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SOME COMPARISONS.

With the summary of finance and commerce sent out from the treasury department corrected to December last, and for which we are indebted to Hon. B. Hermann, there is a diagram showing the relative exports of the United States from 1821 to and including 1896. The diagram shows for one thing that our best foreign customer is the United Kingdom. In 1895 she took nearly 62 per cent of all our exports, and from her we purchased 41 per cent of our imports, Germany coming next with 21 per cent and France with 16 per cent. Germany takes but 14 per cent of exports and France 7 per cent. Is it any wonder, in view of the close commercial relations of the United States and the United Kingdom, two people, with the same language, the same religion, the same literature, and largely the same blood, that all the thinking elements, except the jingo, are desirous of an arbitration treaty that shall bind them closer together?.

Another interesting fact that the diagram shows is that in 1892, the period to which all good citizens love to refer, when the McKinley bill had been in operation just long enough to make its presence felt, our export business with Great Britain exceeded that of any year in the country's history, before or since, being a little over $490,000,000. The highest previous notch was reached in 1881 with about $475,000,000, of exports. It is also noticeable that our imports reached a low ebb that year, 1892, being only about $150,000,000, leaving a balance in our favor against the Britisher of $340,000,000. When a merchant sells more than he buys he succeeds. So with a nation. The policy that enables us to sell more than we buy will be the policy to make the nation prosperous. In 1850, in our trade relations with the United Kingdom, our imports exceeded the exports by about $8,000,000. The balance of trade was against us, and but for the immense gold yield of California and the Crimean war creating a market for our surplus, the hard times of 1857 would have struck the country sooner.

The tariff on wool is again agitating congress. The wool clip is one of Oregon's chief export products and our people are intensely interested in the discussion. The contention once made, after Mr. Cleveland, through his emissary, John P. Irish, took the democratic party of this state by the neck and made it face about on the wool question, was that free wool, by admitting wools of different texture, would so stimulate the manufacture of woolen goods as to increase the demand for, and consequently enhance the price of, domestic wool. That was a very beautiful theory, but three years of trial has exploded it; the price of wool fell to the level of the Australian article and the wool industry of Oregon languisheth.

It seems that the announcement that Judge Northup was appointed a member of the board of trustees of the Soldiers' Home by the governor was a little premature. There is a little comment to the effect that while the appointees are all that could be desired in point of qualification and fitness, it is a little strange that two members should be chosen from Douglas county, two from Marion and one from Baker, while the county of Multnomah, containing a third of the people of the state should be overlooked entirely.

The end appears to be in sight, as far as the Cuban struggle is concerned. There is little doubt but that Spain desires to get out on the best possible terms and these seem to be the selling of the island to the people. Cuba will have a debt to pay, but "Cuba libre" will be accomplished.

Memaloose island, in the Columbia river, below The Dalles, has been set apart by the government as a burial place for the Warm Springs Indians. It has been used for that purpose for a long period, but the high water of 1894 swept away the "dead houses."

Theodore Durrant will exhaust every resource known to the law before he gives up his fight for life. His next move will be a petition for a rehearing before the supreme court.

The silver republicans, it is said, and the report, if true, is greatly to their credit, will not stand in the way of the passage of the Dingley bill.

THE EUROPEAN CHESSBOARD.

The Cretan affair is none of our funeral. We have no territory in Europe that we are in danger of losing, and there is none that we wish to acquire. If the doughty Greek and the "unspeakable Turk" desire to engage in a little unpleasantness it is their affair. It would seem to the casual observer from a distance that the great powers are taking more interest than the circumstances warrant, and their blockade of the Cretan ports seems to us an unwarranted use of superior force. Of course it is intended by this to checkmate some other move that it is feared Russia may make. The Romanoffs desire to extend their empire southward and this would disturb the European balance of power. The Eurpean policy seems to be that to be prepared for war is the best way to preserve peace. Each country watches the other closely, and the fulfillment of the prophecy made nearly a century ago, that in a hundred years Europe would be either Cossack or republican, may be nearer fulfillment than is generally supposed. The Cretan affair may precipitate a struggle that shall overturn governments and work radical changes in the map of Europe. A hundred years ago the danger from Cossack sources was observed by Napoleon, who set out to combat it. But the European of today is a different individual from his ancestors of the preceding century, and Europe will not now be Cossack. Republican it may be, eventually will be, but Cossack, never. In the meantime, we must hold ourselves in readiness, when the struggle comes, not to fight, for we shall not be called upon to do that, but to supply the contending forces with bread.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." As long as the forces of anarchy and public dishonesty are determined to keep up their organizations for a further assault on the established institutions of American civilization, which the experience of the years have proven the best, it behooves the friends of good government to be on the alert to meet and checkmate every move of the forces that were routed, horse, foot and dragoons in the battle of last November. New ideas of government that give promises of improved conditions should always be received kindly and considered honestly, but the chief issues now being exploited have long ago been weighed in the balances and found wanting. We don't want, as a people, to take a step backward. It takes too long to recover; nor to take a step in the dark; the issues are so tremendous that we must be sure of the ground. After all, "truth, and truth alone, is still the light to guide the nations groping on their way."

Governor Lord says in effect to the county judges in the matter of the payment of state taxes, that it is none of their business, but that the whole matter rests with the law and the state and county treasurers. Perhaps the governor is right, but he does not have to go away from the capitol building to find officials who are assuming to sit in judgment on matters that do not concern them. We agree with the governor that the law should be administered as it is written and interpreted by the state's attorney and the courts. If the law is obnoxious, the best way to bring about repeal, is by enforcement.

Washington has just had a session of a "reform" legislature. It is safe to say that the present frame of mind of the people of that state is such that if an election was to be held today the state would go as strongly against populism as it went for it last fall. It may soon be in order to inquire "What is the matter with Washington?" instead of "What is the matter with Kansas?" But Washington did not permit the fever to strike in quite as deep as Kansas and therefore may be cured sooner.

The appointment of Hon. Binger Hermann as commissioner of the general land office will give general satisfaction to the people of Oregon, especially the republicans. Having been a member of the committee on public lands for several years he has acquired a knowledge of Uncle Sam's land business that will be of great value to him in his new field of labor.

The fusion legislature of Washington was rather a thrifty set. After all the protestations about honesty and reform the legislature failed to pass an act prohibiting members from riding on railroads on free passes. It is also safe to assert that every mother's son of them traveled on a pass. If they didn't they are different from their Oregon brethren.

The following sentiment from the Portland Evening Telegram should find a hearty response in every breast: "While waiting for the Dingley tariff to improve the times it might be well for every American citizen to put a shoulder to the wheel and help things along."

Dalzell, one of the brilliant republican leaders in the lower house of congress, hit the mark the other day in the discussion of the rules adopted for considering the new tariff measure, when he said: "The country does not want declamation, it wants action."

The Brooks locomotive works have resumed on full time with increased force. Some people would never see that item of news, but if it had said a man was discharged it would be considered occasion sufficient for caustic criticism of the administration.

In another column will be found a letter from Hon. G. W. Riddle, giving the "other side" of the late "house" question. It is a reply to the letter of "Observer" published on the 11th.

Dr. Driver went to Salem this morning. He thinks Mitchell will be re-elected yet.—Eugene Guard.

NEWS NOTES.

Marine disasters have been numerous of late.

Apples are worth 50 cents each on the Yukon.

Woodburn will hold a city election on April 5, next.

Huron, S. D., had a $75,000 fire Monday morning.

A violent storm with snow swept the middle west yesterday.

Secretary Sherman has been officially notified of the blockade of Crete.

Slight earthquake shocks were felt in Canada and the states adjoining Tuesday.

John Koch, an old resident of Tillamook county, committed suicide last Monday.

Lane county, it is understood, through the action of its county court, will hold back 80 per cent of its state tax.

It is estimated that 40,000 jack rabbits have been slaughtered in the recent drives in Bingham county, Idaho.

The W. C. T. U. wants to suppress kinetoscope exhibitions of the recent prizefight. They will hardly succeed.

Jim and Fitz have met and Fitz has promised Jim that if he concludes to fight again, Jim shall have the first whack.

W. E. Ellsworth, charged at Portland some three years ago with poisoning his wife, has had three trials and is at last acquitted.

The Sumpter Valley railroad, in Baker county, will probably be extended to the Seven Devil's mining district on Snake river, in Idaho.

After 45 years of married life Rebecca and James Cochran are seeking a judicial separation at Oregon City. Rebecca says James is abusive.

In the case between sugar and coffee, coffee was knocked out. Arbuckles wanted to refine sugar as well as roast coffee, but Havemeyer was in the way and is there yet.

A family of six, named Ade, were burned in their residence near Nashville, Tenn., Tuesday night. It is supposed that they were murdered and the house burned over them to conceal the crime.

Dave Campbell, a Portland authority in pugilism, who has himself boxed with Corbett, saw the Carson fight. He says Fitzsimmons won fairly and squarely and could win again just as easily.

There is a panicky feeling at Paris, Texas. The failure of a large firm caused a run on the Farmers and Merchant's bank, of which one of the firm was president, compelling it to close its doors. It is one of the oldest financial institutions in the state.

An act of the Arkansas legislature creates a railroad commission with full power to regulate railroad rates and otherwise supervise the transportation business of the state, but enjoins the commission from doing anything to check railroad building.

As much as 75 per cent of their face value is being advanced upon claims against the state by Salem banks. The claims are not being discounted, but the 75 per cent is merely advanced as a loan, the bank keeping the voucher of the claim as collateral security.

The first rivet was driven the other day in the keel of the battleship Wisconsin at the Union Iron Works, San Francisco. This vessel is one of three big fighters for which the government contracted some time ago. She will be one of the finest battleships afloat, having a capacity of 12,000, but with a draught of only twenty-three feet.

A Terriffic Cyclone.

A terrible cyclone passed over Alabama and Georgia last Monday. The town of Blakely, Georgia, is almost swept out of existence. But a tragedy was enacted at Arlington in the same state. The dispatches say it was about 8 o'clock when the pupils of the Arlington academy began to assemble, and there were about 50 present when Professor Covington, noticing the coming storm, called them in for shelter. On and on came the storm, with a roaring sound, increasing until it lifted two cabins across the way into midair, crushing them into splinters. The sight of this so affrightened the children that they clung piteously to Professor Walker and Professor Covington, who vainly tried to quiet them. A crackling noise was heard, and the shutters and swinging doors were wrenched from their hinges. Then came a twisting and a careening, and the north partition gave way, falling with deadly effect upon the group of children who were clinging to the professors. The doors and windows gone, the storm shrieked through the rocking building, and the little ones, thrown on the floor, were crushed under flying and falling debris. The cries of the wounded and the groans of the dying are described as heartrendering. Eight were killed outright and many injured. Death and destruction is reported from many localities. In one place an entire family of five were killed.

The Governor and the State Taxes.

A Salem dispatch of the 22d says: Governor Lord was asked today for an expression of opinion in the matter of the counties withholding the taxes from the state treasury. The governor said:

"I have not given the matter much attention, and have not carefully examined the provisions of the law with respect to the duties of officers about paying over the taxes to the state, or the consequences of dereliction. Of course, if we had any power or discretion in the matter, we would like to do anything we could to bridge over the hard times, and lighten the burdens of the people, but, you know, officers are but agents of the people, and the law is the measure of their powers and duties. Where the law prescribes what shall be done, and declares the consequences of a failure to do it, there is no discretion in its officers. The only safe and wise course to pursue is to obey the law. It seems to me that the paying of tax money to the state treasurer at the time fixed by law, where the money is in the county treasury, is a matter of much more moment to the county treasurer than to the county judge, whose jurisdiction in the premises is not perceived. I take it, when the county treasurer has tax money in his possession which the law requires him to pay over to the state treasurer, he must do it, or run the risk of the consequences that the law announces for the disregard of his duty. No order of the county court can excuse or avoid the duty which the law imposes upon him. The county judge has no jurisdiction in the matter; nor do the officers of the state have any discretion to postpone the commands of the law, or to connive at its violation." Answering a query as to the purpose of the county judges, the governor added: "The motives of the county judges are laudable; they realize the depressed condition of business, and desire to afford belief to the counties to the extent of their ability. Their object is to find out if there is any way this can be done in the interest of economy, without endangering good government by disregard of law. I doubt if what they wish to do can be accomplished in the way proposed."

THE OTHER SIDE.

Hon Geo. W. Riddle Replies to Observer.

EDITOR PLAINDEALER: I have been repeatedly asked to write an account of the late legislative "fiasco" for publication, but so far have declined to do so, leaving a clear field for those who thought it necessary to explain or apologize for their action. But upon reading a communication in your issue of the 11th inst. signed "Observer" I ask space to notice some of the misrepresentations of your anonymous correspondent, who, from the "ear marks" plainly visible in the communication, was, himself, a member of the so-called "Benson house." The writer has shown great ingenuity in making the "worst appear the better course" by telling half the truth and ignoring the other half and in making some down-right misstatements.

Passing over "Observer's" account of the proceedings up to the organization of the "Benson house" which are in the main correct, Oberver says:

"Having been advised by some of the best lawyers in this state and the United States that a majority could legally organize, on the eleventh day of the session 33 members-elect met." Then follows an account of the organization of the "Benson house". Now as a matter of fact no lawyer in this state gave a written opinion that the legislature could organize and legally do business with less than a constitutional quorum, which in the house is 40 members. No lawyer in this state undertook to say that the constitution of Oregon did not mean what it says, that is, that "two-thirds of each house shall constitute a quorum to do business," yet Senator Mitchell procured a telegram from Senator Hoar of Massachusetts, to the effect that a majority could organize the house, and it would be legal, for the purpose of electing a U. S. senator. On the other hand, Geo H. Williams, C. E. S. Wood, L. B. Cox, M. L. Pipes, Wallace McCammat and other prominent lawyers of Oregon, materially dissented. Under the direction of Senator Mitchell, twenty-eight republicans, one populist (Nosler who was not legaly entitled to his seat) and two democrats, 31 in all, proceeded to organize the Benson house. Observer claims that there were 33 members-elect present, thus including Temporary Speaker Davis and myself neither of whom participated in the proceedings. I, at that time, entered my protest against the attempt to organize the house with less than a constitutional quorum showing that no bill or joint resolution could be presented with less than a majority voting for them and a quorum being present and, although anxiously desiring the legal organization, I declined to participate in the pretended organization that would block the way for any legal and permanent organization. The so-called Benson house was a piece of desperate politics, was conceived, advised and had its existence in the interest of one man's election to the U. S. senate. It was not organized for remedial legislation as claimed. By every act it did and by everything that it did not do was an admission that they had no legal organization. No committees were appointed and no attempt was made to pass a single bill. It was not recognized by the senate. No official communication was sent to the governor, or secretary of state, and they were not recognized by any co-ordinate branch of the state government, neither did they make any attempt to bring in absentees, or have the legality of their organization decided by the courts. They simply sat there like dogs in the manger, and growled and sometimes howled. They could not eat the hay (do business) themselves, or would they join with others to effect organization.

It is but justice to say that many of those who participated in the organization of the Benson house did so with the expectation that it would force a permanent organization. While I agreed with them in a desire for organization, yet I differed with them in the effect it would have. Observer says:

"The Benson men held frequent consultation with the hold outs in an honest attempt to effect a compromise, but the only conditions offered were:

"1st. That the Benson men should agree to not vote for Hon. John H. Mitchell, Hon. Chas. Fulton, or Hon. Sol Hirsch for U. S. senator.

"2d. That Jonathan Bourne should be elected speaker in place of Mr. Benson.

"3d. That the Benson men should agree to pass the initiative and referendum, and such election and registration laws as the hold outs should propose.

"These conditions were refused, and the hold outs would agree to nothing else. When asked if they would enter upon the discharge of their duties if Senator Mitchell be requested to withdraw and should comply with the request, the reply was that they would not unless the other two conditions were conceded."

The above statements are in the main untrue. I had frequent conversations with the members termed "hold outs" and with the Benson men, with a view of effecting a compromise and I never heard a demand made that Jonathan Bonrne should be elected speaker, but the Benson men feared he would be elected and that was one of their excuses. There was no demand that Benson men should agree to vote for the "initiative and referendum" or any other measure. These were mere bugaboos used by the leaders to keep their men in line. In my efforts with the Benson men to effect a compromise I was always met with the declaration of "we have a legal organization now, all they have to do is to come into the Benson house" and so far as I know no compromise was ever offered or suggested from the Benson house.

Now, Mr. Editor, I beg your and your readers' pardon for devoting so much space to the Benson house, but I look upon that organization as the prime factor that prevented a permanent organization. It arrayed the house in two opposing factions, the Benson house and the Davis house. The Benson house would not recede and those who were willing to organize when a quorum could be had in the legal temporary organization, the Davis house, could not accomplish their desire.

Therefore no organization was had and no legislation was possible. "Observer" says "the Benson men contended for a principle." Just what principle he does not say. But I would say, while calling attention to the "mote in your brother's eye" you should remember that there is a "beam in your own."

Upon the senatorial question, there was a proposition made by the republicans who did not participate with the so called joint convention that they would agree to support any representative republican selected by a majority of the republican members except John H. Mitchell, or one selected by him. This might mean Hon. Chas. Fulton and Hon. Sol Hirsch. The latter two men not named. The proposition simply showed a willingness to elect a U. S. senator, if Mitchellism was eliminated from the contest. The proposition was rejected by the Mitchell caucus. Another proposition was made by a Benson man and a Mitchell man to try to organize with the understanding that no senator should be elected but simply for the purpose of legislation. This was jumped upon as something monstrous but in fact was a candid proposition to carry out the pledges for remedial legislation. The rejection of these propositions shows that some of the members were not alone actuated by the consuming desire to carry out their pledges to the people, to lessen their burdens of taxation but the election of one man for senator was ever uppermost in their minds.

Let justice be done.

GEO. W. RIDDLE.

Lime and blue vitriol, for spraying purposes at Marsters'.