



TO OUR READERS.

We have lost many thousand dollars by the credit system, and must do business hereafter on a cash basis. We were burned out last spring and since then have passed through very hard times. The majority of our subscriptions expire during the Fall and in January, and we ask our friends to be as prompt as possible in making renewals.

SCHOOL SYSTEM OF OREGON.

The report of Hon. L. K. Powell, Sup't of common school for the State of Oregon, made September 1st, gives much valuable information in the form of tables, that follow: The facts made known in his report are sufficient of themselves to convince any reader that Oregon is alive to the great necessity of public education, and has a well perfected school system. The same is true of Washington Territory, and if we are not mistaken the school system of the two are very similar.

Table with 2 columns: Category and Value. Includes 'Whole number of organized Districts, 1,067', 'Total number of persons over 4 and under 20 years, 59,615', 'Total number of pupils enrolled in the public schools during the year, 37,533', etc.

Table with 2 columns: Category and Value. Includes 'Amount paid to teachers, \$210,420.38', 'Amount paid for repairs on school houses and premises, 7,976.14', 'Amount paid for fuel and other incidentals, 8,783.16', etc.

Table with 2 columns: Category and Value. Includes 'Grand total paid out during the year, \$307,931.46', 'Cost per capita of all persons of school age, \$5.15', 'Cost per capita of all enrolled in school, \$8.18', etc.

THE PRESENT CONDITION AND PROGRESS OF OUR SCHOOLS.

On this subject the superintendent remarks: The present condition of our schools, while it is by no means all that we would like to have it in a great many particulars—though the school houses are not what they ought to be in the great majority of cases—yet, when we compare the schools of the present with the schools of the past, the former make a very creditable showing. Might speak of improvement in the modes and methods of teaching in many respects. In particular, the text books are better; they are taught more intelligently and with more direct reference to the development of the reasoning and perceptive faculties of the children. While there not only may be but are, many instances where cramming is practiced, I regret to acknowledge it, yet the instances are fewer than formerly. While inefficiency sits enthroned in many school houses though the land, yet we have a far greater ratio of good teachers to-day than ever before in the history of the State. They are doing better and more conscientious work than has been done heretofore, and the tendency is towards and the teachers show a commendable zeal in their efforts to prepare themselves to discharge the responsible duties of their positions in a more efficient manner.

every instance friendly, fustian of criticism and denunciation on the part of the press of the State and sundry correspondents. Yet as a general thing when the schools have been put to the test, it has been clearly shown that the methods and system of the schools of the present, while they are not what we could desire in every respect, yet, when they are compared, especially with the schools of the past, they make a favorable showing. So severely have our schools been criticised, and more especially the high schools and "the system," the "cramming process" of the schools of the present time, that at last an annual school meeting in the city of Portland, in order to investigate these charges and ascertain whether they were well grounded, a competent committee was appointed by the school meeting and given ample time to investigate the matter so far as the city of Portland was concerned, and after having devoted four months to the subject and thoroughly examined all the charges and criticisms, they submitted the following report at an adjourned school meeting, July 12th, 1880:

REPORT OF INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE.

Your committee respectfully submit the following report embodied in statements and resolutions: The object assigned us were arranged under five distinct heads. In order to obtain clear and definite views, each subject was subdivided and a series of questions prepared and assigned to five sub-committees, who were requested to examine every point named and make a special report. Every member of the committee felt authorized to visit any or all of the departments, grades and classes of the public schools and seek information from the school superintendent and teachers here and elsewhere, from citizens, from jurists and other professional men, from published reviews and discussions of the subjects in other States.

In justice to ourselves and the objects sought, we must say that the work has been far too great for the time allowed us or that we could give it to. At the outset of this discussion three great facts meet us: 1. That very large grants have been made by the national government for public schools, amounting since the organization of the Territory of Oregon, August 14, 1848, to one eightieth of all the public lands, giving to our State alone 3,577,777 acres, besides large tracts for an agricultural college and State University. The proceeds of these three and one-third millions of acres, and other lands, constitute an irrevocable fund, vested solely in public education. It is a sacred trust, not a fee simple to care of the State as trustee, which pledged Congress on admission as a sovereign State, to guard this fund safely and to use the proceeds for the free education of all our youth. Its acceptance as a trust imposed upon the State a moral, and possibly legal obligation to preserve every dollar of the principal, and to restore every dollar wasted or lost. These national grants for public schools and colleges also imply a national education, and place it beyond the power of change or perversion.

2. The State not only received this great trust on this condition but by statute added a large annual tax to support public schools, with power also of local taxes for the same object.

3. The sentiment in favor of public schools of improved quality and grades gained force by these national and State grants, so that successive legislatures have fixed by law the best, but not the highest courses of study to be pursued in the public schools. Without following the report of the committee further, we sum up their conclusions: which were, that though expensive and accompanied by cumbersome machinery, the committee consider the plan of public schools of Portland both great and liberal. The schools of this city are a pride to the State, and hardly inferior to the public schools of New York or Boston in success and efficiency. The devotion of the citizens of our city and State to common schools is shown by the fact, that nearly all the large cities and towns levy, by popular vote, a tax of from three to four mills for maintenance of free schools, and the wealthy districts of Oregon, outside of the towns, have schools supported by a direct tax as well as by their proportion of the public school fund. In all districts the school houses are built by a tax or general subscription.

THE STATE UNIVERSITY.

The superintendent says: This institution during the last two years has fully met the anticipation of its most ardent friends. It has a beautiful location in the midst of charming natural scenery. The building is substantial, commodious, well arranged and beautiful in its architectural design. It has a numerous, able and deservedly popular corps of instructors, is furnished with ample chemical, philosophical and mathematical apparatus, and with a large and increasing patronage from all portions of the State, and is doing a noble part in the general educational work of the State, and should be fostered and encouraged with a reasonably liberal hand.

I had the pleasure of being present and witnessing the closing exercises at the University on the 19th of June last. A class of 15 young gentlemen and 5 young ladies graduated with the honors of the institution, whose graduating orations and essays showed thorough drill and an independence of thought rarely witnessed on such occasions.

THE STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

It was my privilege also to pay a visit to the State Agricultural College located at Corvallis, and from personal observation can say that the school is doing excellent work and growing in favor with the people. It being in the winter at the time of my visit, I could not speak from observation of the work

of the agricultural department, but only of the literary department. This was thorough and effective and with a most able and efficient faculty.

Relative to the character of the work they are doing for the State, I may say that judging from the character of the instructors performing their respective duties, I believe it is such as to commend it to the favorable consideration of every citizen of the State and to be looked upon with pride instead of discouragement.

He echoes the sentiment of our people when he says: The fostering of a thorough system of popular education—one that as Hancock has well said, would "take every child of the Commonwealth from the State for his future good conduct and useful service," has rightly been deemed by every enlightened and patriotic statesman in the land, as the first duty of a republican commonwealth, and the keystone to the perpetuity of an independent form of popular government.

THE PANAMA CANAL.

SALEM, Dec. 24, 1880.

Editor Willamette Farmer: I know your disposition too well to suppose you will not allow me a little space in reference to this great project when my views do not coincide with your own.

The status of the two canal projects are about as follows: The Panama canal project is a fixed fact. Its bonds are all subscribed for and a part is paid down. Nothing can stop it but the interference of the United States Government. On the other hand the bonds of Nicaragua project are not yet offered for sale. It is not probable either that they will be sold until after the Panama canal is built and it should be seen that one canal is not sufficient to do the business.

Since then the Panama canal project can only be crippled or stopped by a threatening and forbidding policy of our government, I ask the question, "Is it wise to interfere?" I say no: We have everything to lose and nothing to gain.

In the first place we shall lose the respect of every nation and power of Europe in interfering with a project located entirely within a foreign country, and perhaps entail a war with foreign powers.

Secondly—It is not at all probable that if we succeeded in getting the Panama canal to discontinue operations that the United States will be able to build the Nicaragua canal. The rate of interest is too high in the United States for sufficient money to be placed in the Nicaragua scheme, and we could hardly look for foreign capital to build up a canal under the control of the United States Government, exclusively.

The Panama route was selected by De Lesseps and the Paris Congress of Engineers, because it was the best route, in their judgment, and their judgment was confirmed by merchants and capitalists all over the world, in the speedy purchase of all the stock within a few days.

The Panama route, although costing a little more (perhaps no more) than the Nicaragua, is the best, for two reasons principally, and they are of great importance to our west interests of the Pacific Coast: First, the Panama route will afford, when complete, draught of water sufficient for the passage of the deepest laden grain vessels—twenty-seven feet—while the Nicaragua would only allow vessels drawing twenty-four feet to pass, not sufficient for our deepest laden wheat vessels. Secondly, the delay in passing the locks of the Nicaragua route—necessarily so very large, and admitting only one vessel at a time—would be so great as to prevent any considerable number of vessels passing. The Panama canal has no locks and hence there will be no limit to the amount of business which can be done through it.

It is true that the vessels passing through the Panama canal will be mostly steamers, but not more than the Nicaragua. It is a mistake to suppose that our grain will not be carried on steamers to Europe. On the contrary, steamers of seven thousand tons capacity will carry our grain from Astoria to Liverpool cheaper than possible by sail. The voyage will be about thirty days, judging from the time of the large freight steamers of the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

The Panama Canal Company have taken hold in a manner that excites our admiration. They ask no land grants nor subsidies of us, and I hope that our Senators and Representative will simply let it alone.

Respectfully yours, TRANSPORTATION STUDENT.

ANSWER.—First, We do not concede that the bonds and stocks of the Panama canal have all been sold, as claimed.

Second, The amount of 500,000,000 francs will not half complete the canal, and there is great fear that the scheme may prove so impracticable as to be abandoned when years have been wasted on it.

Third, We have confidence in the report of Admiral Ammen, and other Americans who have pronounced in favor of Nicaragua over Panama, and believe that if the American scheme is commenced and pushed the other will be abandoned.

Fourth, This is really an American project and Americans have a perfect right to carry it through and show their confidence in their own judgment.

Fifth, The difference in tolls and distance and prevailing winds make the Nicaragua route far preferable and if we can shorten the

of construction five years, some of us may live to see it.

Sixth, The Suez canal was a very different affair. DeLesseps has no experience in such work and may be altogether too sanguine, and we fear that the other scheme is feasible. Of the locks and canal can be made of size to accommodate any ships our commerce demand. Take the cost of constructing the canal as a basis of calculation and the Panama tide-water canal can never be completed for the money named, or for any sum our commerce can afford to pay interest on.

Seventh, If the people of the United States stand ready, as claimed, to take up \$600,000,000 government 3 per cent bonds, at par, the rate of interest in the United States is as low as any where in the world, and money will not be lacking to carry out this great scheme.

Eighth, The Americans who take hold of this great scheme are men we can rely on much more than DeLesseps. They have mature business sense; they want to be apt to throw away their money, and General Grant will not lend himself to a scheme that has no bottom. Our friend makes us all the more "solid" for Nicaragua. We look upon it as only patriotic to stand by our countrymen and to have faith in their judgment.

GRANGE ELECTIONS.

BUTTE CREEK, Dec. 24, 1880.

Editor Willamette Farmer: We held our Grange meeting Saturday the 18th inst. After a good substantial dinner, got up in first-class style by the sisters, we proceeded with the election of officers for the coming year. The following are the names of the officers elected: P. J. Ridings, M.; J. R. White, O.; E. Skirvin, L.; C. Haggalvon, S.; J. N. Nickolson, A.; M. J. White, C.; R. Thompson, T.; G. D. Thompson, Sec.; John Muelock, G.; M. Dore, Ceres; A. Nickolson, P.; O. Marjann, P.; E. Skirvin, L. A. S. On Christmas Eve we had a splendid Christmas tree in the grange hall, which was loaded with beautiful and costly presents. The weather was very unfavorable for the occasion, but in defiance of wind and rain we had a large assembly of old and young, everybody enjoying themselves. A pleasant meal was deposited on every countenance, which was a true criterion that our Butte Creek Christmas tree was a grand success. The audience was orderly and attentive to an oration delivered in a masterly manner by E. Widdell. May all the good people of Butte Creek live many years and enjoy many more Christmas Eves. W. ROWELL.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

Oswego Grange, at its December meeting, elected the following officers for the ensuing year: Mrs. C. E. Shipley, M.; R. B. Wilcox, O.; J. M. Libbey, L.; M. K. Shipley, S.; S. L. Davidson, A. S.; Mrs. Sarah Ford, C.; Jos. Ranger, T.; A. R. Shipley, Sec.; Della Carman, G. K.; Mrs. S. L. Hayes, C.; Mrs. C. Davidson, S.; Mrs. M. A. Dickenson, P.; Miss Etta Carmen, L. A. S. Installation ceremonies will take place on the 8th of January, and will be public. Members of neighboring granges, and other farmers and their families, are cordially invited to be present and bring their lunch baskets. By order of the grange. A. R. SHIPLEY.

TRIAL JIMMERS

Who are to serve as such at the next Term of the United States Circuit Court.

The names of the following residents of the State, were yesterday morning drawn to appear as trial jurors in the U. S. Circuit Court in this city on the 15th of February next, at 10 A. M., and serve as trial jurors: W. J. Rauch, farmer, New Era. L. D. C. Latowetter, farmer, Oregon City. J. A. Huffman, farmer, Salem. Levi Bennett, farmer, Amity. Jas. Hoffman, farmer, Junction City. B. H. Bosch, farmer, Junction City. A. V. Peters, merchant, Eugene City. A. K. Marks, farmer, Canby. Jonathan Ford, farmer, McMinnville. Andrew Simons, farmer, Junction City. W. B. Cooper, farmer, Albany. Ira F. Powers, manufacturer, Portland. James Humphrey, livery stable keeper, Eugene City. J. W. Archibald, farmer, Tangent. Wm. Ridgeway, farmer, Elkholm. Lewis Heimick, farmer, Buena Vista. John Bilyeu, farmer, Seio. E. L. DeLashmitt, farmer, Dallas. J. H. Downing, farmer, Ferrydale. John Fitzgerald, farmer, Looking Glass. Wm. Galtingham, farmer, Monroe. R. F. Blodgett, farmer, Lebanon. Green B. Smith, farmer, Corvallis. Geo. Knight, merchant, Canby. Samuel Buell, farmer, Beilbone. Squire Farrar, merchant, Salem. Owen Bear, farmer, Shedd's. Henry Bennett, farmer, Greenfield. A. T. Smith, lumberman, Portland. G. J. Gallaban, farmer, Cole's Valley. Fielding Stett, farmer, North Yamhill. Geo. H. Sawyer, farmer, Wheatland. Joseph Smith, miller, Buena Vista. Jas. H. Miller, farmer, Albany. Robt. Cochran, farmer, Cottage Grove. Sebastian Brutscher, farmer, Newberg. Cases that have been set for jury trial can now be put down for a day certain.

How Happiness is Secured

Happiness is the absence of pain or annoyance, and whenever there is pain there is disease. A pain in the lower portion of the body indicates a disorder of some kind. If there is any odor or color or deposit in the urine it means disease and requires attention at once. We have heard of many of our friends speak of the remarkable power of Warner's Safe Kidney and Liver Cure and are convinced there is nothing so certain and valuable for all disorders of the urinary system both male and female.

FOILED IN THE ACT.

Attempt to Rob the Store of Harding & Barlow at Oregon City on Sunday Night.

The success attending the robbery of the Post Office at Oregon City on last Tuesday morning, seems to have stimulated the cracksmen sufficiently to pay a second visit to that little town and give to its residents another surprise. On last Sunday night an attempt was made to rob the store of Harding & Barlow on Main street. The firm carries on a grocery and bakery business, and in addition, is also local agent of Wells, Fargo & Co. An entrance was effected to the store by forcing in a door in the rear of the building, and from the amount of work done by them, they must have been working for some hours before being disturbed. An effort had been made to break open the door of an iron safe in the store which the robbers must have supposed to contain a sufficient sum of money to pay them well for their hazardous undertaking. They had succeeded in moving three bolts from the door of the safe, when the unlooked-for appearance of Mr. Barlow, who came into the store by the front way, caused them to make a precipitate retreat through the back door into the dark, and without any booty. Mr. Barlow had occasion to go to the store at a late hour, which proved a fortunate occurrence, as it would have required but little more time for the robbers to have accomplished their purpose. Mr. Barlow saw two men at the safe as he entered, but was so astonished that both had escaped before he could give the alarm. The design of the thieves evidently was to secure the funds of Wells, Fargo & Co., imagining that quite a sum was contained therein, but in this they would have been mistaken, as the company has all funds forwarded to Portland. The robbery of the Post Office at Oregon City followed in less than a week by the attempt to rob the above store shows that a good night watchman is needed in that place.

DOGGED TO DESPERATION.

A Man Charged with Perjury Tries to Kill Himself at Marshfield.

On last Tuesday night, says the Coast Mail of the 25th inst., after it became apparent that Lockhart, one of the victims of Luse racket, would be compelled to go to jail at Empire to await his examination on the charge of perjury, which was filed against him by the Luse crowd for the purpose of having a bearing in the riot case, he declared that he was sure if he went to jail his enemies would blow it up as they did his house, or would kill him in some other manner. That he stood no chance on trial there and would rather die than go to jail in that place. The steamer Satellite, which was to take him to Empire got aground and Sheriff Lane gave him into the custody of Marshal Rhodes for the night. A room was provided for him in the Central Hotel, to which he was shown by Mr. Rhodes, and he was left alone for a few minutes. When Mr. Rhodes returned he found his prisoner in great agony, and it was discovered that he had taken poison. The usual remedies were administered, and though the case was a critical one there were soon hopes of saving the patient. He said he wanted to die, and for a long time refused to tell what he had taken. He finally admitted that he had taken corrosive sublimate, and that the burning was so great that he afterwards took morphine to allay the pain. He was for two days in such a condition that it was very doubtful whether he would recover, but he is now likely soon to be well.

THE FUGITIVES HAGGED.

Capture of Lynch, Murphy and Johnson, the Escaped Prisoners from the County Jail.

Sheriff Buchtel, Constable Simmons and Charles DuBois, returned to the city last evening on the boat from The Dalles, having in their charge John Lynch, Frank Murphy and "Hickory" Johnson, those of the prisoners who escaped from the County Jail on last Sunday afternoon. It was ascertained on Monday that the three fugitives had crossed the Columbia from the Oregon side at Vancouver. The Police Department of this city and Sheriff Buchtel were informed of this fact and preparations were made to head them off and effect their capture. Detective Day, who had business up the river was in Vancouver on Tuesday, and on the boat he saw the brother of "Hickory" Johnson having two bundles of clothes with him. Day dropped on the game and telegraphed to the city of Chief Lapetus that he was going to remain over and get the men. He found where they intended to take supper that night, which was all prepared for them, but the trap set for the capture failed on account of a former drayman of this city notifying Lynch that Day was in the town. Lynch immediately gave the warning to his companions, and they started off without their supper. Sheriff Buchtel and his assistants had also arrived at Vancouver, and learning of the whereabouts of the fugitives, started down the Kalama road yesterday morning, the route taken by the men, and come upon them a few miles below the town. On the appearance of the Sheriff, the three men surrendered and were brought back to this city last evening and placed in their old quarters in the County Jail. Passengers on the Vancouver boat yesterday morning saw the three men going down the road, and with the aid of a field glass, they were easily identified by those knowing them. All the prisoners escaping are now recaptured, and the probabilities now are that each of them will have an additional term to serve in the penitentiary for jail breaking.

OUR SECOND COLD SNAP.

Condition of the Upper River Yesterday—A Freeze-Up Imminent.

A south wind, a high barometer and piercing cold weather are qualities hitherto unknown to Oregon Winters, and the present cold snap, which promises to be a severe one, will have the effect of shutting off the Eastern portion of the State and Washington Territory from the outside world for several days to come. The transit over the Cascade range was made yesterday, but was attended with the greatest difficulty, and the snow had drifted into huge banks upon the track, making the road almost impassable. The storm of wind raged on Tuesday and the previous day, and the reports from the upper country say it is cold and calm, and from all points above The Dalles the river is full of running ice. At the present temperature this will be sufficient to suspend navigation within 24 hours, and those who are conversant with the eccentricities of Oregon weather predict a genuine freeze-up, and one that will continue for some time. This is not pleasant, but it will be averted, and it will make every business man in the city offer a devout prayer for the early completion of the line of railroad from here to The Dalles. The up-river boat will leave here this morning, but no tickets are being sold or freight received for points above the mouth of the Willamette river. Following are the reports received yesterday at the office of the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company, in this city:

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AFTERNOON REPORT, 1:30 O'CLOCK.

Blalocks—Ther. 29; weather cloudy; snowing very little; no wind.

Umatilla—Ther. 32; cloudy and calm; river falling; running ice.

Cascades—Ther. 25; cloudy; down stream wind.

The Dalles—Ther. 30; moderating considerably along the line from last night; river full of slush ice at Wallula and Umatilla which is forming solid since the wind stopped blowing; weather here now cloudy and calm; some slush ice in the river here.

Celilo—Ther. 26; cloudy; light down stream wind; river full of running ice.

Walla—Ther. 23; light up stream wind; not snowing but the ice getting thicker.

EVENING REPORT, 5:30 O'CLOCK.

Walla—Ther. 22; cloudy; very little wind; river full of ice.

Walla Walla—Ther. 23; every indication of a hard freeze up; ten inches of snow on ground; thermometer going down.

Umatilla—Ther. 24; cloudy and calm; river full of running ice.

Blalocks—Ther. 21; cloudy; not snowing; river full of ice.

Celilo—Ther. 24; cloudy and calm; ice running.

The Dalles—Ther. 25; cloudy and calm; river rose half an inch last 24 hours; no ice in the river.

Cascades—Ther. 24; cloudy; down stream wind no ice.

The latest reports state that ice was forming on the river at Washougal and growing intensely cold in that vicinity.

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Anthony Deiters' aged 93, died at Wheeling, on the 28th. He fought with the great Napoleon through his campaign, was nine times wounded, witnessed the burning of Moscow, and was at Leipzig and Waterloo. He was full of vigor at the time of his death and was one of the oldest Masons in the United States, having joined as a minor.

John Woodsmall, aged 17, murdered Mar-

ius Braxton, aged 21, on the 27th. The two quarreled while returning from singing school, 20 miles north of Washington, Ind.