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**PORTLAND, TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 1905.**

**JAPAN CONSIDERS.**

It was pointed out by The Oregonian at the beginning of the present conference that Japan was in no position to demand indemnity for her expenses in the war with Russia, because she was not in position to exact it. Her position of mastery is not at all comparable with that which existed when Napoleon forced Prussia to pay \$200,000,000 in 1807-7, nor when Germany forced France to pay \$1,000,000,000 in 1870-71.

Japan has managed her affairs with wonderful keenness and intelligence throughout—except in this particular matter of demanding heavy money indemnity. She appears at a disadvantage here. She might insist that Russia should surrender Vladivostok, for she has apparent means of enforcing this demand. But she has no means of forcing Russia to pay her an indemnity, large or small. The reason is, she can't strike Russia in any vital part.

Since Japan, therefore, has put forward a claim which she knows she has no power to enforce, she halts—knowing, apparently, she ought not to put up the issue of her indemnity demand for money that she never will get, even if she should destroy Lincolnton's Army and take Vladivostok.

Moreover, renewal of the war would tax Japan's resources to the uttermost, and might exhaust them. These and similar considerations evidently have moved Japan to make the present conference. She has gained much already than the world expected, or expected herself, when she began the war.

**THE RATE OF TAXATION.**

It is understood that the assessed value of Multnomah County this year will be advanced to \$150,000,000. That should reduce the tax rate from \$40, as heretofore, to \$15, or less, upon the thousand dollars. Under the new law, as to state taxes, the new system will not increase Multnomah's proportion; for state taxes are not now levied on the basis of assessed values, which differ greatly in the several counties, but on other principles.

The total sum to be raised by taxation in Multnomah County, under the new and advanced assessment, should not be greatly more than formerly. The danger is that the much larger total valuation and apparently smaller tax rate will induce extravagance and excess, in various ways. But the several departments of our local government, in whose hands the power to make the rates is lodged, ought to be able to check or restrain the tendency in this direction.

In Massachusetts, property is assessed or valued for taxation at close approximation to its actual value. In Boston, therefore, the rate is about \$15 per thousand. In other cities of Massachusetts the rate runs from \$14 to \$20. In Pennsylvania and Illinois a different method has prevailed. Hitherto the total valuation of property for taxation has been much less in Philadelphia and in Chicago than in Boston, though Philadelphia has twice the population, and Chicago more than three times the population, of Boston.

Of course the tax rate, in itself, is never the true measure of taxation. Many other facts are to be considered. There are poll tax and occupation tax, liquor and other license fees, and so on; and above all, variations in the system of valuation; so that the tax rate of one city or locality cannot well be compared with that of another.

If our tax rate can be kept down to about \$15 per thousand there will be no occasion to complain of the advanced rate of values on the Assessor's rolls. But more and more it will be necessary to scrutinize all expenditures, that extravagance or excess which largely increased valuations might seem to invite, may be met at all points. To many it will appear so easy to get all that everybody wants by adding another mill or two to the tax rate. But let us keep it in mind that, following best examples, we ought not to go

above \$15 on a thousand—upon a very full valuation. This to include the state tax, for which provision is now made through a somewhat subtle and rather indirect method, which may be misleading and illusive, if not carefully and closely observed.

**STARTING OUT NORMAL SCHOOLS.**

Weston's Normal School is started out for want of paper from the state, and now the taxpayers of that town face the necessity of establishing a local high school with their own money. Weston's high school hitherto has been a normal school, which the taxpayers of all Oregon have supported. The state has been doing the same for the towns of Monmouth, Drain and Ashland, but the institutions at these places have not succeeded, because sustained by the promise that the Legislature will pay their debts.

The Weston Leader has called the attention of the citizens of that town to the fact that the demise of the State Normal School leaves the youth without a high school. It says:

Now that the Normal School has been closed at Weston, the necessity of maintaining a larger and better public school appeals to all. A meeting will be held at the schoolhouse September 1, F. M. to decide "whether grades above the eighth grade shall be taught in District No. 19," and will without doubt be largely attended.

The attendance at the public school will be largely increased. The Normal can no longer care for training school pupils, or carry eight-grade graduates forward on their education. It is a fact that the school which can be done to make the school efficient to add two more grades and two more teachers, and to have the school complete of Principal D. L. Gubner, three assistant principals—Miss Nellie M. Stevens, Lillian C. Craig and Alice Barnes.

Thus the taxpayers of Weston are confronted with the necessity of "maintaining a larger and better public school" and with the question "whether grades above the eighth grade shall be taught in District No. 19." It will be seen that the State Normal School has been educating the sons and the daughters of Weston citizens in high school rudiments at the expense of the whole state. Could there be better evidence of the big normal school graft in Oregon, the graft that has thrived not only at Weston, but also at Monmouth, Drain and Ashland, and which would have spread to other towns had not the Legislature been restrained by public call? The grafters would not allow the normal school appropriations to be made alone by their merits, but yoked them up with appropriations for the Insane Asylum, the Penitentiary and the Reform School, expecting that the latter institutions would carry along the sucker normals. But the people called a referendum on the graft and next will pick it apart with the lightning. Continuing the Leader says:

Weston has suffered severely from the national crime resulting in the loss of the Normal—an unexpected blow that has fallen at the brightest period in all its history, and which is still unhealed to the detriment of the students and to Eastern Oregon—but must bear its loss to sustain its reputation as a school town. Nearly every one is agreed upon this point, but the question of ways and means is as yet undecided. This will be discussed at the school meeting September 1, and at a special meeting of the Commercial Association on Monday evening.

If normals in one or two other towns shall be starved out, those towns will have to "beat" themselves the same way. What Oregon needs is one normal school for the state, and it could be economically maintained in connection with the State University.

**FRATERNAL INSURANCE ORDERS.**

The Supreme Council of the Royal Arcanum, one of the old and strong fraternal insurance orders of the United States, meets this week at Olio. The meeting is important because that Nemesis, which relentlessly pursues the friendly orders, has thrust upon the council the old, inevitable riddle: How to meet a growing annual death rate per thousand due to the increasing average age of the membership. Sooner or later the question confronts every co-operative fraternal society, and upon its solution depends either continued prosperity or schism. How real the problem is to the older orders can be gained from one or two facts.

For thirty societies the average death rate per thousand rose from 4.10 in the third year of their existence to 9.5 in the fifteenth year. What, it is doubted and feared, is their fate in the least singular. The case is the same, in a degree not much greater or less, with all the friendly orders. Time necessarily explodes for all of them the fallacy that enough new and young members can be obtained to hold the death rate down to a constant figure. The rate may even be lowered, temporarily, but ultimately a time comes when the ratio of new members to the total membership begins to decrease; the death rate then begins to rise, and nothing can prevent it. From that moment the annual payments of the members must become heavier and heavier unless they have been originally computed to include a sufficient reserve.

Another fact is not without importance in this connection. The average running expenses per capita show a decided tendency to increase with the age of the orders. For twenty-seven leading ones this average mounted in the course of fifteen years from \$14.30 to \$15.70 per cent. The tendency of the doubly increasing burden naturally is that young men turn to newly established societies for their insurance, while often, though by no means always, the membership of the older ones actually declines. Two cases may illustrate this. The first began with a death rate of 12.5. The number of members increased up to a maximum, but with a steadily increasing death rate. And the death rate went on increasing till it reached 33.9 per thousand, while in the meantime the membership had fallen to one-half what it was when the tabulation began. The other case was similar; growing membership, then a decline, but a constantly increasing death rate—from 13.7 to 22.2.

Troubles of this sort among the fraternal orders arise from their paying too little attention to the mathematics of insurance. But experience is teaching them better, just as it did the old line companies. There is record of 82 fraternal insurance organizations. Of these, 75 have disappeared. The annals of fraternal insurance present no such disastrous tale; but, on the other hand, their history is brief. The Oddfellows, the largest secret order in America, has existed here eighty-five years; the Druids, seventy years; but these are not insurance societies.

It was in 1888 that these latter originated in this country, with the Oddfellows at Meadville, Pa. From that year to 1889 there is recorded the failure of sixty-four old line companies and the organization of twenty-nine assessment societies. Insurance based on mortality tables seemed a monstrous

misarrange. The people sought something safer, cheaper and easier to understand. The mutual assessment plan appealed to the plain common sense of the masses as offering exactly what they needed. Between 1889 and 1890 the Modern Woodmen, the Elks and thirty-four other societies were organized. The next decade saw seventy-four, and today there are probably not far from 200 offering insurance on the co-operative plan, and certainly at least 100 with fair success. Some of them have solved the problem of the increasing death rate; the Royal Arcanum has still struggling with it.

There is really but one possible solution, and that is to increase the cost of insurance to every member as his expectation of life decreases. Two ways have been found of doing this, one much better than the other. The step-rate method, as it is called, increases the member's assessment each year, or each five years, or by some other step. It is scientific enough, but as a business policy it has defects. For one thing, a man's power to pay is likely to diminish as he grows old. Under the step-rate system his burden becomes heavier as his strength diminishes. Long life is penalized. The direct effect is to force numerous lapses and to force them at a time of life when reinsurance elsewhere has become out of the question. More than that, the prospect of paying more and more each year for their insurance does not attract young members, who see policyholders in old-line companies obtaining substantial reductions of their premiums, as they grow older, from dividends.

The other and better method for the fraternal order is to fix a "level rate" which shall overpay while a man is young, but only enough to balance what it underpays when he is old. Such a rate builds up a reserve fund in the order and places it on a basis just as secure as that of the old-line companies, while it is free from the discouraging, or even cruel, features of the step-rate.

**SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY.**

It is not recorded in Holy Writ that the founder of Christianity ever ran a restaurant. One would think, therefore, that the conclusions of Bro. A. N. Norton, of Marion, Ind., against the restaurant, must be largely speculative. Still, the Lord never "ran" a newspaper, either, or a church, each of which is vastly more trying to the soul than a restaurant; and yet the Rev. Mr. Sheldon has accurately discovered how Jesus would do both. Possibly Mr. Norton had access to the same sources of knowledge as Mr. Sheldon. Possibly his conclusion that the Lord would use a complete outfit of tin dishes in running a restaurant was based on something far more deeply interfused than mere guesswork. Mr. Norton may have communed with that being "whose dwelling is the light of setting suns." Perhaps he had a vision, in the crimson splendor of the sunset, of a restaurant such as awaits the faithful in the New Jerusalem, whose tables were all set with shining tin plates and tin coffee cups. Not as through a glass darkly, but face to face, he gazed upon the radiant vision.

Or maybe it was revealed to him as the law of meat-eating was to Peter. A sheet came down upon his head, and the light, hidden within in spoon, tin milk pithers and tin sugar bowls, and he heard a voice from heaven saying, "Make a regular tin tabulation of it, Brother Norton." And divinely harmonious was the clatter thereof when they dined. But the Wesleyan preachers were not satisfied. "We have somewhat against them, Brother Norton," they crumbled in sacred phrase. "One thing thou lackest, if Jesus were running this restaurant, and running it for a crowd of preachers, he would set out fried chicken three times a day."

But Mr. Norton thought not. He was trusting in his guests' consciences for his pay, and his guests were preachers. Moreover, chicken was not under the circumstances, he contended, Jesus would have served codfish and dried apple pie. Conductive as those viands are to chastity pensiveness, the members of the Wesleyan conference at Fairview would none of them. They shook the dust off their feet at Mr. Norton's door and receded to the bosoms of the hotel.

Thus dishearteningly ends another great effort for the evangelization of the world. But Mr. Norton should not despair. His work is not lost. He has taught us just how Jesus would run a restaurant. "Set the tables with tinware," so goes the lofty precept, "and serve no fried chicken." The result is in the articles prohibiting poultry in catching this plate hold that has ever been scored by the revenue cutters which have tackled the work, they might as well remain at home.

If Captain Spencer succeeds in arranging a race meeting between his boat and Captain Scott's Telegraph, it is to be hoped that there will be a clause in the articles prohibiting poultry on the result. Spencer has made a hard fight for law and order, and the abolition of gambling on horse races, and it would be painful if some sly speculator should take advantage of the occasion and wager a few kopeks on his steamboat race.

There was an error in the statement of yellow fever mortality at New Orleans in a recent news report. It was reported that the proportion was only eight in one thousand, among those taken with the malady. The actual proportion, during the present visitation, is one in eight. It has been higher heretofore.

It is painful to observe that Captain E. W. Spencer, who broke up the horse races by betting on the speed of horses is so sinful, now offers to bet that he has a steamboat that can beat another man's steamboat. Captain Spencer reminds us of another lot of reformers, now much in evidence in the city government.

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led the engineers into the heart of the Cascades, and a grade eighty miles long, and not exceeding 2 1/2 feet per cent, was discovered. The highest point, of 4400 feet or thereabouts, was led up to by a steady, gradual ascent. The curvature was moderate, and no need for tunnels, and slight use for snowsheds, was found. Along this route the old Oregon Pacific, now known as the Corvallis & Eastern, has been constructed to a point well within the mountains, and in measurable distance of the summit. The advantages claimed for this pass, besides those already mentioned, are its accessibility from the eastern side of the range, in which direction a grade of 1 1/4 per cent, with very light curvature, is shown on the maps of the line.

Albany, in Linn County, eighty-eight miles south of Portland, is the starting point at present for this route. Forty miles south, against the Cascade range, at the head of the Willamette Valley, and near where the McKenzie and the middle and coast forks of the Willamette join their waters. The valley of the McKenzie was carefully examined many years ago. The lower course of the river was quite inviting for many miles. But the higher the engineers got the more broken the country became, until they were brought face to face with difficulties prohibitive to railroad building.

But the middle fork of the Willamette offered another chance. The route north of this led the surveyors out into Eastern Oregon either north or south to the snowshed Three Sisters. By one or other of the streams forming the headwaters of the middle fork, it is thought that a way out, in the neighborhood of Odell or Crescent Lake, may strike the headwaters of the Deschutes River and so reach the easy slopes leading out on to the plain country of Eastern Oregon. It is often stated, but that by a tunnel a considerable saving of elevation may be effected, and that this route may be set on equal terms with that of the Minto Pass above described.

To settle this question and to determine the practicability of this pass is probably the function of the engineering party whose departure from Eugene was referred to in yesterday's dispatches. For south of the pass, in this question, none other has yet been heard of in railroad circles for joining Western with Eastern Oregon.

The Southern Pacific winds its devious way southward from Oregon over a route truly called "scenic," but more inviting to the traveler in search of scenery than to the lover of easy grades and straight railroads. Problems without end have been met in the effort to straighten and improve, and still the maximum of 200 tons is understood to be the best that a very powerful engine can haul over the Sikkiyoo.

If the railroad development of Oregon is to proceed, as it most surely will, with the completion of the east and west divisions of the great, it seems that Nature has very plainly and decisively marked out the way.

Count Romanones, the Spanish Minister of Agriculture, has journeyed from end to end of Andalusia and throughout that historic land has found nothing but desolation and starvation. People are dying for want of the plainest and most inexpensive necessities of life, and yet the coffers of poor, old, degenerate Spain are made to yield up liberal sums in order that the prodigal young King shall not misstep or lag in the primrose path. Much of the suffering in Andalusia is undoubtedly due to a protracted spell of unfavorable climatic conditions, but the money that is wasted by the aristocracy of Spain in keeping up an opera-bouffe form of regal government would, if properly spent, save many lives.

In the findings relative to the Bennington disaster, there is directness and a sobering admiration. We know now, with absolute clearness, what caused the boiler to explode, and the blame has been fixed. It will be no little relief to the country to learn that the Bennington's boiler, after fourteen years' service, were not in bad condition. If examination of other war vessels, ordered by Secretary Bonaparte, shall reveal like soundness, this feeling of relief will be accentuated.

San Francisco friends of Alexander McLean, who is cruising around the North Pacific sealing preserves on a poaching expedition, are said to be fitting out an expedition to warn him of his danger of arrest in case he comes back to the California port. Unless the warning expedition has better success in catching this pirate hold than has ever been scored by the revenue cutters which have tackled the work, they might as well remain at home.

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## OREGON OZONE.

I don't know—but it seems to me. Wealth and religion don't quite go; That is, wealth in stacks and oodles, That runs to automobiles and poodles, And the good old-fashioned creed That helps God's children when in need; Seems to me that they don't go.

Seems that way.

I say.

**Exposition Personals.**

Miss Wealthy Douglas has returned from her vacation at the Lewis and Clark Exposition, at Portland—Ogden City (Utah) Examiner.

Mr. and Mrs. Pate Humble, of Corvallis, returned Monday evening from a visit to the Portland Fair—Stevensville (Mont.) Register.

Mr. Glen Fairley returned from the Portland Fair Friday. Mr. Fairley will leave here for the Fair about the first of next month, at which time a great many Peckites will go—Peck (Idaho) Press.

Robert Lemons, wife and daughter, will leave Sunday afternoon for Portland, Or., to attend the Fair—Carrollton (Mo.) Democrat.

**The New Viceroys.**

How I envy the Earl of Minto! (Though I reckon it is a sin to).

'Tis a fine large job

For a big nabob

That he seems to have gotten into.

Undoubtedly the oldest living American is the Baltimore American, which has just celebrated its 123rd birthday.

George Washington, colored, known as the Father of Centralia, Wash., is dead. He was not related to the Father of His Country.

**"Munkers Murmurs."**

If you want a proposition that will chase away the blues,

Just peruse the "Munkers Murmurs" in the Santiam News.

Oh, this Munkers murmurina is a correspondent

To the date in each particular—he surely fills the bill.

As an artist of the average he's bound to carve his name.

And become a grinning gargoyle on the Parthenon of Fame.

Now he writes of Jimmy Jenkins, who, "in a moment of a pearl,"

In his briefest talk and tuck, goes to "Sunday with his girl."

But, alas, alack for Jimmy! 'twixt the lover and the lip

That he fain would seek the sweetness of, there's many a woful slip;

For, upon the way from Munkers, Jimmy falls into a bog,

And "he reached his destination very much upon the hog!"

Because her husband grates his molars, a Tacoma woman begged the police judge to "punish him as far as the law goes."

In describing the woman a reporter says "her lips close with a snap." Is there any law in the State of Washington that will go so far as to punish a man whose wife's lips close with a snap, merely because he grates his molars? It looks to be an even break.

The New York American tells us that the first corset, which was invented by Catherine de Medici, was called a "corpeuse." Possibly the final "e" was omitted because it was too suggestive.

A recent issue of a San Francisco newspaper contained this advertisement: "Will exchange first-class piano for tombstone." The advertiser evidently wants an instrument that won't make a noise.

**Refreshments.**

There is a lovely little line

On invitations some of them—

That makes our optics beam and shine,

Each one a very diadem;

In script so cutely cut and curved,

It reads: "Refreshments will be served."

I rather think we would not go

To sundry functions were it not

For that refreshment hint, for oh,

It touches quite a tender spot!

Our presence may not be deserved,

And yet—"Refreshments will be served."

Parties, receptions and the sort,

Not all enter as with their charm,

Of sociability, in short.

We view them with profound alarm;

And yet to dare them we are nerve,

By this: "Refreshments will be served."

ROBERTUS LOVE.

## SPOKANE TO THE STORM CELLAR

Bellingham Revelle.

Not a peep nor a chirrup do we hear these days from Spokane as to the necessity of a railroad commission for the adjustment of traffic rates for the especial benefit of the shippers of that political district.

It must have tickled the heart cookies of the state railroad commissioners, and especially excited the ribilities of the Hon. Harry Fairchild, who has been the object of so much unmerited suspicion and abuse, to have witnessed the scamping to cover of the greatly aggravated merchants of the Pacific City, when the board recently appeared there to hold public sessions.

To the invitation that the dolefully advertised grievances of this distressed railroad-ridden town be placed before the state commission for settlement, not a complaint showed up.

Even the Spokane-Man Review refrained from filing a protest against the rate on paper.

Where was the tempestuous Jake Schiller, the rampant Mr. Crane, and their long train of Republican secessionists, who swore eternal destruction to the party unless they were given the very opportunity from which they fled in terror to the storm cellars of Spokane prairie?

What a lovely lot of humbugs these Spokane reformers are. Come to find out, they know better than to have been especially favored by rate cuts against the surrounding communities whose little merchants they would like to swallow in one gulp.

Unless we are greatly mistaken in our calculation, Spokane just now would prefer to have no railroad commission at all.

**Connecticut Farmers Scared.**

Minneapolis Journal.

That Connecticut legislature which has been so well known in this time, is loaded down with large bunches of cotton, and it is estimated that the state is worth \$15,000,000 against "corrupt practices." If this legislature picknicked anywhere, the Connecticut farmers were doubtless shrewd enough to lock their chicken coops.

**Respects to Mr. Stubbs.**

Bend Bulletin.

Mr. Stubbs made a trip over the Columbia Southern Railroad with his special train last Tuesday. That was, of course, for fun. But the fact that Central Oregon is strong enough to stand up to the railroad lords in the eye and tell him we are growing tired of waiting, is having its effect.

## AN OPINION OF THE FAIR.

Cle-Elum (Washington) Echo.

The Lewis and Clark Exposition is now in the zenith of its glory. Thousands of people from all parts of the United States, Canada and even foreign shores are now in or enroute to the Pacific Northwest, ostensibly to see the Exposition, yet more desirous of seeing this, the most wonderful part of Uncle Sam's domain, and every one of them are more than pleased that they are now making or have completed the trip and have seen and now know that the half has not been told about the resources, possibilities, climate and opportunities of the great Northwest.

Never before has such an opportunity been afforded for visiting the Pacific Coast states, and the fact that all transcontinental railroads are crowded to their utmost capacity is a sure sign that everyone