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AN ENCOURAGING REPORT

Much encouragement can be found in the weather report secured through the courtesy of Mr. C. C. Covey, superintendent of the Warm Spring Indian Agency, which is published in another column. It shows that during a period of five months, from October 1, 1906, to March 1, 1907, there has been a total precipitation of 7.79 inches, which is greater than that of any preceding year since the records have been kept at the agency. The nearest approach to it was in the winter of 1903-4 when the precipitation amounted to 7.28 inches during the same period, and the rainfall during the past five months has exceeded that by half an inch. In the two preceding years it was slightly over four inches for the same periods, and the result of the deficiency of rainfall in those years was manifest in the crop failures from which this country suffered. On the other hand, the unusual rainfall of the Winter of 1903-4 brought good returns in the harvest of 1904, when the banner crop of this section of country was produced. The conditions are even more favorable this year, as there has been half an inch more rainfall than in that year, up to this time.

Mr. Covey's word of caution about conserving the moisture by frequent cultivation is timely, however. Later rains may fail, and unless the moisture which fell during the Winter season has been conserved for use during the possible drouth season, disaster may still befall the crops this year. A little extra labor by the farmers will insure the benefits of the Winter's abundant rainfall.

RULING IS MODIFIED

The President has modified his recent order requiring an examination of all public land entries by a special agent before final certificate is issued. Homesteads and timber entries may now pass to patent when the entryman has complied with the law and submitted proof thereof, and examination is unnecessary. In the following cases no examination by a special agent is necessary:

1. Final five-year homestead entry hereafter made, where proof is satisfactory and complete.
2. Final certificates and receipts in final five-year homestead proofs heretofore or hereafter made, when proof is satisfactory and complete.
3. Homestead entries committed on ceded inland lands on which annual payments are required.
4. Entries where the claimant's compliance with the law has been established by contest or other regular adverse proceedings.
5. Entries confirmed which may have been confirmed by virtue of any act of Congress.
6. Selections and entries in which no residence or improvement is required by law when land embraced therein is situated in non-mineral localities as shown by records of the geological survey, when the character has been fixed by investigation and classification made in accordance with law.
7. Reissuance of patents because of some clerical error occurring in patents heretofore issued.

8. Military bounty land warrants and other similar warrants when request for proof has been made.

Where timberlands are situated in "mineral localities" referred to in Section 6 there may be some possibility of delay; examination might have to be made.

PAYMENT OF TAXES

The following rules governing the payment of taxes may be of interest at this time:

1. If you pay your taxes on or before March 15, you will be allowed a rebate of 3 per cent.
2. If you pay your taxes between March 15 and up to and including the first Monday in April, there will not be any rebate allowed and neither will there be any penalty or interest added.
3. If your taxes are not paid on or before the 1st Monday in April, they will become delinquent, when there will be added a penalty of 10 per cent and the tax will draw interest at the rate of 12 percent per annum in addition to the penalty.
4. If you pay one half of your taxes on or before the first Monday in April, then the remaining half may run up to and including the first Monday in October following, but if the last half of tax due is not paid by the first Monday of October, it becomes delinquent, and there will be added to such balance a penalty of 10 per cent, and in addition such balance will bear interest at 12 per cent per annum from the first Monday in April until paid.
5. On all personal property taxes, if one-half is not paid on or before the first Monday in April, the law compels the sheriff to levy upon and collect the same after May 1; hence, to prevent a levy upon personal property after May 1, it will be necessary for one-half to be paid as above stated.
6. The law compels the sheriff to sell all lands on which taxes have not been paid, and that such sale shall not be held later than March 1 of the year succeeding the year in which the tax was made.
7. The property will be sold to the person bidding the lowest rate of interest, and certificates will be issued therefor, and deeds given for such property sold, unless redeemed within three years from the date of such sale.

That portion of Wasco county known as the "pan-handle" is certainly most unfortunately situated with reference to its countyseat and it is to be regretted that a new county could not have been created out of that section without encroaching too heavily upon the territory of northern Crook. There was no opposition in this section to the creation of Nesmith county, provided it would confine its demands to a strip off of northern Crook which would not be unfair to the residents of that section, and which would not forever cripple the prospects of the remainder of that section for a similar relief in the future. The bill as introduced, however, was subject to those objections, and without manifest unfairness it could not have been passed. The panhandle of Wasco is entitled to relief, and it is to be hoped that before another legislature meets, development in that section and in this will permit of an adjustment of lines between the two sections that will be satisfactory to both. Without such an adjustment the relief each of those sections desires appears a remote possibility.

The wish was father to the thought, in the Prineville Review's story about the creation of Nesmith county. Anything that makes for the discomfiture of any section of Western Crook is pleasing to the "rule or ruin" crowd at the county-seat, of which the Review poses as spokesman. The Nesmith county bill was favored at Prineville because it would be a stumbling block in the way of the future creation of Jefferson county, and in exact proportion to the damage it would do to the interests of this section. The spirit is a nasty one, but it is the strongest spirit which animates a certain element at the countyseat. Occasionally they get a set-back, and none which has disconcerted them more than their failure to bring about the creation of Nesmith county.

The re-appearance of the sage rats should be a warning to ranchers to begin to wage their war of extermination upon these little pests. Last year they simply swarmed over this section, doing incalculable damage to the growing crops. Two ranchers living on the east side of the big plains killed in the neighborhood of 3000 on their ranches without noticeably decreasing the number, as the sage rats appeared to swarm in from adjoining ranches as fast as they were thinned out. There should be some concerted action on the part of the ranchers of this locality, to stamp out the pest early in the season, before they become too numerous. They can be reached by the poisoned grain better at this time than later on when the growing grain tempts them more.

A neat up-to-date printed letter head adds much to the dignity and general appearance of your business correspondence. The Pioneer office is specially equipped for this kind of work. Call and see the printer about it. Mail orders promptly executed.

Judge Brooks's bachelor reveries were disturbed last Tuesday evening in a manner which brought home to him most vividly his lonely estate. It became noised about that the Judge had become a benedict, and a number of his friends gathered and gave him a good, old-fashioned charivari, with horns, tin pans, bells and all the infernal paraphernalia which contributes to that kind of delicate attention. The rumor proved to be a false one, and the Judge is still "eligible", although he unblushingly permitted the demonstration on Tuesday evening.

Ranchers of this section are beginning to appreciate the value of trees upon their property, and a number will plant shade and fruit trees this Spring. Among those who are making a good start in this direction is Otto Hoffeldt, who has a homestead on the Madras-Heisler road, about seven miles from this place. Mr. Hoffeldt already has a good-sized orchard growing, and this Spring he is planting out shade trees along the boundary line of his homestead. In a few years he will have a good growth of both shade and fruit trees, which will not only make the ranch more attractive, but will greatly enhance its value should he ever care to dispose of the property.

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OUTSIDE MAIL ARRIVES

First Installment of Delayed Letters Received Today

THE FIRST FOR PERIOD OF FOUR WEEKS

Promise Of Normal Condition Again Being Resumed—Trains Running On Columbia Southern

A big batch of letter mail arrived this morning, the first mail from the outside to reach this point in four weeks, with the exception of one small bundle of letters which came last week. The letters were post-marked as far back as January 31st, and the letters which came this morning are evidently the first installment of the accumulated mails of weeks. It took Postmaster Davis and two assistants about two hours to distribute the letters. Very few papers were received with the consignment of mail which came this morning. There was one bundle of Oregonians of February 25, and one sack of miscellaneous second-class matter. The accumulated second-class matter will probably be brought out from Shaniko in big wagons, the stage lines having all they can do to handle the first class matter which has piled up during the past month. Papers three and four days old were seized and their contents perused with evident relish this morning, as these were the first daily papers received here since the wash-outs occurred on the Columbia Southern. In a few days, however, normal conditions will have been restored, and the mails will arrive regularly each morning.

Train is Running

It is reported that the Columbia Southern Train reached Shaniko last night, after a suspension of traffic for four weeks past on account of the wash-outs on their line. The main trouble was between Wasco and Biggs, where large sections of the roadbed were entirely washed out, and many small bridges washed away. Near Moro there was also some trouble. The last train out of Biggs was on Wednesday, January 30th, and all traffic over the line was completely suspended for a period of four weeks to a day. At the time that the wash-outs occurred on the Columbia Southern, serious trouble was also experienced on the main line of the O. R. & N. at a number of places between Pendleton and Portland, and all the force of the company was

directed towards getting the main line opened up again work on the branch lines being neglected until this was accomplished. For this reason no effort was made to clear the Columbia Southern line for fully two weeks after the wash-outs occurred, and the resumption of traffic was delayed on that account.

After being tied up for nearly four weeks, arrangements were made last Saturday for hauling the mail out from Grants, on the O. R. & N. line, by stage and one rig left Shaniko Sunday morning, carrying out mail and to bring other mail in from Grants. This rig probably reached Shaniko last night about the time the train did, on its return trip.

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