Joe Rothchild.

FELL 80 FEET.

Workman on the New Corbett Building Met With Fatal Accident.

John Burke, a workman on the new Corbett building, at Fifth and Stark, fell down the elevator shaft yesterday afternoon, sustaining injuries from which he died at 1:45 this morning. Burke had been working under the roof, and was standing on the edge of the elevator shaft on a plank, while he was trying to shove a board under the roof. This met a sudden resistance, for which he was not prepared, and the board slipped from under him, causing him to lose his balance, and fall to the basement floor, 80 feet below. Planks across the shaft at every floor broke his fall, and by the time the basement floor was reached he was insensible.

Contractor George Langford immediately summoned Dr. K. A. J. Mackenzie, and the injured man was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital, where examination showed three ribs broken on his right side, his right arm broken between the elbow and shoulder, severe cuts on the back of his head reaching to the skull, and symptoms of dangerous injuries to the brain and chest.

Burke was in the employ of Cahill & Hall, a San Francisco firm, having the contract of putting in the elevator. He had not been working since the 4th, and yesterday was his first day back at his job. He complained in the morning of not feeling well, and the foreman, J. B. Coale, ordered him to work on the ground floor and not to go up to the higher stories, and while the foreman was absent, Burke climbed to the roof and commenced rigging up some tackle, shortly after which he fell. He is a competent workman and a married man.

DELEGATES TO LEAGUE.

Meeting of Republicans Who Will Go to St. Paul.

Delegates to the twelfth annual convention of the National Republican League met in the rooms of the state central committee in the Chamber of Commerce building yesterday. There was a small attendance, although nearly all the delegates were represented by proxy. It was decided to take no action until the delegates arrive in St. Paul, and the names of those who will go could not be learned. Those who are entitled to represent Oregon in the convention are:

At large—S. B. Eakin, of Lane; D. F. Hardman, of Linn; W. A. Howe, of Yamhill; Chester V. Dolph, of Multnomah; O. V. Hurt, of Benton; W. H. Moore, of Sherman.

First Congressional District—J. C. Hayter, of Polk; W. B. Odell, of Marion; E. D. Strathford, of Douglas; C. S. Moore, of Klamath.

Second Congressional District—J. H. Johannson, of Clatsop; J. E. Haseltine, of Multnomah; W. H. Conyers, of Columbit; I. S. Geer, of Harney.

J. M. Church, president of the State League, and J. P. Kennedy, secretary, are ex-officio delegates, as also the member of the National executive committee.

College clubs in the state holding membership in the American College League are entitled to one delegate each.

Death of Job Hatfield.

Job Hatfield, of Inman, Poulson & Co.'s sawmill, a well-known resident of the East Side, died at Paso Robles, Cal., Sunday. The news of his death came by wire, and was a severe shock to his wife and children, who live at 362 Grand avenue. He had been away about a month, and went to California on account of his continued ill-health. The change was made on the advice of his physicians in the hope he would recover. His health had been failing for over a year. Mr. Hatfield had been connected with the mill firm since the mill started, and was the collector. Several years before he was connected with the Willamette Mills. He was highly respected, and popular with all with whom he came in contact. Only a week ago Mrs. Hatfield received a letter from her husband, and he was then feeling better, and was hopeful of recovery. The body will be shipped to Portland, and the funeral will probably take place Thursday. Riverview cemetery will be the place of interment.

Body Not Found.

The body of Mary Simmons, who is supposed to have been drowned in the Willamette River by falling off the platform of her mother's floating house at the foot of East Ankeny street Saturday night, has not been recovered. A most thorough search was made within 100 feet or more in every direction from the place she is thought to have fallen. The river was carefully and thoroughly dragged all day Sunday, and three expert divers explored the depths all about the boathouse, and nothing was found. The child fell in the river Saturday evening, if she fell in at all, and the body might have been carried by the undertow out into the river, and then been swept away from that vicinity. In that event, it would not be recovered. This is the only explanation of the failure of the searchers to find the body, for it would likely have been recovered had it lodged anywhere within 100 feet of the house. There are some who incline to the belief that the child is not drowned, but has been carried off. They think that she would not have disappeared, but that her clothes would have buoyed her up, and she would have made some outcry.

Lewis and the Reporters.

Kansas City Cor. New York Tribune.

James Hamilton Lewis, of the auburn whiskers and flaming necktie, has arrived and registered at the Midland. He came by way of Lincoln, where, he says, he had a conference with W. J. Bryan, "satisfactory to both." Colonel Lewis, as everybody knows, is a man of imagination. Just now he is laboring under the hallucination that his little picturesque boom for second place on the ticket is being taken seriously by the people. Within half an hour after arriving in town, the Colonel had "sat" for a dozen photographers and had struck graceful attitudes for at least a score of pen and pencil artists, who bore down on him whenever he appeared in the lobbies of the Midland.

"For heaven's sake, boys," pleaded the Colonel, "keep people talking about me. If you can't say anything pleasant regarding me, abuse me; but for Heaven's sake don't drop me."