

The Spirit Of Reform.

The following leading editorial in the Oregonian is so full of truth and good sense that we reproduce it. It might be said to be the program of the present session as laid down by the leading republican paper of the state. It will be interesting to note how closely the advice laid down is followed by the legislature:

"Never has there been so auspicious a time to reform the excesses, the extravagances and the multifarious abuses that have crept in to every department of our government, from state to precinct, as now. Never did the needs of the country so cry for this reform. The excesses have grown from year to year, by little and little, till we have come here, instead of simple and economical government, believed by the founders to have been established, one of the loohest and worst plundered the country presents. This condition has grown and existed by sufferance when prices were high, profits large and taxes easily paid. But the depression of the last year which has swept over the world has made tax-paying difficult with all, and impossible with many, and the many are increasing. With every business and every individual in the grip of hard times, there is abroad in the land a resolute determination that these abuses and extravagances shall stop short; that government shall cost no more than it need, and that the hand of official cunning and greed shall be withdrawn from the long-time rifled pocket of the hitherto patient taxpayer. This impulse will be felt by the incoming legislature and by the new members of the state government, and by their example extends to the counties, towns and districts. If, under these, searching and sweeping reforms are not now instituted, we may well despair of their ever being accomplished.

The last legislature made some inroads upon the fee system. They are what should be but a beginning. The system is an abomination, and should be cut up root and branch, legal and illegal. And it is a vice of the system that more fees are taken without the law over it than are provided for under it. The offices of secretary of state, treasurer, and superintendent of schools are fruitful fields for the knife. Those who know the new secretary of state doubt not that he will enter faithfully into this work. Sheriffs, county clerks and recorders have been made salaried officers with more than ample salaries, and yet some of them are left with lucrative fees in addition that should be at once and forever wiped out. Let there be no hidden emoluments, but let the salary acquaint the public with the full amount of the compensation. And in view of the changed condition of the country, many of these salaries should be reduced, to take effect from the passage of the act, not at the end of the term of the incumbent. No officer has vested right to office or fee against act of the legislature.

There are sinecures in the state departments and in the county and city officers that should be abolished. The acts under which state, district, county and city officers are enabled to make emoluments beyond the limits of compensation proper to the service and to the times, should be reviewed by the legislature, and all excesses should be annulled or amended. The state convicts should be put at work and made to earn their prison living. The asylum legislation needs thorough scanning and overhauling, to the end that no one should be sent there who does not there belong; that large profits shall not be made in transporting patients there and that patients and relatives with sufficient means shall pay the expenses of sending and keeping. Officers of the state should be required to pay into the treasury all receipts whatever other than the salaries named in the constitution. Bounties to fairs and exhibitions should be discontinued, at least until more prosperous times. Appropriations to normal schools and state colleges must be restricted, as must appro-

priations for all state institutions. There is not one of the expenses which cannot be materially reduced. A half score or more of "homes" and "aid societies" have sprung up over the state, some of which seem to have been born principally for the purpose of obtaining appropriations. The committee-clerk abuse and scandal saguad knocked on the head. The state militia should be reduced to a half dozen companies, properly distributed over the state, and the outrageous draw upon the treasury proportionately reduced. The expense of state printing can be reduced more than one-half, by omitting wholly unnecessary printing—printing of no value to anybody except the printer. The knife must be inserted here, sharp and deep.

Never before has an Oregon legislature had such a summons to duty as rests upon the one that will assemble tomorrow. Our whole official system has become honey-combed with practices which to use no harsher terms, are burdensome to the taxpayer and destructive to the state. Offices are sought for their emoluments and "worked for all there is in them." Extravagance, looseness and recklessness of expenditure have prevailed in legislative halls and department offices. It should be the business of this legislature to reform these abuses, and put the state upon a career of honesty and economy such as honored its early years. The voice of the people has called it into life for that end, and their eyes are upon it.

There is need of searching inquiry and deep insertion of the pruning knife into the administration of every office. The general appropriation bills have been made to extravagances and jobbery, which could not be trusted to separate bills, and, introduced at the very heel of the sessions, have been carried blindly through. The general appropriation bill should be placed before the legislature and the people at least ten days prior to the end of the session, so that its items may be scrutinized. The legislature must not, will not, fail the people now!"

The Brownsville Times contains a two column article in favor of a division of Linn county, one that will have little weight with loyal members of old Linn, one of the banner counties of Oregon. The proposed county would be nineteen by seventy miles, and according to the paper the two counties would contain the following: Value of property in incorporated towns and cities north of line, \$2,221,739; south of line, \$536,476; amount in country north of line \$3,189,631; south of line, \$3,880,349; total amount of taxes at 15 mills, on towns cities and country north of line, \$5,408,170; south of line, \$3,323,935; total amount of taxes at 15 mills, on towns, cities and country north of line, \$81,122.50; south of line, \$49,859.02; total amount of taxable property in Linn county, \$8,732,105; total amount of taxes at 15 mills in Linn county \$130,981.58.

A peculiar suit is pending in New York state. Miss Mueller gave free kisses at a church festival for the benefit of the church. A fellow with money in his pouch attended and planked down his spondulics for a kiss. He got it and liked it, and kept on paying and kissing until he emptied his wallet. Thinking over the sweetness and satisfaction of the osculatory performance, he concluded to marry Miss M. that he might get his kiss free of charge. He proposed, she consented, then he backed out and declared he would not hang his fortunes to a girl who would dispense her kisses so freely, even if it was for church purposes. And now there is a suit for damages.—Ex.

Two large seals were sunning themselves on the ice in the river near the Umatilla house in The Dalles all day Wednesday. The supposition is that they crawled up on one of the pieces of floating ice, and as the latter struck the head of the jam and were soon surrounded by other pieces, they were unable to get back into the water.—Ex.

The biennial session of Joe Simon convenes at Salem today. If the cow county members behave no better than they usually do, Joe will elect himself president of the upper house, somebody else speaker of the lower house, name the United States senator, and shove in his pocket any bill that don't suit him.—Corvallis Gazette.

The Salem Statesman, following the example of the San Francisco Examiner, makes a proposition to the ladies of Salem that they take control of that paper on February 15th and edit the same, and that the proceeds from all the extra papers sold and extra advertisements will be donated for charity. The paper will furnish all the material, and have the paper set up at its own expense.

The year 1895 will give us five eclipses, three of the sun and two of the moon. All of the solar eclipses will be partial, and none of them visible in the United States. Both lunar eclipses will be total, and will be visible in the United States. The lunar eclipses will take place March 10 and September 3. The solar, March 26, August 20, and September 18. With the year ending September 3, six eclipses will have taken place.

A Grafton, N. D., thief stole the steeple off the Baptist church. That thief ought to be able to give some of the church papers a good ecclesiastical pointer.—Minneapolis Journal.

This must be the same fellow who stole the organ out of the church at North Salem last fall. Having an organ and a steeple, all he needs now is a church to be complete. He will probably steal that soon.—Oregon Independent.

There is a constant tendency for public sentiment to go from one extreme to the other. A few years ago comparative little attention was paid to educational matters in Oregon. Then there came a tide in favor of liberal appropriations for educational institutions. Now the public are beginning to conclude that they have been too liberal and there is a popular demand for cut-off all appropriations from highest institutions of learning. We fear the thing will be carried so far as to seriously cripple the state schools. The training of the children and youth of the land should be encouraged and not hindered.—Polk County Itemizer.

E. Gilliam, stock inspector of Umatilla county, has inspected 248,000 sheep during the fall of 1894, and finds them in an excellent state of health, and in his estimation, freer from disease and imperfection than the sheep of that county have been for ten years. Only a small proportion are infested with scab, the improvement in the general condition having been brought about by the rigid enforcement of the law. In the spring the inspection included 206,000 sheep, exclusive of lambs, 25,000 of which were driven away during the summer. Since the fall inspection 10,000 sheep have been driven and shipped out of the county, leaving 238,000. The present average price for ewes is \$1.25.

The vote for the selection of school text books for use in the schools for the next six years results, with a few exceptions in the adoption of the books of the American book company. Among the books adopted is Barnes' History at the price of \$1, the same book that sells in Wisconsin for 75 cents. It is to be said to the credit of the Superintendent of Benton county that he voted against the adoption of this book, as he thought his constituents were illy able to pay the book trust \$1 for a book they sell elsewhere for 25 cents less per copy. The extra profit on this book will pay for the expenses of newspaper howling against a change, which played an important part in the trust campaign to secure re-adoption of their books, the trust has conducted. It is a precious thought to school patrons to know that they have a school system that permits rings and combines to mulct them of their hard earned earnings.—Corvallis Gazette.

Hon. Levi P. Morton is the first republican governor the state of New York has had since 1879.

The Albany Democrat says that probably not half a dozen names could be obtained in that city to a petition for the pardon of W. W. Saunders, who is serving a life sentence for the crime of murder. This shows their good sense. Saunders got no more than his just deserts, and should stay in confinement while he lives.—Mercury.

Clatsop county's recorder has a big job on his hands. Last week 268 deeds were filed for record. They are the subsidy deeds of property to Bonner & Hammond. A careful estimate was made of the property, and the value was placed at \$2,119,785. It is said that a great deal of property was rated at a price far below what it would bring during ordinary good times. The subsidy would bring anywhere from \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000 in good times.—Portland Dispatch.

The Capital City Nursery Company, of Salem, shipped 800 pounds of baled moss to nurseries at Fresno, Cal. This article is strictly an Oregon production, and for packing fruit trees and shrubs for shipment cannot be surpassed. This shipment was made at Salem, the moss being gathered in the woods in the immediate vicinity of the city. Rumor has it that the moss is worth \$50. per ton, delivered at the nurseries in California.—Portland Dispatch.

A form of cruelty to animals very common in Oregon has met with deserved punishment in Yamhill county. Frank Stickler, of North Yamhill, was taken to McMinnville from Newburg, Tuesday, by Constable W. T. Macy, and placed in the hands of Sheriff Henderson to serve a sentence of twenty days in jail in lieu of a fine of \$40 assessed by the justice court. Stickler went to Newburg two weeks ago, and fastening his horse in a shed, left it without food for several days, the animal dying soon after being found.—Oregonian.

A miner operating at Sabe creek, Idaho, for some time past has missed a great deal of amalgam from his sluicboxes. He determined to keep watch for the thief, and several nights ago he saw a calf nibbling grass near the boxes, often reaching over the rim and drinking the water that flowed over the riffles. He, however, paid no attention to the animal. The theft of amalgam still continued, and a few nights ago, when the calf appeared, he shot it. He ran to where the calf was lying and saw a human leg protruding from the animal's stomach. It took him but a second to realize that he had shot the thief, who had been cleverly disguised as a calf. The miner took the culprit to camp, and much to his surprise, he discovered the thief was a young woman.

Langley, the trackwalker on the Southern Pacific railroad, from Eugene, to Walker's station, says the Guard, has had several close calls and exciting incidents, but one stormy night about a week ago he met with an accident on the long trestle near Judkins' point that was a little closer and came nearer proving disastrous than any of the others. He had started back on the last half of his run and was, when he had reached this point, running rather slowly, as the rails were slippery and a heavy wind was blowing. When about thirty feet out on the trestle the wind blew the hind wheels of his vehicle off the track, on the outside of the rail, thus throwing him off the trestle backwards, with the machine to follow. As he fell he grabbed the rail with one hand, and at the same time the handle of the machine caught one of his feet, thus leaving him partly across one rail and almost unable to help himself, with his feet light out and the train due in a few moments. By almost superhuman effort he managed to extricate himself after a time, and proceeded on his way to Eugene. By a fortunate chance the train was late that night, or he might not have fared so well.

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