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TODAY'S WEATHER—Occasional rain; brisk to high southerly winds.

YESTERDAY'S WEATHER—Maximum temperature, 49; minimum temperature, 44; precipitation, 0.27 inch.

PORTLAND, FRIDAY, JANUARY 23.

SALARIES ARE "FLAT" NOW.

In view of the fact that the long and loudly heralded "flat salary" bill has made its appearance at Salem, it seems necessary to advert to Article XIII, Section 1, of the constitution of the State of Oregon, to-wit:

> The Governor shall receive an annual salary of $1800. The Secretary of State shall receive an annual salary of $1500. The Treasurer of State shall receive an annual salary of $800. The Judges of the Supreme Court shall each receive an annual salary of $2000. They shall receive no fees or perquisites whatever for the performance of any duties connected with their respective offices, and the compensation of officers, if not fixed by this constitution, shall be provided by law.

As regards "flat salaries," therefore, it will be seen that they are already provided, if the constitution is to be obeyed. It is not obeyed, but its infraction by evasion does not justify its infraction by direct enactment. Five thousand dollars is an unconstitutional salary, whether paid through indirect perquisites or in flat defiance of the provision we have quoted. The members of the Legislature will, of course, interpret the constitution for themselves, but it is difficult to see how they can reconcile the "flat salary" bill with the constitution. The illegal salaries now paid were opposed by The Oregonian thirty and more years ago, when they were first mooted. They are exactly as illegal now as then. It is a strange proposal to do in plain defiance of the constitution what has hitherto been done only through indirection and subterfuge.

Efforts have been made, it is true, to explain away this unequivocal utterance of the constitution. But this can only be done by assuming that the constitution fixes no salaries; for the salaries fixable by law are only those "not fixed by this constitution." It is argued that if the people will endure increased salaries granted indirectly they will endure increased salaries granted directly, which is a specious balancing between two ways of doing a wrong act. It is further argued that if unconstitutional allowances of $4000 to $5000 a year are voted, the illegal perquisites now allowed will be done away. There is no evidence that this would be the case. If the constitution is to be flouted; if there is no sacredness to its prescriptions, then the Legislature can go on ad libitum increasing the emoluments of the state officers, on top of a $4000 or $5000 salary, just as it has in the past exceeded the constitutional salary of $1500.

The only way in this matter is the right way. If men are not satisfied with the constitutional salary, there is no compulsion on them to seek the offices. The truth is, they seek the offices in the hope that they can circumvent the constitution. And this does not apply to members of one party more than of another.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S TASK.

When Secretary Chamberlain decided to spend three months this Winter, which are the Summer months there, in South Africa, in order that he might obtain at first hand knowledge of the conditions there existing, the British people were well pleased. It had long been evident that the problems of peace in the Transvaal were almost as difficult and as expensive to solve as those of war, and, in order to expedite the solution, this visit of the Secretary was planned. General disappointment has, however, resulted at the best arrangement that he has been able to make in regard to the payment of the expenses of the war.

Both the political and industrial situations in the Transvaal are unsatisfactory. The Boer colonies lost $300,000,000 by the war. The $15,000,000 for relief promised in the treaty of peace was found to be but a drop in the great sea of their necessities. The representatives of the impoverished people hoped that the home government would pay all the cost of the war. To add to the dissatisfaction, the rehabilitation of their farms proceeded all too slowly to meet the urgent demand of their necessities. To meet these complaints and reconcile the situation with the British demand for a stated war contribution, Mr. Chamberlain went over some weeks ago. It is not strange that he has been unable to perform the task to which he set himself.

Perplexing as is the industrial problem, the political problem is still more so. Mr. Chamberlain has found that the purpose of the home government to treat the Boers fairly is more pronounced than is the desire of the British in South Africa to recognize Dutch rights. Race hatred—that most unreasoning of all forces, is at the bottom of this. The loyal British distrust the Dutch, and the latter are in a state of internal revolt against their conquerors. This is an arbitrary condition that will yield only to the softening influence of time and the return of prosperity to the colonies. Mr. Chamberlain recognizes this fact and has used great discretion in dealing with the jealousies and resentments that grew out of it. At the best the lot of the Boers will be a hard one for several years. A country devastated by war cannot regain what it has lost quickly, even under the best conditions. Growth of this kind cannot be forced, but must follow due processes of nature and of trade. It may be expected that those who suffer the manifold disabilities of such a situation will become querulous and impatient at the slow progress of restoration. Patience with those who suffer is a requirement of civilization, under such circumstances, of those who are charged with the responsibility of conquerors.

In the discharge of the duty imposed upon him Secretary Chamberlain has shown patience and prudence. If he has also shown the British quality of stubbornness and a British spirit of reprisal, it is not to be wondered at. Neither is it a matter of surprise that both the British and the Boers are disappointed at the best that it has been possible for him to do in the premises. He will, however, accomplish by his visit to South Africa his first purpose in making it, namely, the desire to learn for himself by personal investigation the conditions of affairs in the colonies.

QUAY AND HOAR.

The promised dullness of the short session is relieved from time to time by incidents of moment and significance which are likely to grow more frequent with the approach of adjournment. Forces are mustering for conflict, especially in the trust and tariff fields, and clashes are to be expected.

With the assistance of the beet-sugar Senators, Quay has succeeded in getting the Republican leaders on the run. It is easy to sympathize with this assault on their infallibility and omnipotence, though one can but wish the Pennsylvania boss had enlisted himself in a better cause. No one has done Quay the injustice to attribute his activity on behalf of the omnibus statehood bill to any considerations of public policy. He has girded on his armor and assailed the Senatorial hierarchy because he has mines in New Mexico or because of some equally disinterested motive.

Equally indifferent is Senator Hoar's contribution to freedom of thought. His resentment at Presidential interference easily reaches the dimensions of an episode. In a good cause his protest would command general approval, but its motive doubtless rises no higher than petulant disappointment because the President prefers the Knox anti-trust plans to Senator Hoar's, while its effect can hardly be otherwise than to delight and encourage the opponents of all trust legislation.

Nothing was to be expected but that President Roosevelt's vigorous method would sooner or later, like President Cleveland's, arouse hostility in his own party. Last session we had the "insurgents." Now we have the negro question and the discontent of those who hoped to divide the whites of the South; the protest against the President's utterances concerning Smoot, and the restlessness under his persistent demands for anti-trust legislation. These elements of unrest are not in the way of improving the general welfare. Their authors are on the wrong tack. Senator Hoar is similarly infelicitous in his protest; for trust legislation will have hard enough sledding as it is, without such impediments as he is putting in the way.

Quay's generalship is masterly and Hoar's independence is commendable. One can only regret that they are not enlisted in a better cause. What could the forceful men of the Senate not accomplish if they set themselves to the task of correcting trust and tariff abuses? Quay will never organize a successful revolt to abolish the duties on iron and steel. Hoar will never rise in his seat to rebuke the Senatorial leaders for not pushing an anti-trust law to enactment.

THE DALLES PORTAGE PROJECT.

It cannot be said that the argument presented to the Legislature in support of The Dalles portage railroad project is entirely convincing as to the practical wisdom of this special project; for, while it makes the fact of grievance clear enough, it does not make it equally clear that a portage railroad at The Dalles would cure it. The handling of freights over portages, it must be borne in mind, is a method at best of limited capability for relief, besides being out of date in a traffic sense. And it must also be remembered that very little of the freight originating in the Columbia River Basin is in position to choose immediately between river and rail transportation.

If, indeed, there were a dependably open river, it would enforce a recast of freight rates everywhere in the interior to figures calculated upon the low grades and relatively short haul of the Columbia River route; but it is, we think, more than questionable if a portage railroad at The Dalles would prove a sufficiently powerful lever to accomplish this result, or anything like it. The thing to be feared—much to be feared—is that, after costing a large sum of money, it would turn out to be practically of little value and an injury rather than a benefit in that its failure would serve to put the whole project of river improvement in contempt. In brief, we distrust it as a half measure bigger with elements of danger to the interests of the interior basin than of promise of effective relief.

But the figures are truly overwhelming as related to the advantage of an open river—that is, a river really and dependably open. We quote for illustration the following comparison of rates between The Dalles and Portland (open river) and The Dalles and Arlington, where the river is closed:

> Wheat—Arlington to The Dalles, 54 miles, 11½ cents per 100 pounds; The Dalles to Portland, 88 miles, 7½ cents per 100 pounds.
>
> Wool—Arlington to The Dalles, 54 miles, $1 06 per 100 pounds; The Dalles to Portland, 88 miles, 25 cents per 100 pounds; Portland to Boston, Mass., 3500 miles, $1 per 100 pounds.
>
> Cattle, hogs and sheep—Arlington to The Dalles, 54 miles, $24 per car; The Dalles to Portland, 88 miles, $38 per car.
>
> The four class rates are:
>
> Arlington to The Dalles, 54 miles, 58 cents, 48½ cents, 42 cents, 36 cents.
>
> The Dalles to Portland, 88 miles, 25 cents, 20 cents, 18 cents and 15 cents, respectively, showing 150 per cent more for an equal distance.

The disparity of these rates tells the story. Where competition is possible the railroads make rates to meet it; where competition is not possible, they put on the screws under the familiar principle—all the traffic will bear. The products of the interior basin are rated upon the non-competitive basis; and it is unquestionably true that the country pays an enormous sum annually in the form of freight rates which would be saved if the river were an available agency of competition. How to make it so is the question. That a portage railroad would do it we do not believe. The remedy is too small in its capability, too limited in its availability.

While an open river is easily a possibility, it is a project practically beyond the resources of the state, unless it could work in conjunction with the National Government. In such partnership and in furtherance of a plan about which there could be no question, the State of Oregon might well afford to give the amount asked for a portage railroad—or double that amount. No sum that could be raised without distress to the people would be too much to pay for the universal blessing of an open river. But there must be care that any sum so paid shall be for an improvement that will yield relief, and not for a mere makeshift, that will do little or no good and serve to postpone rather than bring nearer the day of deliverance for the interior basin.

OREGON'S POSITION IN CONGRESS.

The contention at Washington for the committee places vacated by the death of Mr. Tongue is a reminder that Oregon's position in the House of Representatives, recently very strong, is bound in one respect to be a weak one for some time to come. In the course of his long service Mr. Tongue had gained the standing which entitles a member to preference in the very important matter of committee assignments, and he had acquired a commanding rank in the committee on rivers and harbors, and was chairman of the committee on irrigation and arid lands—the two most important committees of the House as related to the special interests of Oregon. Mr. Moody's committee relations include membership of the committee of public lands, mines and mining and Indian affairs—all likewise important in their connection with our legislative interests.

By the death of Mr. Tongue and the retirement of Mr. Moody these committee posts, so important for our interests, will be lost to the state, for Mr. Williamson and whoever shall succeed Mr. Tongue must begin at the bottom of the ladder and work up into relationships of legislative influence. They will, by the unwritten rules of the House, which apply to all new members, be given whatever places may be unassigned—that is, they will have what is left after all the older members have had what they want. For a term, at least, unless aided by some special fortune, they must be content with membership in committees dealing with neutral or routine matters and which give them no opportunity to command favors for themselves or the state.

Nor will our position in the Senate in the matter of committee posts be as strong for some time as it once was. Upon his return to that body two years ago Mr. Mitchell was not able at once to fall into his old committee posts. Others had taken them, and, like other men just entering the Senate, he had to be content with what was available. His assignments are not unimportant—far from it—for they include coast defenses, interoceanic canal, Pacific islands and postoffices and postroads, but they are not comparable to the committee positions held by Mr. Mitchell at the time of his retirement previous to re-election. Time and continuous service alone can gain for a Senator the more commanding assignments, and every man entering the service must begin at the bottom. Mr. Mitchell's committee relations will become rapidly more important from this time on; but the Senator who is to be chosen at the present session of the Legislature will have to build himself up from the bottom.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the practical advantage of effective committee relationships in Congress. It is, in truth, the key to a hundred doors of legislative influence. It not only gives a man power in connection with subjects directly related with the interests under his hand, but it puts him in a position wherein, by doing favors for others, he may demand favors in return. Say, for example, an Oregon man as chairman of the committee on irrigation and arid lands is asked by a California man who is chairman of the committee on postal affairs to do some service for the irrigation interests of his state; he is able by compliance to establish himself in position to ask for a return favor when the postal interests of his state are in question. It detracts something from the dignities of legislation that results are obtained by processes of this sort; but it is a fact that relations of reciprocal service count for much in Congress, as elsewhere, and it is well to be in connections where the conditions may be made to count for state advantage.

In the next Congress Oregon will have two members of the House and one member of the Senate in the list of "freshmen," with everything to learn and with their rank to establish. In some important committees, more especially in the House, where hitherto we have had direct and personal representation, we shall have none. Most unfortunately of all, we shall have no representation in the rivers and harbors committee. It is to be regretted, but it can't be helped; and we must make the best of the situation as we find it.

The possible entrance of Jacob Furth, of Seattle, into the Senatorial contest at Olympia in the character of a candidate is one of the interesting suggestions of the hour. Mr. Furth is a banker, a man of large affairs, personally wealthy. In many ways he is a very strong man, though, like Mr. Ankeny and every other man whose name figures in the fight, he is lacking in the traditional "Senatorial" qualities. In all that part of the work of the Senate in which business talents and experience count, Mr. Furth would be an efficient man; in the consideration of affairs involving acquaintance with the world's history and of the great principles upon which the actions of men and nations depend, he could have no active part. Speaking frankly, Mr. Furth's place is not in the United States Senate, and probably nobody knows it better than himself; at the same time he would be a most effective agent at the National Capital of the general interests of the State of Washington. The strange thing about the Senatorial practice of Washington is that little or no mention is ever heard of the several men like John B. Allen, Judge Thomas Burke, Judge Henry V. Struve and others, who, if they were in Senatorial service at Washington, could not fail to distinguish the state and establish it in universal respect.

That the election of Mormon Apostle Smoot to the United States Senate from Utah will displease the Senate as the mere suggestion of it displeased the President is certain. And it is not to be doubted that, if a way were open to deny him admission and send him packing back to Utah, as was done in the case of a polygamous Congressman-elect from the same state two years ago, the Senate would be glad to employ it. But the conditions in the two cases are radically different. Roberts, the rejected Congressman, was an open and shameless polygamist, boasting of his three wives, and the moral sentiment of the country protested against him for specific cause. Smoot, so it is declared, while devotedly a Mormon and a dignitary of the church, is not a polygamist and is not therefore in such character as to be dealt with as an unclean beast with whom civilized and self-respecting men may decline to hold relations. If he is declined admission to the Senate, it will be not upon the ground of objectionable social character, but of his religious character; and the Senate can hardly afford to commit itself upon such a question in opposition to the spirit and letter of the American system. It is questionable if harm rather than good was not done by the rejection of the polygamist Roberts. It made him a hero with his own people, and promoted in them an attitude toward the Government which is very much to be deplored, since it adds to rather than diminishes the difficulties of the Mormon problem.

Statistics compiled by the Interstate Commerce Commission for the three months ending September 30, 1902, show that the number of persons killed in train accidents in that time was 263, while 2613 were injured. Other kinds of accidents, including those sustained by employes while at work, by passengers getting on and off cars, etc., bring the total number of casualties in the railway service of the country during that period up to 12,007, of which number 845 lost their lives. Large as this number is, it is small when compared with the vast army of railroad employes and the immense number of passengers carried. The traffic during the three months covered was, on very many of the railroads, heavier than ever before. Many new men, wholly unused to the service, were of necessity employed in train and yard work. Individual carelessness and recklessness added their usual quota to the sum of disaster, and no doubt long hours and overfatigue added their quota. Large as the casualty list was, we may well marvel that it was not, all things considered, larger even while we censure the inattention to duty that led to the collisions and derailments, the effects of which were so disastrous to human life and limb.

There is very little reassuring in this recrudescence of Venezuelan hostilities unless it be the fresh protests of Germans against German offensiveness. Whatever plans of a Greater Germany may be entertained at Berlin in connection with German residents in South America, they are rendered more abortive by every shell that goes screeching landward from German guns in the Caribbean Sea. The diplomatic undertakings of Mr. Bowen are obviously imperiled, and Germany herself is in a fair way to defeat the purposes contemplated in Von Sternberg's amiable address to the American people. Perhaps the chief diplomatic bearing of the situation will prove to be the fresh impetus given to British discontent with the Anglo-German alliance. This, of course, is water on our wheel. It is humiliating, of course, to be impeded in our good offices toward poor, little Venezuela; but there is some consolation in expressions of renewed British sympathy and in the spectacle of Germany's stamping out all desire of South America to do business with her.

A large number of bills have been introduced in the Legislature proposing changes in the laws relating to assessment and taxation. This is one portion of our statutes which should be subject to as few changes as possible. Just now there is need of additional laws which will throw more of the burden of taxation upon corporations which have almost entirely escaped in the past, but the wisdom of other changes is doubtful. The joint committee on assessment and taxation, composed of Senators Booth, Pierce, Mulkey, Holman and Miller and Representatives Phelps, Fisher, Huntley, Reed and Robbins, includes a number of men who are known for their exceptional business ability and their conservatism in all public matters. With a body of such men in a position to retard any ill-advised legislation, there is little danger that the taxation laws will suffer any injurious changes.

How desperately the old bosses do fight to retain control of the machinery governing the selection of men for official position! In Wisconsin the stalwarts have been won or forced over to all the reforms urged by Governor La Follette, except that of direct primary nomination of candidates. That is a blow that would put the old-guard politicians out of business and give the people a show in the management of public affairs, therefore on every sort of pretext it is opposed by a strong faction of the Republican party and it is by no means clear that the Governor's ideas will be put in the form of a law this Winter, though two state Republican platforms have explicitly indorsed them and the voters have twice ratified them at the polls. The bosses die hard, which is a very good reason why there should be no delay about relieving them of their heavy duties.

The list of new committees for the Portland Chamber of Commerce gives promise of effective work by that organization in the coming year. And there is plenty of work to be done. In these prosperous days the tendency is to neglect many things that have important bearing on commercial affairs, but the men identified with the Chamber of Commerce represent the substantial and progressive business interests of the town, and they are able and willing to give this public service. They should receive generous support in these efforts.

Marconi is to establish wireless telegraph stations at points on this coast for trans-Pacific service. Shall we let him ignore the mouth of the Columbia River? There is already a cable to Fort Canby, where a fine location for a Marconi station can be found. This may be worth looking into by our commercial bodies.

The duty and responsibility of presenting the Lewis and Clark appropriation bill to the State Senate and securing its passage were reposed upon Senator Hunt. Just how well he performed his work is shown by the practically unanimous vote with which the measure passed the Senate.

EDUCATION AND NEGRO PROBLEM

Chicago Tribune.

The reception which was given a few nights ago in Philadelphia by the American Academy of Political and Social Science to the Southern education board, which is striving to develop public sentiment in favor of education in the South, and to the general education board, which stands prepared to furnish financial assistance to Southern communities which are not able to maintain a public school system, was made specially interesting by the expression of views upon the question of education in that section by prominent educators and friends of education from the South.

The most prominent of these speakers was Edwin A. Alderman, president of Tulane University at New Orleans, now regarded as one of the most important educational institutions in the South by reason of the exceptionally large gifts which have been made to it in the last two or three years, which have enabled it to approximate to the standards of the first-class universities in the North. In the course of President Alderman's address, the subject of which was, "Sectionalism and Nationalism in Education," he said that the negro question was only one problem of "determining how a backward race of a divergent ethnic type and in a different plane of development shall become a part of National life for the National good." Upon this question he eloquently said: "Slavery put him (the negro) under the bottom and held him there. Reconstruction put him on top and held him there. God knows neither plan worked. There is but one thing in this world to do with a human being, and that is to give him a chance. Can he be made fit for our life? The problem of the stronger is to find the way; the problem of the backward to use the way."

President Alderman not only believes that the negro question must be solved by education but he says, unreservedly, that the South is committed to the education of the negro. Hampton and Tuskegee are experimental stations for the backward race and Southern colleges and universities are training stations "for the forward race in patience and scientific inquiry and sympathy." The old cry of "let us alone" which used to come up from the South he says is changed. That section does not now wish to be let alone, for "we are one Nation, members of one body." Rarely has a nobler utterance come up from the South than these closing words of President Alderman's address:

"We love our self-respect better than gold. Our lips are shut like iron about some things, and we shall not babble overmuch of our past, idealized forever to our souls by woe and fortitude, and deep loyalties, but if your eyes are clear enough to see straight the paths we have trodden, and if your souls are great enough to want to serve, our souls, my brothers, are great enough to want your sympathy and help, for the glory of the Nation and the good of men. The energy of the South demands to be free, and shall be free, and you shall help us to be free."

There are some of the old, unrelenting Bourbons, unforgiving survivors of the war, and some unreconstructed Southern newspapers which still oppose the education of the negro even in the fundamentals, and bitterly denounce the Southern and general education boards, though they are composed of leading men in both sections, but undoubtedly the higher and more intelligent sentiment of the Southern people is reflected in this noteworthy address of President Alderman.

On Cheap Living.

Philadelphia Record.

Among the communications which some newspapers consider it enterprising and profitable to publish are such as profess to instruct the housewives how to live on a certain inadequate and ridiculous number of pennies a week. Who are the real authors of these communications, and what are their actual motives we can only conjecture. From the spirit in which they are received by a vast majority of the frugal and experienced housewives, it is suspected that the writers are divorce lawyers, and that their purpose is the fomentation of domestic discords which may lead to the divorce courts. For one thing, it is certain that they are insincere. It has been proved again and again that they do not recite an actual experience. Nobody ever did or ever could live for more than a week on the insignificant sum which they affirm is ample week in and week out. They give prices which are not to be found in any market, and a menu which would exhaust at a single meal the entire week's appropriation.

The mischief which follows the publication of these apparently beneficent letters is incalculable. The hard-working provider for a family who has reduced his daily consumption of cigars from ten to nine for the sake of economy seizes on such published letters with avidity. He believes every word, partly because it is in print and partly because it is comforting to find that the main reason why his salary does not go farther is extravagance in the housekeeping. The wife may have expended brain tissue on the problem of keeping down the cost of the table and other expenses; she may have exercised genius in getting the most out of her allowance, besides denying herself many necessaries. When she is charged with extravagance and these pernicious and untruthful letters are offered in proof she feels the injustice deeply. Nothing can convince the husband that the printed matter is absurd. Here, then, is a foundation for mutual anger and perhaps eventual divorce.

A Liquor Law Symptom.

Boston Herald.

It is stated that in some of the larger towns of Vermont the liquor-selling interest is opposing the movement in favor of a license law which is being agitated in that state at the present time. This anomalous condition of affairs can be accounted for only in one way. The business of these men who oppose a license law is liquor selling, and, of course, they want it to be aided rather than injured. The presumption in the case must therefore be that a license law will work injury to them rather than aid. There must be further reasoning to the effect that they can sell more liquor by evading the present prohibition law than by engaging in competition with others under a license law. There is thus direct evidence presented of what has been often charged, that the enforcement of the prohibitory law is evaded by bribery of those whose duty it is to carry it out or that public feeling is such that enforcement cannot be accomplished. Perhaps both causes operate; however this may be, the evidence seems to prove prohibition a failure in the larger towns of Vermont.

A Reciprocity Measure.

Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

The bill that is described as placing coal on the free list is likely, according to the dispatches from Washington, to pass without much objection. It is a Republican measure, and even the Democrats are likely to vote for it. The bill, however, is not a free trade measure, pure and simple, but may be described as an enlightened attempt at reciprocity. As the press dispatches tell it, while the bill may take the form of a rebate or drawback for 90 days, it also will provide for the admission free of duty of coal imported into this country from countries granting the same privilege to the United States. This, as it is stated, means Canada, and will permit Nova Scotia coal to come into this country free, while coal from the Alleghenies and westward will go into Canada free of duty. There are parts of Canada that are a natural market for American coal, and parts of the United States that are a natural market for Canadian coal. The removal of tariffs by both countries will shift Canadian coal to a more convenient American market, and vice versa, to the advantage of both countries and the loss of neither.

EXTORTION IN COAL PRICES.

Kansas City Star.

It is certain that the present prices of coal, which are so high in many parts of the country as to cause great suffering and hardship among the poor, are brought about by a combination between operators and dealers. There can be no other explanation. The cost of mining coal has not increased. The plea that the Pennsylvania strike has caused a great shortage in coal, and that the demand has forced the extortionate prices, is not borne out by investigations conducted in many places. The supply is plentiful enough, but the strike is used merely as an excuse. Even if coal were scarce, inasmuch as the cost of mining and transporting it has not been increased, there would be no justification for the inordinate greed of those who have coal to sell.

Why are such things possible? Simply because there has been such an extensive combination of those who are identified with the coal business that it is possible to enforce practically all the exacting policies that an absolute monopoly would observe in robbing the people in selling them a necessity of life. And how is such a combination made possible? By maintaining a tariff on coal, thus shutting out foreign competition and protecting the American operators and dealers in their outrageous practices. If the duty on coal had been remitted when the prices first began to advance, the extortion would have been checked; and if there had been no duty on coal the extortion never would have been attempted, for the attempt would have been foredoomed to failure.

The coal situation is only one of many instances of licensed plunder. This kind of robbery is going on, has been going on, to a greater or lesser degree, and has been patiently tolerated by the people because the imposition has been brought about by such gradual processes that even the extreme abuses of the present time do not arouse the resentment and opposition that the violation of public rights are expected to call forth. The coal robbery ought to furnish at least one impressive lesson in favor of tariff reform.

Need for Forest Preservation.

Boston Globe.

The most heavily-timbered state now is Oregon, next comes California, then Washington. They are each far ahead of any other state. Of the states east of the Rockies, Arkansas has probably more timber than any other state, though exact information is lacking. Following it more or less closely comes such states as Louisiana, Mississippi, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Maine, Pennsylvania, Texas, North Carolina and Florida.

The most valuable tract of timber under one control comprises over 1,000,000 acres in east Texas, which is worth upward of $25,000,000. A syndicate in Kansas City has holdings running over 1,000,000,000 feet, mainly in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. The largest syndicate in the country has more than 1,000,000 acres in Washington, on which there are upward of 20,000,000,000 feet of lumber, and its holdings will very likely cut out double that amount.

The strongest argument in favor of the preservation of timber lands is the influence they exert upon the health of communities. The effect of forests upon temperature conditions has long been recognized. The moisture from the woods makes the general temperature more uniform. Destroying trees increases river freshets. This destruction and forest fires have also made irrigation necessary on Western lands. Singularly enough, on the Atlantic Coast, the forests have gained on the open fields because of emigration from the East to the West.

If there is only 42 years' supply of timber ahead, it is vitally important that the National Government, and also states and cities, should make strenuous efforts to preserve woodlands. They certainly deserve as much attention as our harbors, rivers and lakes. The National health should not be imperiled by any short-sighted money-making.

Lesson of the Coal Reduction.

New York Evening Post.

Men who, on the common subjects of discussion, use their reasoning faculties freely, go over at once to the credulity of the nursery when it comes to an argument about the tariff. Then their minds close with a click, as did the English bishop's when the conversation turned seriously to theology, and they run off with the silliest phrases. Some of them amount to this: "Oh, of course, everybody understands that if we should take the duty off dolls' eyes American industry would perish in a day."

We perceive also, in current revelations of the protectionist spirit, the tendency of superstition or a false doctrine to grow more intolerant and extravagant with time. Von Holst has showed beautifully how this worked in the case of slavery in the South. From being thought a temporary evil, it came to be held as, first, as an economic necessity, then a social advantage, and finally a divine institution, with big blessing to black and white, and against which it was sacrilege and treason combined to lisp a syllable. So we have seen protectionism grow from the "infant-industry" stage, a policy to be apologized for as a passing necessity, until it has become the sacrosanct thing we now see it to be regarded. This has all the marks of accelerated folly, and of superstition near the time of being blown away.

In this aspect of the matter, the forced removal of the coal duties is a most valuable example. The tariff has actually been "touched," and the dome of the Capitol has not fallen in! Duties have been repealed, and Americans yet go forth to their work in the morning. This is a timely and a damaging blow to superstitious protection. It is certain to be followed up by others. Reason and justice will, in the end, prevail; and the protectionists who now (many of them sincerely, no doubt) "hag themselves with apparitions," will rejoice with the rest of the country at the lifting of the old nightmare.

Impudent Cattle Barons.

Cleveland Plain Dealer.

According to Senator Millard, of Nebraska, a plan has been arranged to end the range war in the West over the open Government lands. This plan, it appears, is a simple one. It is merely to confirm the cattle barons in their possession to property stolen from the Government. They have inclosed, without a shadow of right, millions of acres of the public domain and have successfully resisted a somewhat feeble effort to oust them. Colonel John S. Mosby's revelation of the magnitude of the steal attracted the whole country's attention, but he was "hushed up" through the influence of certain Western Senators and the steps which he recommended to bundle out the squatters neck and heels were never taken.

They Want Their Own County.

Fossil Journal.

Representative Newt Burgess has introduced his bill for the creation of Stockman County. It is a meritorious measure, whose passage would afford much-needed relief to the people of Wasco and Crook Counties living in the territory embraced in the bill. Sherman and Wheeler Counties are living examples that the small counties do better than the big ones, and it is hardly fair that the people of the Antelope country should have to leave their own county and travel the entire length of another county in order to reach their county seat.

Progress Great and Wonderful.

Sacramento Bee.

The Portland Oregonian of the 1st inst. was a special number largely devoted to historical reviews of the development of Oregon and the Pacific Northwest generally. This publication was in anticipation of the centennial celebration at Portland in 1905 of the Lewis and Clark exploratory expedition. The progress of Oregon, as shown in these pages, has been great and wonderful. The state has just passed through its banner year of prosperity, and begins 1903 entirely free from debt.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

It is all work and no play in learning the piano.

Mr. Scattering is at present receiving a good many votes at Olympia.

It is a pity that Dr. Lorenz went back home before the Colorado Legislature became dislocated.

Spain's anxiety to interfere in that Morocco fight is probably due to the fact that it is a one-sided affair.

The occulist would soon get rich if he could number among his patrons all the people who are blind to their own faults.

Patti may make another farewell tour. So novel an announcement is almost as unexpected as that of a South American revolution.

Reports of burglaries and hold-ups in the San Francisco newspapers prevent them from doing justice to what is going on at Sacramento.

These Senators who are talking back at Mr. Tillman in the debate over the coal situation have probably had their life insurance cancelled.

There is going to be a hot time in Parliament, the London Mail says, but Parliament is too far away to afford any relief to those shivering folks in the East.

We have the satisfaction of knowing, anyway, that even if all those threatened bills pass at Salem, we will still have the right to use umbrellas when it rains.

The Omaha Bee thinks that Secretary of the Navy Moody has felt it incumbent to get into a runaway accident in order to keep in style with the Administration.

State Senator Hobson declines to tell for whom his final vote will be cast, but we have an idea that the successful candidate will be, in part at least, Hobson's choice.

What has Senator Vest against the University of Missouri that he should send them 990 volumes containing the accumulated speeches of the United States Congress?

Mr. Grip, the Swedish Minister in Washington, has gone to Mexico on a diplomatic errand, and we venture the hope that he will not cause us trouble with our neighboring republic by becoming epidemic down there.

The New York Board of Education has decided that matrimony among the feminine teachers is to be discouraged. They will allow no work in the schools, consequently, that is not the result of strictly maiden efforts.

There is no denying that a town like Portland, Or., has pluck and nerve galore in volunteering to entertain the National Livestock Association after Kansas City has given them a taste of the real thing.—Kansas City Star.

There is no question of Portland's nerve in matters outside of the National Livestock Association, either. We are willing to have the next Democratic National convention meet here.

Mrs. Laura J. Hosier, of Anderson, Ind., has an odd suit on her hands. She gave her brother, George W. Overshiner, a remedy to cure him of the liquor habit. The remedy proved effective. Mr. Overshiner declares that he did not wish to be cured of the drink habit, was not aware that the cure was being administered to him and has sued his sister for $5000 for destroying his thirst.

J. Pierpont Morgan is becoming absent-minded. He says that he doesn't know whether or not he lost a couple of millions in the reorganization of the Louisville & Nashville, and that it is not his habit to charge his mind with such details. Some of these days J. Pierpont will leave his small change in the pockets of his other trousers, and go down town without money enough to buy a new steamship line.

A tall, dark man looking thoughtfully about him at the last White House reception attracted considerable attention. His colleagues in the House recognized the native Hawaiian delegate, Robert William Wilcox. His father was a native of Newport, R. I., but his mother was a pure native of the Island of Maui. Mr. Wilcox has been a leader of his people and was sentenced to death for his effort to restore Queen Liliuokalani. The United States intervened and the sentence was commuted to 35 years' imprisonment at hard labor and $10,000 fine. The sentence was afterward commuted by President Dole.

The figures of the year's output of gold from the South African mines are not yet complete, as December's total is still to be added, but by striking an average it can be found how heavy the loss has been to shareholders in comparison with the two years before the war broke out. In round numbers the year 1898 produced $73,000,000 worth of gold, and the year 1899 about $4,800,000, less the output for the final three months (war breaking out in October), being very small in comparison with the first nine. In 1900 some few mines worked for three months and then all stopped entirely, the output for the year being $6,720,000. The complete closing down lasted 13 months and mining was resumed in May, 1901, but during the 20 months which have since elapsed (including this December, which I have averaged) the output has only reached $31,000,000. Had there been no stoppage the output since the war began would probably have been worth at least $254,000,000, so that the shareholders have had $223,000,000 less gold for the working expenses of their mines and for dividends. This is quite an "extra" to the $1,200,000,000 the war cost in direct payments to British taxpayers.

PLEASANTRIES OF PARAGRAPHERS

"Do you know what I can take for indigestion after dinner, doctor?" "Yes; pie."—Yonkers Statesman.

The Retort Courteous.—"Why are you in mourning?" "Oh! for my sins." "I didn't know that you had lost any."—Life.

Simple Directions.—"Do you have much trouble directing your cooks?" "Oh, no! The depot is only one block down, to the left."—Puck.

Insurance Agent—Now, that you have a wife, don't you think you ought to take out a life policy? Newed—Oh, I guess not. I don't think she is going to prove dangerous.—Chicago Daily News.

A Serious Outlook.—"I see there is talk of increasing the inheritance tax." "Yes," said the rich man's son, "it's getting so a fellow would almost as lief have his father live, don't you know."—Brooklyn Eagle.

Like Father, Like Son.—Mrs. Flicker—Johnny, Margaret says you swear like a pirate. Johnny Flicker—I suppose she must mean dad. Rather tough on him to call him a pirate, ain't it, ma?—Boston Transcript.

Too Timorous Adorer.—"Sir!" she exclaimed haughtily. "You kissed me. Never dare to look at my face again!" Meekly he turned and left the house. "I'm glad I didn't marry that fool," she gasped, between sobs.—New York Sun.

"There are few great actors left," said the man who takes a melancholy view of things. "On the contrary," answered Mr. Stormington Barnes, with a touch of asperity, "great actors are, to my personal knowledge, getting left every season."—Washington Star.