THE ASHLAND TIDINGS

FRIDAY.....FEBRUARY 14, 1879

AN INFAMOUS FRAUD.

The Oregon and California Military Road Company is about to receive another gift of the choicest public lands in Oregon. Thus a ring of land speculators achieve another triumph over justice and over the rights and interests of the people. It is claimed that the road passes through the Klamath reservation—at least it is so marked upon the maps forwarded to Congress for inspection—and as the company has a title to three sections of public land for every mile of its extent, it owns a considerable portion of the Klamath reservation, which has been located since the location of the road. A recent telegraphic report of the decision of the Senate public lands committee says:

"The committee are satisfied by record evidence that the Wagon Road Company's title to these lands is perfect, and that they are entitled to possession and compensation; but in view of a mass of official correspondence on the subject including letters from the governors of Oregon and California, in which it is shown that any attempt to remove the Indians would be extremely dangerous, the committee recommend that the company's proposition to accept indemnity scrip in lieu of the choice lands thus occupied should be complied with as the most feasible means of adjusting the claim without threatening the public peace."

That the matter should be so adjusted as to avoid trouble with the Indians, is eminently wise and proper, but, even upon the hypothesis that the company's claim to public lands is just, the bill introduced in the Senate by Grover to thus grant them lieu lands is an outrage upon the public, if its provisions be as they are reported. A large portion of the land which the company claims within the limits of the reservation is swamp land, and yet by the provisions of this bill the company is allowed to pick out the very best land contained in the public domain in Oregon. They would no doubt rejoice if they could find their "road" passing through another reservation or two.

It may be that the O. C. M. Co. hold a legal title to the lands which they claim, but the people of Oregon have long been convinced that equity would compel the company to yield up much of the land now in its possession, instead of granting them more of the best lands in the state. It is well known that the scheme of building this road was that of a corrupt ring of "land grabbers;" that the road was not demanded by the public interests; that it never was made worthy the name of "road," and is not only unused, but is in places almost impassable. The effrontery of Grover in offering this bill to allow California speculators to thus rob the people of their birthright is perfectly in keeping with his past record, and will add one more link to the chain of pleasant memories which binds his name to the popular heart.

THE CIPHER INVESTIGATIONS.

The Potter sub-committee has been taking the testimony of Marble, Pelton and Tilden at New York upon the cipher dispatches unraveled by the Tribune, and something positive will perhaps be reached at last. There is now no longer any doubt that Marble and Pelton were negotiating for the purchase of the presidency. Tilden denies any complicity whatever in the matter. He said: "The publications and translations in the New York papers I have read; did not recognize a single dispatch either in cipher or translation, which I had ever seen before; I never entered into any arrangement to purchase the vote of South Carolina or Florida; I had no information, no suspicion, that any such communications were being carried on until I saw the dispatches published in the New York Tribune; had no knowledge, no dealings with any parties to these negotiations; never authorized any such negotiations in any form whatever. * * * * * I was called on by Mr. Cooper, who was on his way down town, and was told by him that he had received an offer from some party offering to obtain for money the vote of South Carolinia. I said I would authorize no such transaction, nor spend money for any such purpose. The whole conversation occupied only a few minutes. I obtained Colonel Pelton's address in Baltimore and telegraphed him to come home. I knew nothing of the ciphers that had been passing between him and others, and I could not have translated them. With regard to Florida, I never saw one of the telegrams, either in cipher or translation. I did not know, I was not informed, that negotiations were going on in regard to illegally obtaining certificates of the Returning Board. I never saw any of these dispatches relating to Florida, either in cipher or translation."

The Herald says: Tilden's failure to turn this scapegrace nephew out of his house when he discovered what he had been doing should be judged with indulgent leniency under the circumstances but the intimacy of their relations gives a plausible color to the inference that whatever Pelton did was done with Tilden's connivance. But this inference is supported by no facts which have as yet been brought out in the sworn testimony. Marble committed a great error in communicating the offer as a piece of confidential news to New York, instead of exposing and proclaiming it; covering the Returning Board with disgrace. Had he taken this course, the cipher exposure would have been a blank-cartridge.

The country feels relieved over the unexpected alacrity with which the New York custom house nominations were confirmed. The importance of these nominations will be realized when it is considered that the officers superintend the collection of one-third of the entire custom revenue of the country, and there is a general protest against their being used as a political aid by the New York senators. Had the present struggle between Conkling and Sherman represented a contest between machine politics and true civil service reform, a deeper interest would have been felt in the result, but the general impression is that it was merely a fight between political factions of the same stripe, and the only interest taken in it by the people was to observe how much time would be consumed by the quarrel.

There is an apprehension among ship owners in the East that the Chinese will soon enter into damaging competition with the present ocean carriers. A recent telegraphic dispatch contains the following: The fact that twelve steamers, of 400 tons each, owned manned and officered by Chinese, ply along the Chinese coast, and that the line is successfully and skillfully managed, strengthens the opinion in commercial circles that the maritime nations must expect Chinese competition on the ocean. Thirty steamers are run by the Chinese Merchant's Steamship Company, whose manager is a Chinaman. The opinion is expressed the first to feel the competition would be the fleet of ships which still find profitable employment in the California grain trade under the American flag.

As illustrative of the glut of money, the dullness of trade, and the difficulty of finding safe investments on the continent of Europe, late London newspapers note the fact that on a subscription for 375-000 florins—about $150,000—opened at Amsterdam and Rotterdam, for an additional issue of the stock of Rotterdam Street Railroad Company, the enormous sum of 71,000,000 florins, or nearly $30,000,000 was offered on the first day the books were opened.—[Chronicle.

The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, to whom the Chinese bill was referred, have reported the bill back without recommendation either for or against it, but Hamlin, the chairman of the committee, has announced his intention to move that it be indefinitely postponed when it is called up for action. Seargent gave notice that he would call for the bill on Wednesday of this week. The issue is still in doubt.

The Times now claims that the reason for its gentle treatment of the political rascals who have just begun to receive the execrations of the people of Oregon, is its "modesty." It should have the cut of a daisy at the head of its editorial column; but the "modesty" is transformed into brazen effrontery and vindictive abuse when the investigating committee is spoken of.

The Oregonian is publishing the testimony of Cann, Chadwick and others before the Investigating Committee. It speaks for itself, and even should the Grover organs succeed in utterly and literally annihilating the committee, the guilty ones are condemned by their own mouths.

The first number of the Oregon Literary Vidette, a monthly journal published at Salem by E. O. Norton & Co. Its character is indicated by its name, and it starts out with an abundance of excellent reading matter. The subscription price is 50 cents a year.

The Oregonian entered upon its nineteenth year on Feb. 4th. It is beyond question one of the best journals published on the coast, and has no rival north of San Francisco.

Beet sugar manufacture hasn't very good prospects in California. The Alta says there "is no probability of a large industry in this line for sake of dividends."