

NEW COUNTIES.

Among the matters which will be brought before the legislature which convenes in Salem next week will be the creation of several new counties in different parts of the state, and we understand that one or more divisions of Wasco will be demanded. As population and wealth increases these political divisions become not only convenient to the people residing at a distance, but almost a necessity. For this reason, when the exigencies require such action, we believe members of the legislature, as representatives of the best interests of their constituents, should grant the request of petitioners, but due consideration should be given to the facts in each particular case, and the vote by which such bills are passed or defeated should be an intelligent one. In many instances the taxable property of the people seeking to be set apart from their neighbors may not be sufficient to support the increased burdens, and then it is for the general good of the public that these requests not be heeded.

Old Wasco has been sliced up in the last few years in different shapes, and we will not say that the new counties formed out of the parent one have not proved for the best interest of all. Distance from the county seat rendered this nearly imperative in the past; but in this era of railroad communication the same emergency does not exist. It may yet be necessary to carve up our county in two or more different parts, and if it can be proved to be a convenience or a necessity to the taxpayer it should be done. But we have confidence in those who represent us at Salem that no hasty action will be taken. Due consideration should be given to the value of property in the new division, and whether there is a sufficient amount, without exorbitant taxation, for the purposes of erecting buildings and paying officials a living salary. And legislators should not be unmindful of the condition these new counties will leave the old one, and consider, if it will not burden the property-owners who remain in an unfair degree. Representatives of the people who congregate at Salem every two years have duties to do which should be performed conscientiously and intelligently, and there is no legislation which requires more careful thought than the formation of new counties.

CLEVELAND AND TAMMANY.

The Democrats are not smiling complacently at the dictation of Mr. Cleveland in the choice of senator from New York, and the Evening Telegram, the organ in this state, makes the following vigorous protest: "Plainly speaking, Murphy is Tammany's candidate, and Mr. Cleveland is fighting him for that reason. In view of the noble stand Tammany took in behalf of Mr. Cleveland and the assurance of victory that they gave him, it looks to be ingratitude on his part now to make a fight against Tammany's choice for the senatorship. It is bad politics all around, and whether Murphy is elected or not Mr. Cleveland's action in this matter will be harmful to the Democratic party. It will be treasured up against him by the friends of Tammany, and it is but natural that they should seek every opportunity to punish him for his interference in this senatorial fight." Mr. Cleveland is a much able politician than he was four years ago, and now that he has secured the presidency through Tammany's efforts he can paraphrase Mr. Vanderbilt's expression regarding the people. He has captured the big plumb in the Democratic pie, and is undoubtedly satisfied. If any one can afford to be independent of party dictation that man is Grover Cleveland, and it is very apparent that he intends to exercise his prerogatives as executive of the great republic. This is for us, and we desire to see this opposition extend all along the line.

Hon. Henry Cabot Lodge, of Massachusetts, is the caucus nominee of the Republicans for United States senator, and this will be very acceptable to the party in that state and in the nation. But the Democracy does not approve of him because he is the author of the so-called Force bill, and they have already begun to "show their teeth." Mr. Lodge has proved himself a very able legislator, and in every way competent to represent his state in the upper house of congress. The odium attached to the bill he introduced for fair elections in the United States was manufactured by the dough-faced Democracy of the north to keep the south solid, and if enforced would not have interfered with the constitutional rights of any citizen. It may have had its effect in increasing the dimensions of the tidal wave of public sentiment last November; but when this settles down to its normal condition, and men regain their sober senses, the Lodge bill and the McKinley tariff will be the theme of praise instead of blame. The next four years of Democratic rule may give the people practical illustrations of the way elections are manipulated in the south and of the financial disasters attending the inauguration of free trade.

Mr. Cleveland, as it is well known, is a pronounced mono-metalist, and has not the least sympathy with the silver cause, which has lately passed over the country, while Mr. Crisp, the speaker of the house, believes in free coinage, and in placing silver equal with gold as a representative of value. The speaker, in the appointment of committees and shaping legislation, has equal if not greater power than the executive, and there must be no clash between him and the president. To bridge the

chasm between these two leaders of the Democratic party is causing considerable anxiety, and it is evident that if Mr. Crisp expects Mr. Cleveland's influence for his re-election he must forego some of his notions on silver. It is very evident that the last term of Grover Cleveland as president of the United States will be automatic in matters over which the constitution gives him control, and the country will anxiously wait and see whether Crisp can so far forget his British stubbornness as to become an humble suppliant at the throne of this modern Caesar for the position he desires. There are many jarring elements in the ranks of Democracy, even if megawatt discontent has been eliminated, and not the least of these is the strong individuality of him whom the party has elevated to the presidency.

The project of incorporating the port of Portland, to extend from the region east of the Cascades to the mouth of the Columbia river, is agitating the people at present. This incorporation is to be made for the purpose of improving the navigation of this great commercial highway, and it is claimed by this means that the work at the Cascades and the portage road from this city to Celilo would be pushed to an earlier completion. It seems that such a corporation has been pushing the work on the lower river very successfully, and it is claimed that the same would be true of the middle and upper Columbia. There may be some arguments in favor of such a scheme and many against it, and viewed in the most favorable light not be considered experimental. The producers east of the Cascades appear to desire an appropriation for a portage road more than to be included in the "port of Portland," and their desire for a sufficient sum to build the road are not in any manner impertinent or the amount asked exorbitant. Every session of the legislature liberal sums are appropriated for public institutions in Western Oregon, and very little, if anything, for Eastern. The portage road will not nearly equalize benefits between these portions of the state, and as taxes are proportional, appropriations should follow the same equitable rule.

The coming legislature has a difficult task to perform if it attempts to pass laws on the subjects which have been named by the people and the press. It is expected to remedy the defects of the method of assessing values; to deal with the convict labor question; to create several new counties; to guard the salmon industry; to legislate on a better system of roads, etc., and all this in forty days of working time. Of course it is not expected that the representatives elected biannually to occupy the capitol at Salem are given the position for the purpose of recreation or festivity; but if the matters requiring intelligent legislation are presumed to receive proper consideration and laws passed which will be made effective, the constitutional limit of the session should be extended. It would be no great burden on tax-payers if the per diem continued for a longer period than the time mentioned, for matters of legislation are of little good if done hastily and not with care and consideration.

It is, of course, a difficult matter to estimate with any approach to accuracy what amount of the outstanding obligations of the United States in the shape of currency have been accidentally destroyed and thus removed from the class of treasury liabilities, says Bradstreet's. The discussion of the condition of the treasury which has gone on recently, however, has directed attention to the subject, and accordingly we find in press dispatches from Washington some attempts at estimates of the amount of paper currency destroyed by accident or otherwise eliminated during the last three decades. The estimates of the amount of currency thus removed range from \$14,000,000 to \$20,000,000. Of course all of this currency has not been lost.

Some of it, the fractional currency especially, has gone to a considerable extent into the hands of collectors. What gives point to those estimates is the suggestion now made that the amount of this money be taken out of the sum of the liabilities of the government, a suggestion which may be laid before congress in the near future.

Now that congress has reassembled after the holidays, our senators and representative should be urged to immediate action in favor of the bill extending the time for the payments to be made on the forfeited railroad lands. In many instances our settlers will not be able to purchase these lands next month, and an extension of time would be a great boon to those who desire to secure them. For the past two or three seasons crops have been very light, and farmers have found it difficult to meet their obligations. There is no possibility of land speculators reaping any advantage from such legislation, and the petitions presented to congress clearly prove that these are the honest, earnest prayers of home-builders.

Mr. Nathan Pierce will be an elector on Oregon by a decision of the supreme court, although the judges decided that the votes cast for him, where his name appeared on two tickets, were irregular. This is one way in which a decision may be rendered that is really not conclusive on a question of law, and is the same difficulty were to happen at the next general election there would be no precedent to follow. It appears to one not acquainted with the technicalities of jurisprudence that if a vote were irregular it would be illegal; but this rule will not hold good under the Australian ballot system.

DR. BRIGGS VINDICATED.

Dr. Briggs has been vindicated, and neither of the charges against him of teaching doctrines contrary to the Westminster creed has been sustained. In this age of the world the leaven of liberalism is permeating the churches, and the iron-bound dogmas which were considered necessary to salvation a century ago are only advocated occasionally by the clergy. If religion conformed to the advocacy of a life more comfortable to the high moral teachings of the New Testament, with the constant practice of an open-handed charity towards all classes of mankind, then the world is becoming more religious; but if it consists of implicit faith in old creeds which narrow thought to the most contracted channels of investigation, then the human race is more heathen than in any epoch in history. To hold views which are now frequently preached from the pulpit would have considered ministers of the gospel a few years ago to the severest condemnation of their church synods; but ecclesiastical bodies must keep pace with modern advancement, and men, whether Catholics, Presbyterians or Methodists, can only follow the path in religion, as in science or philosophy, that their enlightened reason marks out for them. It was hardly expected that Presbyterians would so soon occupy the advanced position of Dr. Briggs; but they are in the line of advancement, and other denominations must follow or adopt the rules of the "inquisition" of the middle ages over the minds of their adherents.

NOT HARMONIOUS.

Congressman George Fred Williams, of Massachusetts, has not helped the cause of the megawatts with his visit to the southern Democracy by his visit to Charleston, S. C. Mr. Williams made a speech at the Forefathers' Day banquet at Charleston last week, and was applauded when he devoted his attention to the corporations in the north and accused these of controlling votes in the interest of the Republican party. But when Mr. Williams gently hinted that there were election methods in the south that would not pass muster in the shadow of Bunker Hill he touched a sensitive point and the atmosphere of the banquet hall became as chilly as that which struck the *Lauressina* when her compasses were frozen, and the Charleston *News and Courier* next morning proceeded to read a lecture to megawatts in general and Mr. Williams in particular. Mr. Williams has learned that however much the megawatts may help the south to control the government, they must not speak in criticism of the southern elections. The solid south does not hand over to Mr. Cleveland its 159 electoral votes without regard to the wishes of the voters to have the elections criticized. Like the colonel who ate the chicken stolen by the foraging private, Mr. Cleveland and his friends must accept this support without asking impertinent questions.

There is some discussion in the public press of employing the convicts in the penitentiary in a jute bag factory, and this is receiving favorable comments from many. The state which supports these criminals should receive some compensation from their labor, but it should be in a channel in which they would not come in competition with the wages of bread-winners, and this causes the present agitation of the question. We believe the manufacture of jute bags has been tried in the penitentiary of our neighboring state, Washington, and the result has not been very encouraging. There is no reason that it would be more successful in Oregon, and it is experimental, at best, on this coast. There is a public necessity of the early completion of The Dalles portage road by the state, and the northwest is interested in this improvement. The present legislature can pass a liberal appropriation for this project, and there would be healthy employment for criminals in grading and doing the heavy work.

TELEGRAPHIC NEWS.

A Mob's Hearty Work.
LEWISTON, Idaho, Jan. 5.—At midnight, a furious mob of twenty-five or thirty men, masked and armed and determined to take the law into their own hands, called upon Deputy Sheriff Wright who has rooms at the court house, and the other revolvers demanded him to deliver to them the key to the cell of Albert Roberts, who murdered Jack Sutherland. The key was obtained and Roberts taken from the jail across the road to an old, grim mill and hanged by the neck. The coroner found a verdict in accordance with the above fact. The crime for which Roberts suffered was the killing of J. A. Sutherland, at Lewiston, Idaho, December 15. The row, culminating in murder, occurred in Jones' blacksmith shop at Lewiston, about four miles from Kelso, over the amount of wages coming to Roberts, who had formerly been employed by Sutherland. During the altercation Roberts called Sutherland a liar and was jumped upon by him. Roberts had a gun in the inside breast pocket of his coat, which he discharged three times, all three shots taking effect in Sutherland's chest. Sutherland lived about 10 minutes.

Career on the Skis.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—Chairman Carter, of the Republican national committee, was at the capital to-day under a subpoena from the judicial committee of the senate in the charge made against

Louis McComa, who was nominated judge of the supreme court of the District of Columbia. Talking about the probable outcome of the senatorial contests now beginning in the northwest, Mr. Carter said: "In my own state the result is still doubtful, but with chances in favor of the Democrats. In Wyoming the Democrats and Republicans together have control of the lower branch of the legislature, and there are two contested cases which I suppose will be decided against the Republicans, thus securing a majority on joint ballot, which will probably be used to elect a Democratic senator in California, the legislature is against us. In Kansas Nebraska there is a chance we will be able to elect our candidate, but there is considerable doubt about it."

Another Idaho Murder.
LEWISTON, Idaho, Jan. 5.—Mr. J. A. Crizik, a prominent miner from Warrens arrived in the city last evening, bringing the news of another horrible murder in Idaho county. Two brothers named Perkins killed a man named Grangeville and Warren, near the junction of the Little Salmon and Rapid rivers. The cause of the tragedy was about a dispute over a mining location. One of the Perkins was held under arrest by Tom Pollock at the latter's home, where Dickinson's body was taken out, and the other Perkins fled the country.

Cold Snap in Europe.
BERLIN, Jan. 5.—The cold is severe, increasing all over the continent. Last night the thermometer marked 10 degrees below zero. A heavy snow is falling in the mountains. Suspension of traffic is threatened on several railways. All the lakes in France, Germany and Austria are frozen over, and the ice has been organized in most of the cities. In Vienna thousands were employed all night clearing snow from the streets. At Trieste the harbor presents an Arctic scene. A whole family were drowned near Giffhorn, while crossing the Allier on the ice.

Democratic Control in Kansas.
TOPEKA, Kan., Jan. 3.—The supreme court is hearing arguments in the cases brought against the state board of canvassers by the Populist candidate for governor. It is believed that the hearing will not result in any change, except to give Rosenthal, Don, the certified election issued to Stubbs, Rep., by an undisputed clerical error. This leaves the Republican one majority in the house. On joint ballot the Democrats will hold the balance of power.

Double Murder and Suicide.
OAKLAND, Cal., Jan. 5.—Last night a terrible double murder and suicide took place in the rooming house of San Leandro at a point called Ashland Junction. The man who keeps a way with a man and wife who were stopping with him. He shot them both, killing the husband and dangerously wounding the wife, and then killed himself. All were Portuguese, and had been drinking heavily.

Picked Out For Prosecution.
PARIS, Jan. 5.—Le Figaro says the batch of persons selected by the government for prosecution in connection with the Panama canal frauds includes four members of the chamber of deputies and an ex minister. It is reported that the will of the chamber of deputies will be to raise from the chamber account of the connection of his name with the scandal.

Repairs to the Zamboni.
LONDON, Jan. 3.—Repairs to the British steamship Zamboni will take 36 days, at a cost of \$2100. Tenders were received from Hong Kong to repair her for \$2600. Surveyors proposed to repair her at Yokohama. Temporary repairs can be made in one week.

Cold Weather in London.
LONDON, Jan. 3.—The weather has been very windy several days. Much ice has formed in the Thames. Traffic above and below London Bridge is much impeded by pack ice. The upper river is frozen over.

SUGGESTIONS BY THE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION.

SALEM, Ore., Jan. 4.—Today the state board of equalization adopted a resolution addressed to the legislature, recommending certain changes in the assessment of property. It recommends that the 5 mill tax, now levied on the assessed value of property, be reduced to 4 mill, and that the county courts for school purposes be an independent assessment of property at less than its actual cash value, the said tax ought to be abolished. The board also recommended that the law which levies a tax on the number of children of school age in the county be amended so as to give the state board of equalization 60 days in which to complete its work, instead of 30 days, as now. It recommends that the law allowing deductions of indebtedness and exemption of same from taxation should be so amended as to not allow any exemptions for indebtedness. It asks the repeal of the present law on the assessment of mortgages. It wants property assessed on the basis of its cash value, instead of its assessed value. 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