

The Daily Astorian AND Astoria Daily News

Established 1873

FRANKLIN PRINTING CO.,
Publishers.



RATES:

Sent by mail, per year.....\$6 00
Sent by mail, per month..... 50
Served by carrier, per month..... 60

SEMI-WEEKLY.

Sent by mail, per year, in advance \$1 00

The Astorian guarantees to its advertisers the largest circulation of any newspaper published on the Columbia River.

AN UNSCRUPULOUS EDITOR.

A singularly unfortunate condition of affairs has come to light up in the little town of Goldendale, Klickitat county, Washington. A man named Story conducts a paper called the Agriculturalist while the Sentinel is owned and operated by W. F. Byars. Byars is a married man, who has seven children, while Story is a bachelor, with none to look after but himself. All this is very well. If Story wants to enjoy single blessedness, he may do so; and if Editor Byars saw fit to take unto himself one wife and seven children, that is likewise his business.

But there are other serious considerations involved. Story has acquired the political acrobat habit and his course is operating to the decided disadvantage of Editor Byars, Mrs. Byars and the seven children. Prior to the election of President Cleveland the Sentinel man received what federal patronage the county had to offer, but Story succeeded to the plum upon the election of Mr. Cleveland for being a good democrat (whatever that might be.) Now, this selfsame Story continued to enjoy the business during Mr. Cleveland's term, and when the county repudiated the democracy he, too, became a repudiationist, flopping to the ranks of the victors. And behold! the patronage went with him!

To this the editor of the Sentinel takes exception, and well he should. He says that Story's commercial course has taken bread from the mouths of the members of his interesting family, and he feels that Story has not played fair, especially in view of the fact that he has only himself to care for. "If we," says Editor Byars, "were guilty of taking bread from children, and at the same time acted like the Judas to accomplish it, we would steal away to some secluded spot and never return."

Editor Byars is right. Any man who would change his politics for the paltry patronage of the government certainly ought to go to Skamokawa, or some other seaport, and there remain forever. The incident only serves to remind us of the abnormal development of commercial strenuousness. Here we find two editors doing business in the same town, the one with his name well perpetuated in the way of children, and the other leading the humdrum existence of a bachelor, dining at his club instead of at the head of a table in his own home, and generally giving himself over to the indolence of a Bohemian career; the first at home most of the time with his wife and children, trying to provide for them, and worrying himself into an early grave because his Judas-like competitor changes his politics to suit the exigencies of the occasion. The bachelor is not half a man. That he should take away from the bread of the means of providing for his family is, to say the least, an act of perfidy. And it is remarkable that the good people of Goldendale endure this direct thrust at our institutions.

But there is a way for Editor Byars to get even. If he be wise, he will send some fine looking girl over to the agriculturalist office to win the heart of the calloused Story. Then after seven children come along to bless the Agriculturalist man's home, Editor Byars may go through the political contortion and turn the tables, bread and all, on the versatile Story.

IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

The lumbermen of Washington have inaugurated a movement that is likely to revolutionize the insurance business not alone in that state, but throughout the country. It is the organization of a mutual insurance company, by which members will, if good fortune attend them, save nearly all of the vast sums that are annually paid out for fire protection. The West Coast Lumberman thus refers to the new incorporation:

"There are always a number of live questions of expense around a saw mill and the question of fire insurance may be justly termed a burning question. It is exceedingly monotonous to pay out six to ten per cent annually for a term of years for fire protection and see no returns for it. Still no business man can afford to do without insurance. In many sections of the United States, mutual insurance companies have successfully and economically carried fire insurance risks for lumbermen. There has been incorporated in this state the Lumbermen's Insurance Company. It is incorporated under the laws of the state, and is purely mutual. The liability of the participants is limited to the amount of one annual old line premium, that is to say, this company would charge the same as the old line companies do, and a member having paid his premium has no other liability other than he has in the old line companies. If losses are less than premiums collected, the company will do as they see fit. This company has been thoroughly investigated and at the present time over fifty policies have been issued. The mills are generally taking hold of this, and practically all of them have promised to support it. The funds of the association are protected by a public bonding company. The officers are some of our best mill men whose integrity is unquestioned. Perhaps no man has taken hold of this with more vigor than Harry Carstens, of Seattle, where the headquarters of the company are. This is something which every lumberman should look into as it is a proposition which will bear investigation."

In the notion of the Washington lumbermen is a lesson by which the people of this city will do well to profit. No place in the country pays so high a rate of insurance, when the excellence of the fire department is considered, as does Astoria, and the only justification offered for the extortionate charges is "there is apt to be a destructive fire at any time," and such-like arguments. Some Astorians never carried a dollar of insurance and saved much money by not doing so, fortune favoring them by saving them from loss when fires have occurred. But while good business policy would suggest the wisdom of covering possible loss by fire with insurance, it is plain that an enormous saving could be effected by the organization of a home company on the plan adopted by the lumbermen in our sister state.

Doubtless action in this direction would have been taken long since had there been anyone to take the initiative, and the fact that among some of the local business men there has for several years existed a sentiment in favor of such a plan indicates that under competent leadership they would quickly fall in line and unite in the organization of an insurance company of their own.

CUBA IS PROSPEROUS.

The report issued by the government through its Bureau of Statistics shows the enormous possibilities of agricultural development in Cuba. Although Cuba has 28,000,000 acres of good land, less than half a million are now under cultivation for raising sugar and not more than 100,000 acres for tobacco.

Conditions have improved greatly since the United States took possession. What the Americans began the Cubans under independence, have carried forward with great credit and benefit to themselves. Cuba is now transformed into a wealthy and well ordered community, solvent, self-governing, reliable and prosperous. Cuba will export 1,000,000 tons of sugar during the present year. Its trade with the United States has been restored practically to the point it had reached before the insurrection.

EMPHATIC, BUT NOT INFORMING.

The president's message cannot be regarded as a strong state paper. It is emphatic, but not informing. He says: "The treaty submitted to you for approval secures to the United States

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economic advantages as great as those given to Cuba." This is plausible, but it is unsupported. The closing statement that "A failure to enact such legislation would come perilously near a repudiation of the pledged faith of the nation," is even more sweeping. When and where and how was the "faith of the nation" pledged to adopt such legislation? The Platt amendment didn't do it; congress didn't do it; nor is it publicly known that the administration did anything to "pledge" the "faith of the nation." The president and the advocates of the "Iowa idea" may desire a reciprocity treaty that would give Cuba the benefit of the American market at the expense of our growing sugar industry; but before the people are asked to believe that the "faith of the nation" has been pledged, evidence of the fact should be presented.—Gaston's Magazine for December.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.

The Dalles Times-Mountaineer rejoices over the fact that Representative Johnson has repudiated the language imputed to him in an interview recently published in the Oregonian, wherein he was made to appear as opposed to the proposed portage railway. The Times-Mountaineer says: "Representative C. P. Johnson, of John Day, father of the portage road bill in the house, has at last come to his senses, and has publicly stated that the interview that appeared in the Oregonian some time ago, quoting him as favoring the repeal of the portage road law, was a misquotation, as he still favors the building of the portage. This denial comes rather late, but it is nevertheless acceptable, since friends of the road will feel less alarm after the father of the law is ready to stand up and defend it."

There is a growing conviction that the backward development of eastern Oregon, as compared with the progress of eastern Washington, has not been due to a lack of resources, but to the failure of railroad and other capital to exploit the country, says the Spokane Spokesman-Review. The slow development of the coal fields near Heppner is to the point. These coal measures were discovered about 20 years ago. Seventeen or 18 years ago the owners had done sufficient development to warrant a strong hope that the find was of great value, but development was allowed to drag along for two decades. It is hoped that the report will be verified that the O. R. & N. Company is seriously contemplating the purchase of these mines and the extension of its Heppner branch to them. If the expectations of the present owners are realized the opening of these measures will mean a great deal, not only for eastern Oregon, but for eastern Washington as well. The coal is said to be superior to the Wyoming product, which now sells in Spokane for \$8 per ton, and the secretary of the company owning the veins declares that it can be laid down in Portland for less than \$3 per ton. If that proves true, this coal can be delivered throughout eastern Washington for the same price. Three dollar coal would mean a great deal for the Inland Empire.

It is the opinion of the Oregon Law Journal the problem of tax dodging can be quite successfully treated by amending the law on assessment and taxation so as to cause the assessment roll to be printed in a condensed form prior to the time that it is presented to the board of equalization. By following such a course of publicity, it is argued that the opportunity and the liability for making any extensive changes in valuations after the listing of properties by the assessor will be largely eliminated. Those championing this change in the tax law contend that the advantages to the state will more than justify the slight cost of causing the list to be printed. The proposed amendment is deserving of consideration at the hands of the state's lawmakers when the present faulty tax law is corrected at the special session.

If one will only take the time to dig into the reports from the census documents issued by the United States he will find very much of interest, perhaps too much. He is liable to grow weary with figures. Another trouble lies in the fact that the census is so exhaustive that much of its information is delayed in dissemination. The bulletin devoted to lumber contains the following statements. There were in the United States in 1900, 31,833 saw mills, worth \$305,785,226, with 229,717 employes. Pennsylvania had more saw mills than any other state, to-wit: 2280; Indiana second, with 1829; North Dakota and Nevada had but 4 each; Arizona, 14; Alaska, 17; Idaho, 114; Montana, 127; California 235; Oregon 265; Washington, 535. It is noted that California with less mills than Oregon turns out product worth \$8,729,654, while Oregon puts out only \$6,883,234. Washington with only 45 per cent more mills than Oregon yields a product valued at \$18,617,179. There were 10,213 planing mills; New York having the greatest number, to-wit: 1069; Alaska, 12; California, 275; Oregon, 226; Washington, 233. It will be noted that California, Oregon and Washington have about the same number of planing mills.

The Daily Astorian and the Astoria News have been consolidated and now appear as the Daily Astorian in an evening edition only. A new linotype machine has been added to the plant and the improvement already made in the appearance of the paper is an indication that the owners purpose to make it a first-class up-to-date daily. It is clean, editorially, and gives the latest telegraphic and local news up to the hour of going to press. We wish the new management the greatest measure of success.—Tillamook Independent.

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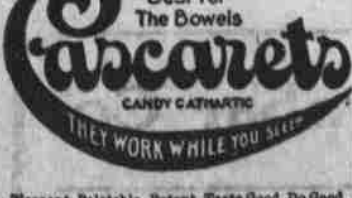
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