

THE JOURNAL

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WHY CLOSE THE LEGISLATIVE EYE

AS THE LEGISLATURE at Salem as keen to investigate public officials as its concern over the Steiner episode would indicate? Does it want to engage in an investigation that will be a real investigation?

For 10 days it has been much concerned with Dr. Steiner. Every day's news from Salem has been filled with varying features on that subject. A resolution offering Dr. Steiner opportunity to reply on the floor of the assembly to his accusers is understood to be dying a slow death in a committee.

Why is the insane asylum affair a proper matter for investigation, and the dairy and food commissioner's office not a fit subject for the legislative probe? In his message, as acting governor, Mr. Bowerman referred to the insane asylum as buying supplies cheaper than any other of the institutions.

However, it is fitting for a fair square investigation of the asylum to be made. As much is due Dr. Steiner, State Treasurer Steel and Secretary of State Benson who approved all the asylum purchases. As much is due the people of the state. Let the investigation go on, and let all political and factional influences be left out of it.

The house resolved for such an investigation of the dairy and food commissioner's office, and appointed a committee, but the senate balked on the plan. It gave as a reason that the district attorney's office in Multnomah county was investigating.

INSINCERE PROFESSIONS. THE RAILROAD companies, through their presidents and press bureaus, seek to convey the impression that they do not view regulation with disfavour, and also that they are being more or less badly treated and imposed upon.

A statement issued by the railroad commission of Indiana is fairly illustrative of the conditions through-

out the country. The occasion for the statement arose from a request of the Chicago, Indianapolis & Louisville railway asking the commission to dismiss certain suits against the railroad for failing to comply with the orders of the state commission fixing freight rates.

"The railroad companies in almost every rate case decided by this commission have brought suits against us to set aside our orders, thereby putting the state to great expense, and taking the time of commissioners, which ought to be devoted to other important matters. The commission act means, if it means anything, that this commission has the power, and must exercise the power, of making rates in a case properly brought before it. It was never intended by the act that every rate made by us should be a matter of litigation, and that we were right in fixing the rates as we did fix them."

REGULATION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

WHAT THERE WILL be some legislation at this session looking toward the regulation of the public utilities of the state seems apparent. The need for such regulation is everywhere admitted.

There is another proposition which seeks to eliminate from state control all such utilities in cities which choose to create separate local commissions, for the obvious purpose of enabling the creation of a Portland city public service commission and placing it beyond the jurisdiction of the state.

The argument that the work of the railroad commission will be hampered by the addition of such jurisdiction is not borne out by the experience of many other states, where all public service corporations are under one control and benefit from results have been obtained. It is simply a question of the employment of necessary expert assistance and a more rigorous procedure.

INDUSTRIAL HAZARDS. EFFORT IS TO be made at Salem for legislation that will provide automatic compensation to workmen for injuries sustained in industrial accidents.

There is agitation on this subject throughout the country. Most European nations, including Germany, Holland, Belgium, Austria and Italy long ago provided such a law.

At present in Oregon, the only recourse of the injured workman is to go to the courts. It is often a cruel process. If an important case years may result before there is a final settlement of the issue.

It is a painfully wasteful process. In the Multnomah courts last year there were 50 personal injury cases. Each occupied the time of a judge and jury from two days to a week or more.

cases, and thereby becomes a deeply interested party to the issue of industrial accidents.

It is claimed that of the damages awarded for personal injuries, the plaintiffs receive only about 40 per cent. The remainder being dissipated in litigation. There was sent out of Oregon for liability insurance last year \$178,000, of which \$70,000 came back. Of that returned, the workmen received but \$15,000, according to the statement of Fletcher Linn at this week's meeting of the Manufacturers' association.

A PLEA FOR MORE HOGS. LECTURING recently to the short course farmer students at the O. A. C., Mr. D. O. Lively, manager of the Portland stockyards, pertinently urged the raising of more hogs, pointing out what ought to be a potent inducement, the profitability of doing so.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHINA. TRANSFORMATION IS not too strong a word for the process going on at an ever hastening rate in China at this time.

THE NEW WATER BIRD. THESE aviators ever seek new worlds to conquer. Not content with risking their lives with their spiral glides, and height records, they now propose to try how nearly they can come to drowning themselves, as a change.

THE NO BREAKFAST FAD. ADVOCATES OF THE no-breakfast fad will find no support in the report of causes of the late Paul Morton's sudden death, at an age when a man should be in the prime of life.

SEVEN NOBLE WOMEN. Florence Nightingale. "God has a bright example made of thee, to show that womankind may be above that sex which her superior nature crowns."

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ness can be found or instructed. Round the university will be grouped colleges or hostels where the missionary teachers and their students will be housed.

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did Cook; at least he arranged it so that there could be no reliable confirmation. But let him have the credit, and let Cook feel "the thump of success"; the Pole is really a matter of very little importance.

COMMISSION CAN REGULATE RATES

ONE AFTER another, decisions of federal courts are establishing the doctrine that federal and state railroad commissions can regulate rates, and can reduce rates, if in the opinion of such commissions they are too high.

Judges Bean, Gilbert and Wolverton held Friday, in the matter of rate reductions from Portland southward, that no right of the railroad company had been invaded. That the action of the commission must be presumed to have been fair and just to the railroad, and that unless it could show that in consequence of such reductions it was deprived of a fair remuneration upon its investment no such restraining action could be maintained.

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class, the government being definitely committed to its steady prosecution and early completion. There must be no let up of effort till there is a 30 foot channel in the river and a 40 foot channel over the bar.

Senator Heyburn is another deaf and blind statesman. He says he has no evidence that the people of Idaho desire an amendment of the constitution providing for the popular election of senators, and he criticizes the Idaho legislature for passing a memorial in favor of such an amendment.

Having made a careful recount on its own motion, The Dalles finds that its population is 5714, instead of 4880, as announced by the census bureau. In all probability the home count is nearer correct than the official count. Some other Oregon cities were presumably undercounted to about the same extent.

Annuities for Teachers.

Approval should be given the bill providing for creation of the Retirement Fund association and for granting annuities to retired teachers in the school districts in Oregon having more than 10,000 children of school age. In these days of expression of continuing interest in the welfare of the people, by the best judgment of business men, the establishment of this system of annuities will be giving recognition to a class of public workers who are among the most faithful and most useful instrumentalities in the social order.

THE BASIS of the proposed fund will be as follows: Contributions by teachers, \$1 a month for the first period, of 10 years' service, \$2 a month for the second, and \$3 a month for the third 10 years; interest on a permanent fund of \$50,000, which shall be accumulated before any moneys contributed by teachers will be available for annuities; and 2 per cent of the revenue from the Irrevocable state school fund, apportioned to the district. Annuities must qualify as follows: They must have taught 30 years; must have contributed \$600 to the fund; those having years to their credit may have these years counted by making up back dues, with 3 per cent interest on each year, or by other incidental regulations, but these shall be the more important. Annuities must be paid quarterly.

New Democratic Insurgents

From the New York Evening Post. The new Declaration of Independence at Albany goes beyond the question of the amendment of the constitution. It is a determination to withstand Murphy throughout, in his attempt to Tammanyize the state. These resolute Democrats who have banded themselves together to prevent Murphy from forcing an unfit senator upon the legislature, may also in some schemes which he has in mind, be dashed to the earth, but that all his plans for legislative chicanery are impeded, and his very position as Tammany boss left wide open to attack.

Fortifying the Canal

President Taft's speech on the fortification of the Panama canal shows how even such a man as he is can be overcome by the military obsession which infects the air at Washington. The original idea of an isthmian canal is now in danger of being entirely forgotten. It was to be a great highway of commerce, a new triumph and pledge of peace; but suddenly it has become exclusively a part of our coast defenses, a military instrument, a thing to fight over.

Oregon's Chauvinistic Bourbons

From the Medford Mail-Tribune. One distinguishing characteristic marks the old-line machine politicians of Oregon: total inability to analyze public opinion and sense stupidity in learning lessons from previous blunders. Chauvinistic Bourbons, they continue the worship of the setting sun, long after it has sunk amidst the darkening mists of oblivion.

News Forecast of the Coming Week

Washington, Jan. 28.—President Taft, Secretary Knox, Justice Day and other prominent public men who were intimately associated with the late president McKinley will be the speakers at the banquet to be given Monday night by the city of Washington to commemorate the birthday anniversary of the martyred president.

SEVEN NOBLE WOMEN

Florence Nightingale. "God has a bright example made of thee, to show that womankind may be above that sex which her superior nature crowns." Florence Nightingale, one of the noblest women of the present century, died less than six months ago, having celebrated her ninetieth birthday on May 12 last.