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LINCOLN COUNTY LEADER

—W. L. DAVIS, Editor.—

Official County Paper.

FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 1899.

RESULTS.

A Short Review of The Results of The Late Legislative Session.

To one who keeps close track of
the work of our legislators, it is
difficult to follow each bill through
its devious windings, and oftentimes
before passage is lost. Hence we
make a brief review that our
readers may have a better under-
standing of what has taken place,
leaving out such acts as are not of
interest to our readers.

The special session last October,
although it reduced the legal rate of
interest in the state at 6 per cent.,
leaving the contract rate undis-
turbed, did not repeal the require-
ment that the state school fund
must be loaned at 8 per cent. Un-
able to loan the funds at a lower
rate there accumulated in the state
treasury more than \$6,000,000 that
could not be loaned out. The
regular session reduced the rate to
6 per cent., which is an invariable
rate, and this vast sum of money
will immediately pass into circula-
tion and finally fix the customary
rate of interest in Oregon at 6 per
cent. School funds now drawing
8 per cent, may be refunded at 6
per cent. The law was amended
after a severe legislative conflict of
parts of three days.

The nickel-in-the-slot bill was
passed, but through a loss of the
original file after it reaches the
house, a copy of the bill was sub-
stituted and some doubt exists as
to the validity of the law. The
law prohibits the use of the nickel-
in-the-slot machine.

The clerk of the supreme court
was placed on a salary of \$3,000.
All fees are to be turned into the
judiciary fund of the state treasury.
This will be a large saving to the
state, as the income of the office is
variously estimated at from six to
ten thousand dollars per year.

The law governing school fund
loans was modified so that the
lands coming to the state by fore-
closure, deed or otherwise will be
cared for and looked after in a
business like manner, and in this
connection lieu lands were with-
drawn from sale for a period of
years to prevent their being bought
up by syndicates at ridiculously
low figures, as has been done in
the past.

The school laws were modified
in such a manner as to raise the
standard of teachers by preventing
chartered institutions and normal
schools of the state from issuing
life and state diplomas and by
raising the age and qualifications of
teachers in the schools.

The Daly school book law makes
a change in the methods of select-
ing text books in Oregon so that
two years from this time the peo-
ple may have the benefit of free
competition in the choice of books.
This will effect favorably every
patron of schools in the state.
This bill passed after a severe
contest, and to have been the bit-
terest ever waged over a legislative
matter in Oregon. This is prob-
ably the most important bit of legis-
lation passed in many years in the
state.

The law enacted fixing the
amount of the court fee in equity
cases where the amount involved is
not known, and regulating the
court fees in probate matters to
correspond with the amount of the
estate, has long been needed.

The act codifying the laws
governing negotiable instruments
simplifies business transactions and
will prove a wholesome law.

A law was passed creating a
state board of equalization to con-

sist of the governor, the secretary
and the treasurer of state. It is
unfortunate that the bill in its
terms was not such as to meet the
approval of the governor, ascertain
counties of the state have made
their present assessment with refer-
ence to paying as little state tax as
possible. This will work a hard
ship on counties who will not avail
themselves of this opportunity to
beat the state. The result will
surely be a reaction that, it is to be
feared, will re-enact the expensive
and cumbersome board repealed a
few months ago. Under the old
law the state was paying through
its counties thousands of dollars
annually for needless copies of the
assessment rolls for the secretary
of state's use in making the state
tax levy. This law was amended
so as to cut off this expense with-
out impairing the service.

An act making the road super-
visor elective by the people of the
various districts has long been in
demand and it goes into effect in
1900.

At last a law governing clerk
hire in the legislature was passed.
Of course it begins to operate with
the next session. It is a reasonable,
sensible law, providing only the
few clerks absolutely necessary and
taking their appointment out of the
hands of individual members.

An act regulating the amount of
printing to be done by the state
printer was passed as a part of the
appropriation bill. It limits the
amount of printing to the legal
requirements. Custom more than
law it seems has long governed the
amount of printing done for the
various officers and heads of depart-
ments.

A registration law that is said to
meet constitutional requirements
while it is a very effective act and
comparatively inexpensive was
passed. Under this law all voters
must register in order to be eligible
to vote at any general elections.
This law met with no opposition
upon its final passage, although it
was vigorously opposed at the out-
set.

A reapportionment bill was
passed that changed the representa-
tion in the legislature of the various
counties. This was done to keep
pace with the constitutional require-
ments. The basis for house mem-
bers is 6000, and for senators
12000. Polk county with a popu-
lation of 9,200 in 1895 gets one
senator, one representative and a
joint representative with Lincoln
county. The constitution requires
the representation to be based on
the census of 1895. It is generally
believed that in this reapportion-
ment Polk county fared better than
any other county in Oregon. East-
ern and Southern Oregon suffered
most in the reapportionment.

A strenuous effort was made to
pass in a modified form the mort-
gage tax law. It passed the house
but lacked three votes in the sen-
ate. As the objectionable features
of the old law were eliminated the
bill should have passed.

Tax legislation difficult near the
close of the session, as an effort to
amend the assessment law was op-
posed by those interested in the
Multnomah tax collector bill, lest
it might be interfered with by any
subsequent act having general ap-
plication. Otherwise the three
changes needed in our assessment
laws would have been made. 1st:
To make a levy by the county
court a lien on the property of the
tax roll. 2nd: To provide a pen-
alty for delinquency. 3rd: To cut
off copies of the tax roll and pro-
vide for collection on the original
roll. These failed at the last mo-
ment, for reasons mentioned above.

The division of the appropriation
bill into three portions to be re-
ported at different times proved a
benefit to the state. The appropri-
ation bill just passed is the lowest

in twelve years, which comparison
show.

A strong demand for legislation
carrying large appropriations was
pressed at every turn. A scalping
bounty law carrying \$6,000 as a
maximum, a sugar beet bounty
law, carrying at the outside \$200,
000, a law appropriating \$50,000
for salmon hatcheries, another call-
ing for large sums for artesian
wells in Eastern Oregon, a road in
the northeastern part of the state
and bridges in two different parts.
All were in turn defeated, except
the salmon hatchery bill, which
was passed after being reduced to
\$15,000.

The law abolishing compulsory
piloting on the lower Columbia is
of interest to every farmer in the
Willamette valley, as their prod-
ucts have been forced to pay
heavy piloting for every incoming
and outgoing vessel carrying their
products.

The number of clerks employed
in the senate in former years was
from 70 to 80 most of whom drew
\$5 per day and many drew \$4 per
day. At the session just closed
the number of clerks employed was
46, of whom one drew \$7 per day,
three \$5 and forty-two \$3 per day.
A grand total of less than one-half
the usual amount paid and a por-
tion of this sum was wasted.

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