

Oregon Scout.

B. CHANCEY, EDITOR.
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EDITORIAL NOTES.

A BILL granting a pension of \$100 a month to Mrs. Gen. Custer has passed congress.

CHARLES FOSTER, of Ohio, has been appointed secretary of the treasury, vice William Windom, deceased.

IT QUICKLY getting rid of a large surplus in the treasury entitles a party to public confidence, the republicans will have a sure thing in 1892.

THE "practical" men who think they can deal with men as though they were things, and with communities as though they were herds of cattle, sooner or later reveals the fact that they are the most impracticable men of all.

THE second session of the fifty-first congress is not conspicuously successful in carrying out the high-horse programme framed by Mr. Reed and adopted by Hoar and Edmunds. The November elections seem to have had a paralyzing effect upon the fine enthusiasm of a year ago.

WE are in receipt of the initial number of the Elgin Recorder, the new paper started at that place last week by Swinehart & Tuttle, they having purchased the plant and subscription list of the Summerville Press and moved it to Elgin. The Recorder presents a very good appearance and shows evidence of future prosperity. We wish it success.

A TOWN without a newspaper would be a dead place and yet there are business men in every town who refuse to support their local paper beyond a subscription and perhaps a few locals occasionally, and yet they expect a paper to work for their interest and are quick to find fault if it does not come up to their required standard. If a town desires a first-class, progressive, live journal that will reflect credit on the place, it must do its duty toward supporting that journal. A liberal, progressive policy pays in every enterprise. Stinginess is foggyism in a very aggravated form.

AN important point of law, which will be of interest to counties contemplating the building of county bridges was decided by Judge Deady in the case of the Pacific Bridge Company against Clackamas county. The court held that the mention of the "board of county commissioners" in section 4141 of the compilation of 1887, relating to the contracts for the building of county bridges, is null and void, because there is no such tribunal known to the constitution or laws of Oregon as board of county commissioners, and the legislature might as well have said the "board of missions."

IT is now understood that the republicans appreciate the fact that the only chance they have of winning in 1892 is to make a sentimental campaign, and with this end in view it is said they will nominate Robert T. Lincoln for no other reason than that he happens to be the son of his father; but he will not be elected. The country has grown tired of sentiment and the people will not cast their votes for a man whose only claim to their support is the fact that he was "papa's little boy." They now have at the white house a man who is the grandson of his grandfather and they do not want any more of the sentimental racket. One dose is more than enough.

THE new organization of the farmers' alliance brings the discussion of questions connected with our agricultural life to the front. Rev. E. P. Powell, who is a regular contributor to Farm and Garden, and a practical and enthusiastic farmer, as well as student, journalist, and preacher, reviews the year 1890, and expresses in his incisive fashion a deep distrust of most of the methods and motives underlying the present agitation on this question. It is our bad and wasteful system of popular education, he thinks, which lies at the bottom of the trouble, unfitting the farmers' sons for both a love and understanding of farm life, its necessities and its advantages. The Germans and the Swedes outdo the Americans in skillful and fruitful cultivation of the soil. Legislation and politics will not help a man to raise good crops, or to find a speedy market for them. We have come to a crisis in American farming, says Mr. Powell, and shall have a revolution without doubt; and he deprecates the fatal likelihood that years will be wasted in "trying to compel prosperity by a set of statutes."

WHY DON'T THEY EXPLAIN.

Two weeks ago we published a letter from "Citizen" in which he asked a few plain questions in regard to certain matters transacted through our municipal government, and kindly asked that some member of the council explain them, and space was professed them in THE SCOUT to do so, but it seems they have no desire to make known their mode of transacting business for the city, and that no one should question their acts as evidenced by the following which appeared in the last issue of their organ:

The two or three selfish, narrow and prejudiced citizens and disgruntled, "would-be politicians" that are endeavoring to exert a silent and traitorous influence to check the growth and progress of the town that is so unfortunate as to be the abiding place of their mossbackism, merit only the scorn of those true citizens who are laboring for the public weal. The game of the coward is being played among those who ought to set a better example. Why these silent, condemning interrogations regarding every effort of public enterprise? Silent? No, not always silent. Off they drift into public note through their favorite organ. What is their motive? Does anyone dare to suggest that it is for the good of the city? We are pleased to know that the number of croakers are few and that their influence is fast fading away before the honest efforts of our people to advance the city of Union.

THE SCOUT, true to its motto, is always open for discussion of matters of public interest, and we think these are questions that should receive attention. It surely would do no harm for some member of the council to answer the questions asked by "Citizen." If the council is justified by law in these proceedings in question, we see no reason why they should remain silent. It is true Judge Sanders attempts to answer the questions, but he is not a member of the council, and only says that the \$100 appropriated by the council for the purpose of sending a representative to Salem to push the charter bill through, was not used and the order will be cancelled, but he fails to say anything about the other matters in question, and we presume he knows nothing about them, but the members of the council do and it is their duty to explain them.

So far as Judge Sander's acts are concerned, no one is blaming him for going to Salem to look after the people's interests, and THE SCOUT appreciates his kindness, but the question was, has the city council the power to appropriate money out of the city treasury for the purpose of defraying the expenses of a man to go to Salem to lobby for a measure of this kind? If they have the power, why not let it be known to the people?

THE SCOUT does not, nor does "Citizen," accuse the council of doing anything wrong, but the narrow-minded idiot, of the Republican, seems to think if any one differs from his opinion—but we doubt if he has one of his own—he is a "mossback, opposed to the progress of the town," etc., and that is all the argument he can produce.

THE SCOUT is and always has been in favor of public improvements, and the upbuilding of the town, and has done more in this direction than the Republican will ever do. The people, except a few, always look to THE SCOUT for redress in matters of this kind, and they generally get it, but the editor of the Republican, poor fellow, is under the thumb and is manipulated like a jumping-jack, by a half dozen would-be leaders, who can see nothing right and good except in some scheme concocted by them, and who think it is something terrible if their acts are questioned.

THE STANFORD SCHEME.

The overwhelming objection, presenting itself at the very outset to all such measures as the Stanford bill, is that they would completely destroy the stability of the currency, and make money purely speculative. That is the principal objection to a national bank circulation arranged to expand and contract. It makes the yardstick or the bushel measure elastic. Money should be nothing more than the yardstick or the bushel measure. It ought to measure values and not determine them. To change the dollar is the same sort of a fraud as measuring with the yardstick long or short to suit a particular case. It has been done in the last twenty years persistently, but it was theft then, it is theft now, and it will be theft in those who follow such precedents on one side or the other.

What this country needs is plenty of goods and a fair yardstick to measure them—a yardstick that cannot be shortened or lengthened. That is, it needs unrestricted competition in the necessities of life and a currency that will be naturally controlled by the supply of gold and silver. Whatever this natural supply is at any time it is far better to base our paper greenback cur-

rency on it than it is to leave the control of it to demagogic politicians and financial sharpers.

Another overwhelming objection to any currency issued on land as security is that it would make the federal government a usury office and put the lands of the states in pawn. It is easy enough to get your property into a pawn shop at the legal rate, and the legal rate may be low enough to make you think at the time it will be easy to pay out, but paying out is another matter. After the principal is spent, paying back principal and interest is in many cases, if not in most, a sheer impossibility. Under the Stanford scheme we would have a purely speculative currency, causing at first a wild inflation and soon resulting in a depression in which not only land values but land titles would be involved. The separate existence of the states or else the stability of the Union would be put at hazard. At its very best the system would make the citizens of the states dependent debtors of the federal government, whose only escape from dependence would be in becoming fraudulent debtors and cheating the government out of immense sums of principal and interest. On one side and the other our system of individual independence and local self-government would be sacrificed for paper tokens which would soon lose all value as standards of exchange and would inevitably become nothing more than discredited certificates of private indebtedness to a paternal government, which could not again accredit them without becoming despotic to the last degree. There are people enough who would like to borrow paper money from the government at two per cent. on their farms and city lots. How many of them are there who would like to have the government foreclose on them as it would have to do to give real estate or a farm product currency any permanent value or standing whatever?

There are many other objections to the idea of the Stanford bill, such as the immense advantage it would give political combinations and syndicates of fraudulent speculators in league with official rings. But those who would not be convinced by the two objections above presented are not likely to be convinced by anything short of the calamity which comes as a penalty for folly.—St. Louis Republic.

THE LEGISLATURE.

A New Year Letter From Salem—Both Houses Adjourn—Veto Power.

SALEM, February 22.—[Special correspondence to THE SCOUT.]—At 10:45 o'clock p. m. Friday the president of the senate and the speaker of the house closed their respective farewell addresses, and declared the sixteenth biennial session of the Oregon legislature adjourned sine die.

The number of laws passed was enormous, in fact quite sufficient to last the state for many years, and succeeding legislatures for some time will only be required to appeal existing statutes, and the courts will be kept busy passing upon the constitutionality of many of the enactments. Both houses spent the short session Friday in signing bills, and all such which had been acted on by both branches of the legislature received the signatures of the officers.

No legislature in the history of the state has attempted so much as this one, though many have been divided on this score, and accomplished so little. Only a very few laws have been passed affecting the state in general, and many of those are worse than useless. The only ones which really affect the masses of the people are the port of Portland bill, the Portland consolidation bill, the Australian ballot bill, the \$60,000 portage railway bill, and one known as the labor bill. All except the first and last named have been discussed in these columns heretofore and need no further mention. The port of Portland bill provides for the issuing of bonds to the extent of \$500,000 by the city of Portland for the purpose of creating a channel from that place to the sea, of a mean depth of twenty-five feet. The bill is purely local in its nature, but general in its results; therefore we include it in the above list. The labor bill passed the house Thursday night, having passed the senate some time previous. The bill is a direct and fatal stab at organized labor, and in spite of all the influence which could be brought to bear, it passed both houses. It provides that any person who shall by force attempt to prevent any person from working or accepting work, or by means of printed or written matter, whether concerned as an officer, agent or member of any association, or to induce others to neither buy nor sell to another, or to compel him to discharge or employ another, or to increase their wages or the number employed, shall

be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor. In other words, all strikes, boycotts, regulating the price of labor or in anywise advancing the cause of labor is a misdemeanor under the provisions of this act. The bill was introduced by Senator Willis, of Multnomah county. Hardly one-half of the members knew the literal meaning of the act, and when it came up for final passage, it was too late to work against it effectually. Labor organizations of the state generally overlooked the bill, and had but very few representatives to work against it. The only hope now for the defeat of the law is the governor's veto, and as near as can be learned he will allow it to pass. Why he should do this cannot even be conjectured, as heretofore he has posed as the friend of the laborer and poor man, and on this question entirely rests his political success.

The number of foolish, if not detrimental, laws passed at the recent session is the leading topic of conversation at the capital, and the doings as a whole are almost universally condemned. There is no doubt but that the fight for supremacy between the Simon and Lotan factions has had much influence in leading to legislation of this kind.

The prediction that the assessment and taxation bill would not pass has been verified, much to the disgust of the friends of better laws in that direction. The senate firmly planted both feet on it after it went on the table. That body made itself most conspicuous, however, in the matter of a world's fair appropriation. During the last twenty-four hours of the session, the friends of the bill labored hard to call it up in the senate, but to no purpose, and attention will therefore be attracted to our incomparable state and its mossbacks as being the only one in this glorious union that failed to make such an appropriation.

The wagon road bills met the fate predicted in store for them at the hands of the governor. When the veto was announced the wagon road men held a caucus and drafted another bill embodying the whole family of bills, appropriating the money out of the 5 per cent sale of state lands. This went the way of its predecessors, and all road legislation has been killed for two years. The objections of the governor to the first bill was that it was an injustice and unconstitutional to divert money from the general fund for this purpose. His objection to the second was that the fund from which the money was appropriated belonged to the school fund, and could not therefore be used.

The contest over the seat to the representatives from Union county died still born as did also the meager effort to attach Pine Valley to Baker county. Representative Barnes, of Wallowa, could not get the proper lines and petitions from his constituents for annexing the northern panhandle of Union to Wallowa, and therefore the present ungainly lines of Union county will still adorn the map of Oregon.

A sigh of intense relief arises from the average citizen over the adjournment of the legislative body. Its unpopularity arises entirely from the quality of the work done, and not from the quantity, which has most certainly been very creditable.

Just before adjournment, Representative Moore, of Benton county, arose and thanked Speaker Geer for the able, efficient and fair manner in which he has conducted the deliberations of the lower house, and in closing, on behalf of the members presented him with an elegant gold watch. Mr. Geer was completely overwhelmed, and when sufficiently able to control his emotions, returned his thanks to the members, collectively and individually, in appropriate words.

The majority is greatly censured by almost every democrat for not allowing them to name the democratic members of the railroad, fish and pilot commissions, which were nominated in the republican caucus. On the call of the roll, every democrat voted blank, as stated by Senator Veatch, refusing to swallow the dose prepared for them by a republican caucus.

McAllister, of Union, will remain in town a few days yet as a member of the house committee to oversee the preparing of the journal. The other members have all returned home, and the capital city has once more assumed its every-day appearance.

The total amount of money appropriated for all purposes, not including wagon roads and a few other private and local bills, amounts in round numbers to \$1,213,000. The special bills will run the amount to nearly a million and a half, should they be signed by the governor. This is by far the largest expenditure of money ever made by the state, and the extravagance of some of the items has caused much remark. The rest of the legislation is now with the governor who will undoubtedly put his stamp of disapproval on many acts of the recent factional fight. The veto power is now at work, and gives promise of doing much good to the general interests of the state.

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