The Oregonian

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PORTLAND, SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 1907.

SOWING THE WIND.

The New York American presents to its readers a tabulated statement of the taxes due and unpaid which the corporations of the city ought to pay under the franchise tax law which was passed through Mr. Roosevelt's urgent influence when he was Governor of the state. The table, which covers the years from 1900 to 1906, inclusive, shows that the sum of the unpaid taxes is very large. The only imaginable reason why the property of these defiant corporations has not been sold for taxes, as that of an individual would have been, is that they are all enormously wealthy. The law is very considerate toward any corporation which is rich enough to extend "courtesies" to the officials elected to enforce it.

An example chosen at random from this instructive table may not be uninteresting. Thus, Mr. Belmont's Metropolitan Street Railway has not paid its taxes since 1900. For 1901 it owes $407,000; for 1902, $360,000, while its outstanding tax for 1906 is $278,000. Mr. Belmont is one of the leading lights of the Democratic party, and one of the most distinguished opponents of municipal ownership. One can discern an excellent reason why this shrewd and gilded gentleman should be satisfied with things as they are.

The number of corporations which have not paid their taxes for 1906 is fifty-three, according to the American's table. It is these wealthy aggregations which make the heaviest demands upon the Government for favors and protection. They are always making some new and expensive plea for special privileges. They are always getting into trouble with their workmen and calling upon the Government for soldiers to guard their property. Yet they never under any consideration pay a cent of taxes which they can shirk by cunning, intrigue or bribery. These are the corporations which clamor loudest for a weak government, because under a weak government they can continue their depredations unchecked. It is they that decry reform most vociferously, because reform would compel them to bear their just share of the public burdens. It is they that resist most viciously all legislation to protect their employes and the public from mutilation and death, because safety devices would diminish somewhat the extortionate dividends on their watered stock. It is they that run to the Federal Courts for injunctions against every legislative act which looks to the public welfare, as did the gas company when the New York Legislature reduced its exorbitant rates by statute. Grabbing everything in sight and shirking all their obligations to the public, these corporations are heaping up odium against themselves which is certain to break in a storm of ruin unless they mend their ways. The public has long tried to reduce them to obedience to the law by lawful means, and it has conspicuously failed. When the law fails the American public is never permanently at a loss for remedies independent of the law. What form this remedy may take in the case of the rebellious corporations one need not try to predict; but unless they voluntarily cease their defiance, and that soon, there is a reckoning in store that will cancel every debt with interest.

PROSPERITY OF FLOCKMASTERS.

The year 1906 was a record-breaker in all industrial and business lines. As the annual statistics furnished by the larger newspapers of every state show, the year was one of prosperity from Maine to Oregon and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. The flockmasters of the country, and particularly those of the Rocky Mountain region, came in for their full share in the returns of this most prosperous year. The magnitude of this industry is indicated—it can hardly be comprehended—by statistics showing that over 4,000,000 sheep were marketed at Chicago alone, exceeding in number those of the previous year by 75,000 and excelling any previous record. Moreover, the average cost of sheep during the year was 20 cents per head above any previous quotation. In addition to this the wool clip was enormous and the prices high. Altogether the "sheep barons" fared sumptuously at the great banquet spread by prosperity, and they enter the new year with prospects of success equal at least to that of the year just ended.

Incidentally it may be well to suggest that the flockmasters are abundantly able to protect their flocks from incursions of the predatory coyote and other mutton-loving anlagale of the great ranges. In this view repeal of the scalp-bounty laws that are carried on the statute-books of many states is in order, or will be when Legislatures now in session or soon to commence get down to work. The farmer fights at his own expense rust, smut and other subtle enemies that threaten his wheat; the orchardist is compelled to fight the pests that assail his trees and their fruit. Why should not the flockmaster fight the enemies that prey upon his industry and pay the expenses of the campaign out of the substantial profits that accrue to him?

WHY?

Oregon has a Democratic Governor and a Republican Legislature. The Democratic Governor insists on the right to appoint the members of the proposed State Railroad Commission. If we are to have a railroad commission. The Republican Legislature is going to object. Any one with half an eye can see already that the railroad commission scheme is in great danger. It is to be involved at the outset in the furious maelstrom of Oregon politics. The Democratic Governor will not have a commission at all unless he can have his kind of a commission, and the Republican Legislature will have no commission that it cannot name.

It is nonsense to say that under the Teal scheme the State Senate will have a voice in the appointments. It will have a voice only in their possible rejection, and, if they are rejected, it will be at the Senate's peril, for all the Governor will have to do will be to wait until the Legislature adjourns and reappoint his men. That is just what he will do, following the illustrious precedent of the President of the United States, who never consults the United States about any appointments and is not disturbed by an occasional rejection. Customs Collector Crum, at Charleston, S. C., was rejected two or three times only to be reappointed by the President. The only result of the great fight on Crum was to defer the beginning of his official term, and he is today enjoying the emoluments and privileges of the Collectorship at Charleston under appointment by the President and confirmation by the Senate.

Why this tremendous insistence at the beginning of the railroad commission fight that it shall be appointed by the Governor? Is the Governor of Oregon the only authority qualified to select competent members of a railroad or any other commission? Why wouldn't a commission elected by the Legislature, or elected by the people, or named by a state board consisting of the Governor, Secretary of State and State Treasurer, who name many state commissions, be as efficient as any other? Why?

FREDERIC HASKIN'S LETTERS.

With this issue The Oregonian begins a daily service of letters by Frederic J. Haskin, a well-equipped, versatile, vigorous writer who knows the United States like a book and lays hold of topics that he knows will entertain as well as instruct the busy reader in these, the busiest of all times. As before announced, the live subjects he takes up afford such variety that interest in them cannot flag.

Mr. Haskin is not an essayist; neither is he a philosopher, but a young man of abundant vitality, who believes that America will rule the world. Facts are his chief stock in trade, and he presents them attractively. He comments, too, but nearly always in epigrams. His optimism is in sharp contrast with writers who think and try to make folk believe the country is going to the bad.

This is not to say that Mr. Haskin finds nothing to criticise, but he doesn't despair. He is convinced that any normal young man or woman can succeed in America by industry and thrift. By indirection he appeals to young people to do their best, and points out the never-failing reward. All the while he entertains them.

The Oregonian commends Mr. Haskin's letters on account of their newness, their varied interest and their hopeful spirit. We believe the Pacific Northwest will relish them in connection with the daily chronicle of the world's news so fully presented every morning.

IS THE VALLEY ASLEEP?

Want of enterprise is the charge that has often been made against the Willamette Valley. The indictments have been presented time after time, first upon one specification and then upon another. Upon one of these indictments a trial has been had and the verdict is guilty. Secretary E. R. Lake, of the State Horticultural Society, voiced the opinion of the popular jury when he condemned the apple-growers of the Willamette Valley for their failure to come to the annual meeting with a suitable exhibit of their product. Lack of enterprise is the charge made and proven against Willamette Valley apple-growers, not as individuals, but as a body. There were a few growers who made the showing that was expected of them, but the Valley growers as a whole made a most humiliating failure.

Neither Professor Lake nor the people in general has anything to say against Willamette Valley apples. The Hood River people have long asserted to season and out of season that Willamette Valley apples are inferior to their own product. This assertion has been met by vehement denial and the counter assertion that the Valley can and does raise "just as good" apples as any region on earth. Against the charge made The Oregonian and other newspapers defended the Willamette Valley. The defense had been so vigorously waged that the case had been almost won for the Valley. Now, however, when it came to a matter of proof, as well as denials, the Willamette Valley growers fell down and fell hard.

The Oregonian still believes, and Professor Lake believes, that the proof could be had, but through the lack of enterprise on the part of growers it was not brought forth and the case goes practically by default in favor of Hood River. Instead of all making an effort to re-establish and sustain the Willamette Valley, each hung back to let the others do the work with the result that it has not been done. So far as the world knows, or, from present indications, is likely to know, the Willamette Valley is not an apple-growing section worth mentioning. The Valley is apparently indulging in a Rip Van Winkle sleep, and were it not a part of our own beloved Oregon we would be tempted to say, don't disturb its slumbers.

But such must not be the accepted policy. Neither the Willamette Valley nor any other section of the state must be permitted to miss its opportunities. What the Valley most needs is not a revival of apple-growing, nor an increase of manufactures, nor the building of electric lines. It needs, first of all, the development of an enterprising spirit, an advertising spirit, which will not let the people rest until the whole world knows what that part of Oregon has done and can do.

A MILLSTONE ABOUT HIS NECK.

The Chicago Tribune has given its readers a riddle to solve. It is proposed in the form of three questions: "Which would you rather have been born, rich or poor? Which would you prefer for your baby if you had the choice? Does it help or hinder a child in the race of life to be born poor?" In stating the terms of this triple riddle we have ventured to modify somewhat the language of our metropolitan contemporary, though, we trust, not the meaning. The subject offers such attractions to the reflective mind that we cannot refrain from discussing it a little ourselves; but before setting out to sail the inviting sea we must remark that the whole matter is really comprised in the single query whether it is better for a child to be born rich or poor.

The argument will flow more smoothly if we decide at the outset what we mean by the word "poor." If we take it to mean the condition of those children who are born in the slums in dire want of food, clothes and air to breathe, smitten with disease before they come into the world and morally blighted before they learn to speak, the question does not admit of discussion. To be thus born is to be born as one of the damned. The child who enters the world through the gateway of the slums might well imagine some jeering fiend to have ushered him into the inferno and to have launched him upon his career with the precept, "Abandon hope." For the slum-born child there is no hope. He is foredoomed to perdition of body and soul, and if by chance and the unconquerable energy of his manhood one of them does sometimes overcome his fate and rise to better things, his achievement is a miracle that proves the rule. The word "poor" must not mean for us the soul-destroying poverty of the slums if we are to concede two sides to the Tribune's question.

Possibly one might go a little farther without serious danger of error. There are degrees of indigence less ruinous than that of the slums, which nevertheless conspire to blight the soul and degrade the body of a child. It is a distinct disadvantage to him to be born of parents who are obliged to toil so long and hard for a living that they have no time to father and mother him. By "fathering" a child we mean that divine companionship, nurture and governance by virtue of which the male parent may possess his sons and daughters of the high teachings of experience, the stern calls of duty and the obligations of honor. Sad is the loss to a child whose father seeks his home at night outworn with deadly toil; for whom there can be no morning hymn to the Almighty because of the imperious mandate to rush to his labor. Woe to the boy who never saw his father at play. Woe to the nation whose children's fathers have ceased to play with them. Why have the poor forgotten God? Because they have neither time nor strength left from their toil to remember him.

By "mothering" a child we mean the gathering at her knee at bedtime to learn the magic lore of fairyland, to hear of the love that makes the world beautiful and will some day bind all men in one great brotherhood. To mother a child is to fill his life with sweet and gentle suggestion, to teach him the law of kindness and the beauty of obedience. Just as the father sets his feet in the path of duty, so the mother shows him the golden landscapes of love through which duty leads him. What time for all this is there in the homes of the poor who live by daily toil? What strength is there for it? How can a woman mother her children who spends the night laboring in a factory? How can a child be mothered who has become a bond slave to the pitiless industrial mill? Can there be a doubt that to a child who has missed these things the loss is infinite? Is it rational to conceive that it can be an advantage to any one to be born with the millstone of poverty about his neck and his face forever held to the grindstone of toil?

It is well to talk about the nobility of labor. Labor is noble so long as it conduces to the bodily and spiritual growth of the man who labors; but when it dwarfs him, when it puts out the light of his spirit, wastes his muscles and distorts the bones of his limbs, where is the nobility of it? Such labor is a curse, precisely as the Bible stamps it. And to be born to the necessity of such labor is also a curse. Poverty of this kind, therefore, we must admit, is no blessing to a child. But there is also a degree of riches which acts much in the same way. The woman whose wealth makes her a society leader knows quite as little of her children as the poor factory slave. So far as the welfare of the child is concerned, it matters not whether the mother passes the night toiling in a mill or smiling artificial smiles in the perfumed bowers of fashion. In either case it suffers lethal deprivation. If we need a law to stop night work for the women of poverty, we need one just as badly to stop night dissipation for the women of wealth. One cannot imagine either that it is a great advantage to a baby to have such a man as Mr. Corey for a father. All his wealth would not compensate for the degenerate inheritance, bodily and spiritual, which he transmits. The less companionship of such a father a boy has the better for him. What could he teach a son of the great virtues and divine sacrifices which have made men immortal and redeemed the nations?

What the child needs is a normal childhood. It needs a mother who has time to love and a father who has time and strength to rule. We set Mary, the mother of Jesus, on high in heaven because she bore the redeemer in her bosom; but the mothers of the men whom he redeemed we harness to our machines, while the children for whom he died are marshaled by the million into perdition. We render unto God our holiest reverence by the name of Father, while out of the men whom he calls his sons we grind the fatherhood by deadly toil. It is idle for society to praise the family and laud its virtues so long as we deny to the greater number of families the means to fulfill themselves. That child is most fortunate who is born in a family where there is enough, and no more; who has a womanly mother and a stern but kindly father; and who passes his youth in healthful play and strict obedience. That child is most to be envied who thinks his father the greatest man in the world and his mother the best woman, and never in after years finds reason to change his mind.

OUR AMERICAN ARISTOCRACY.

In the daily bulletin regarding his movements and intentions, Mr. W. E. Corey yesterday announced that he will not marry during his present European trip. This is interesting, for our little world on this side of the Atlantic has become deeply absorbed in watching the course of this vulgar steel king and his chorus lady. And yet we never took any particular interest in Mr. Corey before he was drenched in the golden shower which our protective tariff poured over the steel barons. Riches throw out a peculiar glamour which effects quite a transformation in very common clay, and as a nation we perhaps render a good deal of homage where reproach would be more appropriate. But it seems to be a necessity that we have something to worship in lieu of a mildewed aristocracy such as bends the knee among the foreigners.

We are inclined to make light of the British, who "dearly love a lord," and yet the breathless anxiety with which we seek the news and gossip regarding our vulgar rich, as well as the other kind—if there be any—is perhaps fully as grotesque and unaccountable as is the conduct of our foreign cousins. "Like all other nations," says Mark Twain in his autobiography, "we worship money and the possessors of it—they being our aristocracy; and we have to have one." There is perhaps more truth in this statement than in some of those made by Huckleberry Finn or Tom Sawyer, for it must be remembered that the age of our country —or, to be more accurate, the youthfulness of our country—has barred us from the possession of a home-grown aristocracy, such as is worshiped in the Old World. More than a century ago England was in possession of an aristocracy which even then was so old, mildewed and revered that it had made menials and lickspittles out of millions of common people.

We could not "dearly love a lord" at that time, because our lords were grubbing stumps, fighting Indians or exchanging beads and booze for buckskin moccasins, venison, dried fish and other commodities which the female members of the "first families" of America had prepared. Perhaps we are not to blame that we have not the real thing in ancient lineage, which is said to be necessary in building up a simon-pure aristocracy of the English brand. It must be remembered that whenever our "first families" of the present day trace their lineage back very far they are in continued danger of a surprise. The coat of arms which emblazons the royal escutcheons of Europe generally is illustrative of some great event which gave the founders of the family their start in life. In our country the back trail of some of our first families would lead into a retail whisky store, or something worse, which probably had proved the foundation for the wealth which made our modern aristocracy. Other "family trees," if examined too closely, would perhaps disclose some of the family dangling from a limb with a noose around the neck.

Such cases—and they are frequent—show the difficulty of getting up much of an idol of royalty in this country until more of the oldest inhabitants die off or the local histories throughout the country are revised. A whisky bottle dormant and a red Indian rampant would make a lively coat of arms, and it would be full of significance in the case of some of our vulgar rich; but it is not to be considered. In fact, we are too young to indulge in the worship of any kind of aristocracy except that which has the credentials in negotiable securities. The English "dearly love a lord" and the Americans dearly love a dollar—providing it has multiplied with sufficient rapidity. For that reason the former will continue to exhibit the greatest interest in the title-bearers who are supposed to give tone to the country, while we will continue to insist on the fullest news of the movements of Senator Got-Rocks, Mrs. New-Rich and all of the rest of the aristocracy which in these prosperous times is sprouting more rapidly than pollywogs in a tepid pond in June weather.

NEW HOMES IN CANADA.

The encouragement that has been given to the occupation and development of the great prairie region of Canada beyond Winnipeg by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the immigration department of the government at Ottawa has resulted in an astonishing development of the wide area that pays tribute in traffic to the railway and in taxes to the government. The figures in which this growth is recorded furnish indisputable evidence that it is of a permanent and most substantial and progressive type.

Taking stock of its year's work, the immigration bureau at Ottawa finds the results very satisfactory. The inventory shows that during the season of 1905-6 a total of 189,000 immigrants arrived in the Dominion, an increase of 43,000 over the number the preceding year—a substantial gain of husky agricultural laborers from the Scandinavian States, Great Britain and the United States, a very large per cent of whom, with their families, were immediately located on the abounding wheat lands beyond Winnipeg.

The harvest laborers carried into the province by the Canadian Pacific during the season of 1906 numbered 22,850, an increase of 6000 over the number who went in for the prairie harvest of 1905. Of these laborers, the two forces that combine to encourage immigration to Canada, viz., the Canadian Pacific Railway and the government at Ottawa, count on 40 per cent remaining to make their homes in the prairie provinces, and that within the next two or three years a large proportion of them will have become homesteaders upon quarter sections of government land or settlers upon land purchased from the railway companies. This expectation is fortified by the fact that 50,000 homesteaders went into Western Canada during the twelve months ending September 30, 1906, and entered 12,500 square miles of farm land.

The climate, soil and marketing facilities of this prairie land of Western Canada are similar to the conditions that prevail in the Dakotas. Yet the immigration agents of Canada have, by adroit management, drawn many settlers north across the American border in the interest of Canadian development. This is perfectly legitimate, it being to the interest of the Canadians to get these people if they can, and that of the American Government to keep them if it can. In the latter interest it will be well to heed the plea recently made by Dakota homesteaders, who are suffering bitterly with the cold because of the prevailing fuel famine, to be allowed to leave their holdings until Spring, and with their families seek some more sheltered place. Of the fuel situation on the prairies of Western Canada nothing has been said, but it is reasonable to suppose that the Canadian Pacific has made provision against a coal famine that would either drive out or exterminate the settlers that the company has been at such pains to bring in and locate.

The tactics of the thugs who attacked, beat into insensibility and robbed a Chinaman of the small savings of his industry in his room on top of an abandoned water tower at Prettyman's Station very closely resemble those of the brutal assailants of Dr. Johnson. Had they thrown the insensible victim from the tower, the similarity would have been complete. This they probably would have done had conditions leading to their own immediate safety favored the act. Quite naturally the murderers of Dr. Johnson have changed their base of operations. That they have gone out of business is not to be supposed. Neither is it probable that they have left the city. What is more probable, then, than that they reappeared at Mount Tabor and made a defenseless Chinaman in his lonely abode a victim of their desperate and brutal quest of unearned spoil? It may be hoped that Non Tung will be able to give an accurate description of the thugs who assailed him and identify them promptly in case they are brought before him—a danger that they neglected to obviate by throwing his senseless form from his room in the water tower.

Mr. Harriman appears now in the role of philanthropist. He is going to pay $32,500 for the use of enough freight-cars to relieve the coal famine in Kansas and Nebraska. Through whose fault but Harriman's came this woeful lack of fuel? Is it a noteworthy favor for a corporation that has grown so rich that it cannot find investment for its surplus to expend a trifling sum in order to correct a sin of omission? The people of these great states for more than a generation have paid their industry to swell the Union Pacific's revenue. They are not mendicants. They are willing and able to pay the top price for coal and full freight rates, but they want the coal. The very least Harriman can do is to haul it. The present expenditure of a few thousand won't be missed out of the next 10 per cent dividend.

Even Emperor William admits that something may possibly be learned from the Japanese in training, strategy and other matters pertaining to military efficiency. Four officers of the general staff of the German army, having made special preparation for the service, including a study of the Japanese language, will go to Japan and devote two years to a careful study of the methods by which the soldiers of the Mikado keep themselves in such splendid fighting trim, afield and in camp. The detail of officers for this service is especially complimentary, since the Japanese army received its modern training from German officers and the study ordered is an admission that the pupil has outstripped its tutor upon some important points in military science.

The extension of library privileges to the growing community of Sellwood, under the auspices of the Portland Library Association, is commendable. The city suburbs, not less than the country districts, need library facilities for the entertainment and instruction of the restless, eager element that must and will find entertainment somewhere during the long Winter evenings. The people of Sellwood have made valiant effort to help themselves in this line, and the Library Association has come to their aid at a time when it seemed that their unaided effort must fail. The value of the movement is evident and the timely assistance rendered is greatly appreciated.

The desperadoes bent on robbery and murder who are working this city at present seem to go in pairs and trios. They are doubtless prepared to resist arrest after the manner of the reckless and determined of their kind. Hence the officer who gets the drop on them will need to be handy with his gun or legs.

Estimates, made at the time of her death, of the value of the late Amanda Reed's Portland real estate need revision. Nearly all of it has doubled—not on paper, but the cash it will bring in open market. The object of her benefaction has not suffered financially by the delay consequent on litigation.

Just or unjust, enough publicity has been given to the manner of Senator Guggenheim's election to annul any genuine effort he had in mind for his country's service.

Americans will have no sympathy to waste on the German insurance companies whose earthquake clause defense failed in the courts of the Fatherland.

Portland's side hills afforded youth the rare sport of coasting yesterday. Happy was the coincidence of the first snowfall and the closed schoolhouse.

Existing fuel conditions in Portland present no terrors to the provident man who filled his basement with slabwood and coal last Summer.

Never was an Oregon Legislature watched so vigilantly as the one which convenes tomorrow will be scrutinized by the plain people.

Senator Guggenheim, of Colorado, has been classified. Still he will doubtless be permitted to second a motion to adjourn.

Last week's weather had no chilling effect on business, as witness the 38 per cent increase in bank clearances.

For the next forty days Salem will enjoy her biennial season of high-tide prosperity.

To the Legislature of Oregon: Remember the referendum; also the initiative.

Good morning! Will this little breath of cold keep you from church?

COMMENT ON CURRENT STATE TOPICS

Free Passes to State and County Officials—Closing Saloons by Keeping Them Open—Indirect State Revenues and Direct State Expenses—Clerks and Spectators at Legislative Sessions.

COMPULSORY issuance of passes to state and county officers, as proposed by some, is likely to be attended by questions that have not yet been discussed. To consider the subject in its general features is easier than solving some of the problems presented when it is studied in its details. What constitutes a state or county officer is, for example, an important question. If the proposed law be limited in its application to officers elected by the people, it will fall short of its purposes. Among the officers who do much traveling in the public service are the Master Fish Warden, the Adjutant-General, the State Land Agent, members of the State Fair Board, and other officers who are appointive. But if these are included in the list to whom free passes are to be extended, it is difficult to see where the line will be drawn. If all appointive officers are also included, the list would extend to superintendents of all state institutions, employes of all the departments, deputies and assistants, who may do some traveling for the purpose of attending to public duties, but whose use of passes would be chiefly for private purposes. To enact a law general in its terms would leave doubt as to its application; to make it specific as to the persons to whom it will apply will take considerable time in studying the methods of transacting public business.

Then there is another question of public interest involved. The proposed law contemplates that the pass list shall be limited to those who hold official positions. Then a man who is in office will have the advantage of free transportation in making a campaign for re-election, while an outsider who desires to contest for his position must pay his fare. That would be an immense advantage to those who are in, especially under the direct primary system, which necessitates considerable traveling in making a campaign. It is understood that in the past the railroads have been very liberal in issuance of passes to candidates and that they have not discriminated but have issued to all candidates for an office if to any. One of the objections that has been made to the direct primary law is that it gives a great advantage to an incumbent, who will have a solid support while the opposition will be divided among new aspirants for the place. This advantage would be greatly increased if the incumbent had the privilege of free transportation while his opponents had to pay their fares.

* * *

EVERY town that ever tried to enforce a closing period for saloons, whether for certain time at night or on Sundays, has had difficulty in securing observance of the law. Even in towns where such a regulation is supposed to be in force, back doors usually afford a means of entrance though the front door be locked and blockaded. Then if a raid occurs and men are found in the saloon, the explanation is usually made that the proprietors were merely looking after private business or chatting with friends and were not open for business. Salem has tried something new in closing laws and the result of the experiment may be of value. An ordinance that has just gone into effect in that city provides that all saloons shall close at midnight and stay closed, the ordinance requires that during the closed period all curtains, screens and other obstructions to the view must be removed so that the interior of the saloon may be seen from the street. This will permit all persons to see whether the law is being observed or not. The same requirement applies to Sunday closing. Salem papers quote liquor dealers as saying that they will obey the law for a while, but that after a time people will forget about it and they can return to former methods.

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FREQUENT repetition of the assertion in market reports that the great bulk of the Oregon potato crop is of poor quality and therefore does not bring a good price recalls the effort of an Oregon commission house last year to induce farmers to import fancy seed from Wisconsin. In order to encourage the importation of the seed the firm offered to take orders for all who wished to buy, forward the orders when a carload had been subscribed for, and let the growers have the potatoes at actual cost. It was estimated that the cost would be $2 a bushel. After sending out several hundred circulars and taking the matter up personally with many farmers, the orders secured aggregated only a few bushels. Rather than pay the price named the farmers used seed of their own growing and probably used the culls, consisting of small, knobby and otherwise imperfect potatoes. They planted the seed on ground that had been planted to the same kind of seed year after year. This practice, it is said, accounts for the deterioration of the potato product. The plan of the commission house mentioned was not that the farmers should import all their seed but that they should each import a few bushels, plant these upon well-prepared soil and raise enough for their own seed for the following year, thus securing an abundance of good seed at comparatively small cost and greatly enhancing the value of their crop. Perhaps a change of methods in potato growing will not be experienced until the subject receives as much public attention as the reform in apple growing has had.

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ENACTMENT of laws for the raising of state revenue from indirect sources has for one of its objects the divorcement of the state and county systems of raising revenue, so that there will no longer be any temptation to reduce assessed valuations. This end is already accomplished by the law establishing fixed ratios according to which the counties are required to pay their state taxes, but since there has always been doubt as to the validity of this law it is desired that as soon as possible the state secure practically all its revenue from indirect sources. The attainment of that end would entirely remove danger of renewed reduction of assessments to ridiculous figures. But unless there should be a rapid increase in the amount of revenue from indirect sources or a denial of many of the demands that are being made for appropriations from the state treasury, the expenses of the state will increase more rapidly than the indirect revenue, so that the state will be getting farther away from the coveted goal rather than nearer. For example, if a law be passed which will add $150,000 a year to the revenue from indirect sources, but other laws be passed which will increase the state expenditures $150,000, the state will be farther than ever from elimination of a direct tax on property.

One of the states which now derives all its state revenue from indirect sources has been aided in that change by shifting much of the state expense upon the counties. Wisconsin requires the counties to pay a very large part of the expense of maintaining their insane. The same plan could be followed here in Oregon, if desired, and that such a plan might be deemed desirable is indicated by the recommendation that counties be charged with the expense of maintaining their feeble-minded in the institution which it is now proposed shall be established. The Board of Public Building Commissioners has made this recommendation. Tending in the same direction would be an amendment which would require the counties to pay the Circuit Judges and District Attorneys. Other changes of similar nature might be made, not increasing the burden of taxation upon the people, but shifting it from the state taxing system to the county and thus aiding the movement to put the state upon an indirect revenue basis. It has been remarked by those in a position to observe that there is danger of the state increasing its expenses faster than its indirect revenue, and thus failing in one of the policies that has received wide popular approval.

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WITH organization of the Legislature apparently settled, the members of the two houses began during the past week to pay some attention to the matter of selecting subordinate officers and clerks. Though the demand for clerkships is not so great in the matter of numbers as it was during the hard times, the pressure is just as strong, for those who wish to go to Salem for 40 days are just as anxious as ever. The ordinary clerkship pays but $3 a day, and in these times when most industrious people have good employment, there are not so many as formerly who are willing to quit their regular work for a short season of employment at the Capital. But to those who have no employment, the $3 a day looks as big as it ever did. And there will be plenty of applicants for all the positions that are to be filled. Every member has a friend who wants a place.

The general reference to "$3 a day" does not mean in legislative employment what it does in ordinary occupations. The legislative clerk draws pay for 40 days, including Saturdays and Sundays, upon which there is no work done. Working five days in a week, the clerk draws pay for seven, and then some. It is the invariable rule to allow "overtime." Toward the end of the session there is always a rush of work and the clerks must put in a few hours work in the evenings. This overtime is carefully credited and paid for, notwithstanding the clerk may have been idle nine-tenths of the time earlier in the session. It is related that in some instances the committee appointed to report the amount due to clerks has urged members of the Legislature to put in claim for "overtime" for their clerks, though the members protested that the clerks did not work after the regular hours. Desiring to allow their own friends extra pay, the members of the committee wanted to enlist other members in the support of the additional allowance. These features of legislative employment account in some degree for the eagerness of many young people to secure clerkships, notwithstanding the cost of living at the Capital during a session amounts to at least $1.50 a day, and usually more. Some of the clerks do not begin their work until several days after the session opens, but draw pay from the first. During the first two or three weeks there is little to be done and the clerks have practically a vacation from their usual occupation at home. Without these incidents of clerkship life there would be little attraction in the compensation paid.

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FROM the point of view of the spectator in the gallery, the present legislative session will be more interesting than previous sessions have been. Rather, there will be much less of the tiresome and uninteresting roll call. Heretofore much of the time of the Legislature has been given to the passage of charter bills, and as these are all passed from one reading to another under suspension of the rules, a great deal of time has been spent in taking a vote on the question whether the rules shall be suspended. Scarcely anything could be more monotonous than the oft-repeated calling of the roll with few of the members answering to their names. Yet this formality was necessary. Now there will be no charter bills before the Legislature and there will be more time for the consideration of bills in which there is more general interest and which will invite debate. The country visitor goes to Salem with the idea that the Legislature spends most of its time debating questions of vital importance to the state. He is therefore disappointed if he sits in the gallery half a day and hears nothing but roll calls. It takes a lively discussion to make the Legislature interesting to the gallery.

The Fisher's Boy.

Henry David Thoreau.

My life is like a stroll upon the beach,
As near the ocean's edge as I can go;
My tardy steps its waves sometimes o'erreach,
Sometimes I stay to let them overflow.

My sole employment is, and scrupulous care,
To place my gains beyond the reach of tides—
Each smoother pebble, and each shell more rare,
Which ocean kindly to my hand confides.

I have but few companions on the shore;
They scorn the strand who sail upon the sea;
Yet oft I think the ocean they've sailed o'er
Is deeper known upon the strand to me.

The middle sea contains no crimson dulse;
Its deeper waves cast up no pearls to view;
Along the shore my hand is on its pulse,
And I converse with many a shipwrecked crew.

Her Moods.

Clara Bellinger Green.

A midnight rampant, bloodhound winds
Abroad for prey,
And growling seas that crouch and leap
On ship at bay.

A morning bland, a sea demure,
A blinking sun;
And nature smiles apology
For wreckage done.