East Oregonian.

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ASSESSING MINING PROPERTY.

A correspondent writing from Baker City hits a very large and important nail upon the head, and drives it home, when he shows that mining property of that county is not paying its just share of the burden of taxation. His showing will read with interest for all persons of that county who are now compelled to assume the support of county government, the while men owning productive mines are allowed to go free.

It appears that the assessed valuation of Baker county is $2,966,260. Umatilla county's assessed valuation is about $6,000,000. Baker county's taxation is at the rate of 66.8 mills, to 22 for Umatilla.

It is probably true that Baker county has less mines paying a profit than is commonly claimed by the people over there. This is incident to a sort of boom that has been in progress for several years, during which extravagant assertions are made far beyond actual facts. Yet, it is true at the same time that many mines are paying large returns each year that are not represented upon the assessment rolls.

No man who desires equity of governmental administration will deny the injustice of such a proposition in taxation. The merchant, home owner, farmer, livestock man and laborer is under such a regime compelled to carry the burden of taxation, that the mine owner may enjoy the benefits of stable government, protection for his properties, immunity from highwaymen, and detection and punishment for any one who attempts to break the laws and steal from those same owners of mines.

The other day the Red Boy monthly cleanup was the object for a gang of robbers. It comes out that there was $30,000 in that cleanup for July. This is perhaps an average for the year, or $360,000 annually. It is safe to estimate that of this amount $200,000 is profit, or that the return is five per cent interest on a representative valuation of $4,000,000. It would contribute to the clarity of the discussion were the correspondent to ascertain just how much the Red Boy property is put down on the assessment rolls.

WALLA WALLA'S ROAD MAKING BEE.

Over there in the county of Walla Walla they are just now giving an object lesson to people of the Inland Empire. They have issued a call for the gathering on a certain day of all persons who are willing to assist in strawing the public roads, and no doubt there will be a liberal response. As a result, many miles of Walla Walla county's roads will be improved, to the betterment of all interests.

This strawing of the roads is one manner of making good roads in a country in which the soil is peculiar, and also where there are comparatively few residents. The sparsity of population throughout the Inland Empire is a reason why expensive methods of making roads cannot be adopted. Then, too, the soil is of a kind that renders it difficult to make roads according to the plans pursued in other regions. All of this argues in favor of the strawing bee to be held by the Walla Walla county people.

It is almost incomprehensible that our citizens are so far behind modern ideas as to the value of good roads. Running through these counties is a railroad system that has just completed the expenditure of $4,000,000 for "betterment of system," which is the railroad man's term for making good roads. This $4,000,000 was spent in making it easier of transport goods and passengers over the lines. The best brain in the country is engaged in the conduct of railroad enterprises. If this were not true, then the railroad manager would be content to use a road bed rough and expensive for the hauling of cars.

If it be good policy to spend large sums on railroads, then it is good policy to expend large sums for the improvement of country roads. What governs the one governs the other. Walla Walla county will secure large returns from the investment by her citizens of a little time and trouble in placing straw on the country roads.

Umatilla county's roads are exactly like those of Walla Walla county, and there are more people here and more straw than Walla Walla county ever dared to claim. The moral is obvious.

SIGNOR CRISPI, STATESMAN ROMANTIC LOVER.

Francesco Crispi had a life which reads like a story. Besides his life, which gave him the name of "Italy's Grand Old Man," there has been a romance and a tinge of sentiment and pathos—a humaneness which endeared him to human people.

He was three times married. First to Rosina, a beautiful girl 16 years old; next Rosalie, pretty laundress in the prison where he was exiled and lastly the Donna Lina, for whom he divorced the laundress.

Signora Crispi, the grand lady, mother of the daughter whom Crispi loved as his life, the Donna Lina, was never recognized as Crispi's legal wife by Queen Margaret of Italy. This disposition of the queen was long an impediment in Crispi's political way, and did not cease to hinder him. He might earlier have been premier had not this unwillingness of the queen to countenance the union prevented. There are no divorce laws in Italy, so that his separation from his child wife's successor must be illegal.

Crispi followed in the footsteps of some distinguished personages and procured an annulment of his marriage by some process that seemed to have a foundation in Italy's civil laws. The many said when this was done that Crispi's political sun had set and that he could never hope to become a minister of the crown.

The romance of Crispi's life began when he was 18, and in his second year at the university at Palermo. There he met a beautiful girl of 16, named Rosina, and they fell in love. Because of their youth Francesco's father called him home. The young lover pined away in spite of parental attempts to solace him and their providing for him changes of scene and air. Then came news that cholera was devastating Palermo. Crispi clandestinely borrowed a neighboring farmer's horse and set out for Palermo and Rosina. His inamorata was the daughter of a widow and had three sisters and a brother.

Rosina was in need of Francesco for when he arrived her mother was already dead, as were her eldest and younger sister. Her brother was dying. Francesco sold the horse to the postmaster of Palermo and with the money thus obtained cared for Rosina and her one remaining sister.

In the meantime the mystery of young Crispi's disappearance had never been cleared up and his family had mourned him as dead. One day the farmer's horse came along driven by a stranger and following the clue thus furnished the Crispi family located Francesco who was living in marital bliss with his child wife, her sister completing the household. Parental forgiveness was forthcoming and the three went to Ribera. The pretty Rosina lived but two years.

After his participation in the unsuccessful revolutionary movement in Sicily, Crispi was imprisoned in the Palais Madames. It was in the prison cell of this old palace that the romantic affair began which has cast such deep shadows over his life.

One morning Crispi saw pretty Rosalie Montmasson; she was in the service of the prison laundress, and offered to take the clothes of "messieurs les prisonniers politiques," who were not furnished with clothes by the prison authorities. Rosalie took the prisoner's light bundle of clothes, brought them back, and seems also to have come when there was nothing to take or to bring back.

Crispi was scarcely 34 years old. He looked melancholy, almost sad, and bad, in the girl's eyes, the aureole of the martyr and of the eminent man around his head. And then this ferocious conspirator, this intrepid soldier, could transform himself at will into a fervent lover. Rosalie was before long in love with her handsome client, her illustrious prisoner, and Crispi returned her love.

Presently, the police having found no just cause against the prisoner, he was released, but was expelled and went to Malta without any means of subsistence, accompanied by the little laundress. Black misery awaited the lovers at Malta; bread and herbs were their only food for many days, until Rosalie, who was always loving, devoted, and full of courage, found some work to do, and Crispi, together with other exiles, founded a small paper, La Staffeta, and once more hurled inflamatory articles at his opponents, till the governor of Malta found it advisable to exile him again.

Before leaving Malta, Crispi wanted to marry her, to make her his legitimate wife.

On communicating this desire to his friend and fellow exile, Giorgio Tamajo, the latter, very calmly and quietly, tried to convince him that a union like that intended by Crispi was almost invariably followed by regrets and pain, the different education and sentiment of the lovers forming an insurmountable barrier to a happy married life. Crispi, however, would not hear of it; and made Rosalie his lawful wife.

Crispi fled to London; Rosalie followed shortly, and under Mazzini's guidance, who was also in London at the time, the work of upsetting Napoleon III. and his government, in which all the European revolutionaries were engaged at the time, was carried on with utmost zeal.

The postoffice was not safe, and the police were vigilant; consequently Rosalie took the part of emissary, charged with the transmission of important news or the orders for the various groups of "Young Italy," and of the communications which the refugees in London and Paris had to exchange.

Presently he went to Paris as correspondent of Il Corriere Franco-Italien, his political activity never ceasing for a single day.

Then followed years of tumult and of excitement; one new development of political life was rapidly succeeded by another; Crispi was no longer an outcast, but sat, as deputy for Palermo, in the Turin parliament; he became vice president of the chamber, and everywhere in Italy the name of the eloquent lawyer, politician and statesman had become a household word.

In order to rest from his ardent parliamentary battles, and from his incessant work at the bar, Crispi should have had a calm, regular, smooth home life; but, unfortunately, he was not happy at home. Tamajo's prophecies had come only too true.

Rosalie Montmasson, as Mme. Crispi, had naturally followed her husband from place to place.

Dressed in the "loudest" of colors, laden with jewelry, and always surrounded by a whole menagerie of pet animals, she had become almost demented, and one day when Crispi came home and found her hopelessly drunk he could bear the yoke no longer, and went in despair to seek refuge with his old friend, Tamajo, who once more proved a friend in need.

The marriage ceremony, he explained to the husband's "intense astonishment," had been a fraud, and the bonds could easily be loosened. Rosalie, persuaded by Tamajo, consented to a separation, and Crispi became once more free "to leave the hell in which he had been living."

Rosalie lived at Rome, retired and calm. Sometimes she was seen, decorated with her diamond cross and followed by one or several dogs. Her conduct was irreproachable.

It was at a great court reception that Crispi met the Signora Crispi of his old age. He was passing through a grand salon when a woman's voice asked, loud enough so that he could hear it, that Crispi be pointed out to the speaker. The statesman saw that the woman to whom it belonged was young and fair. He did not look around, but he felt the eyes of the stranger, who, as he heard, was a young widow, fixed upon him all the evening. Next day Crispi made a great speech in parliament; the stranger was there again; their eyes met, and from that moment he spoke for her only. At Rome they met again; Crispi forgot his politics, his ambition and his country and only thought of love. He loved a woman who was worthy of his love, and his love was returned.

They were married by a religious ceremony only, the civil marriage being, for the time, omitted by Crispi, in order to prevent public attention from being attracted, and to avoid causing Rosalie Montmasson an outburst of jealousy. A year afterward their only child, Peppina, now a handsome woman, who is about to be engaged to the duke de Commona, was born, and a few years later the civil marriage took place at Naples, which made Mme. Crispi the lawful wife of her husband.