

The Oregonian

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PORTLAND, SATURDAY, DEC. 22, 1906.

NO TRUST, BUT A TRAFFIC. The price of lumber has soared up so near to profits that the market in this country that the Commissioner of Corporations has begun an investigation for the purpose of finding out whether or not there is in existence a lumber trust. It is very doubtful about the Commissioner unearthing any organization that could control the market.

ON THE NEED OF STATE UNIVERSITY. A report of the work that has been done by the University of Oregon in the past two years, together with suggestions of the needs of that institution for which the Legislature at its coming session will be asked to provide by appropriation, has been issued by Judge W. H. C. Egan, dean of the law school.

THE LIBERAL PROGRAMME. The movement for separation between church and state, with secular education as an incidental issue, which is so strong in France, Spain and Italy, has met with an apparent reverse in England.

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abolish the upper house by a declaratory act, providing the nation is with them, and undoubtedly the Ministry meditate some such plan as this.

REASONABLE DOUBT. The justice or injustice of the President's discharge of the negro criminals alleged to have been concerned in the Brownsville shooting has excited wide discussion. Dr. Lyman Abbott, speaking upon this matter the other day, said that, though Mr. Roosevelt had been severely censured for what he did, "the President was still friend of the negro." Such talk is pleasing and undoubtedly true, but it is irrelevant. Of course the President is a friend to the negro. No well-informed person can honestly doubt it.

PORTLAND'S BUILDING BOOM. Portland building permits for the year will show an increase of nearly 40 per cent over those of 1905, a year which broke all previous records. More than 3000 permits were issued during the year, which closes with more buildings under construction than at any former period in the history of the city. The official statistics will show the valuation of the permits issued during the year at nearly \$7,000,000. As has frequently been mentioned in these columns, the actual amount involved in the building boom in Portland is always far in excess of the figures named in the permit, and it is highly probable that the value of the buildings represented by the permits issued in excess of \$10,000,000.

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those of widows and other dependents. There was an unexpended pension balance of \$1,521,000 returned to the Treasury at the close of the last fiscal year. The number of pensioners is still nearly as large as it was ten years ago, and the amount of pensions paid was over \$140,000,000. Twenty years after the close of the Civil War the disbursements for pensions were only \$57,000,000 and the number of pensioners 323,000. These figures show, among other things, that the pension agent has worked overtime in the last twenty years and that marrying veterans to secure pensions has become a settled industry among relatively young women.

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STATE INHERITANCE TAX. Federal Law, if Enacted, Should Not Interfere. New York Tribune. The recess committee of the Massachusetts Legislature, which is revising the taxation system of that state, will, it is understood, recommend an enlargement of the state's inheritance tax plan. Massachusetts has now a collateral inheritance tax of 5 per cent on inheritances over \$500. It is not unlikely that the revised system will provide for direct inheritance taxes. The more recent tax enactments, especially in the Western States, contain both direct and indirect inheritance taxes, and generally in a graduated form. California passed a very thoroughgoing law of the sort last winter. Direct inheritances are taxed at 1 per cent under \$25,000 and over \$4000 (except in case the heir is a widow or minor child, when the minimum is \$10,000), at 1 1/2 per cent between \$25,000 and \$50,000, at 2 per cent between \$50,000 and \$100,000, at 2 1/2 per cent between \$100,000 and \$500,000, and at 3 per cent over \$500,000. Collateral inheritance taxes are graded according to nearness of kin as well as amount, but in the remotest degree the rate rises with the amount of the inheritance. The minimum is 1 per cent. Fifteen per cent is a heavy tax, but it applies only to bequests to strangers or very remote kindred, and then only to the excess of the bequest over \$500,000. California's system is an illustration of what is meant by a graduated inheritance tax on both direct and collateral inheritances.

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WATTSERSON'S POLITICAL CREED. A Lincoln Democrat Crossed on a Jeffersonian Republican. (Extract from a speech to Kentuckians in New York, Dec. 12, 1861.) I come to fetch you a message from God's country, and as the walking lady in Proctor Knott's delightful story declared, "I mean to fulfill me promise to the people of this village at the risk of my life." Don't forget the old folks at home. Don't forget the honest, the homespun sources from which we draw our inspiration and our life. Don't forget Aunt Betsy's Christian preachments, not Cousin Polly's complacencies and wise rusticity; for the buttress and the bell tower of Kentucky's fame, the verdure and the bloom of Kentucky's manhood and womanhood, were, and are, and will ever remain, the holy Bible, the Old Field school, the patriot's call to battle and the Song of the Greenwood Tree.

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COMING CHANGES IN THE SENATE. Veterans of Upper House Must Soon Give Places to Others. Springfield (Mass.) Republican. The recently evidenced weakness of Senator Allison and the certainty that Senator Platt will not be re-elected, should be miserably hanging on his place until his present term expires in 1909—serve as reminders that within the next half dozen years the membership of the Senate must considerably change. It will probably change more than has been usual in a like period. In the first place there are the natural changes which are likely to be caused by old age or death. Senator Pettus is 85, Senator Morgan 82, and it can hardly be many more years before new Senators all for Alabama. Senator Allison is 77, and the serious illness which kept him out of service during the important closing weeks of the last session was by many regarded as a forerunner of the end of his legislative career. Another of the old guard is Senator Frye of Maine, 75, who though just re-elected, is hardly likely to stand for yet another term. May the day when most of these veterans are retired be near, yet come it must sooner or later.

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SPEAKER CANNON—"EVERY CONGRESSMAN WHO IS OPPOSED TO HAVING HIS SALARY INCREASED WILL PLEASE SIGNIFY BY RAISING HIS HAND"

