

# The Oregon Scout.

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THURSDAY, DEC. 24, 1891

## THE NEW SECRETARY OF WAR.

The president has appointed Stephen B. Elkins, of West Virginia to the office of secretary of war.

Stephen B. Elkins was born September 26th, 1841, in Perry county, Ohio. In early life he went to Missouri and was graduated in July, 1860, from the Missouri State University. In 1862 and 1863 he served as captain in the Seventy-seventh Missouri Regiment.

He was admitted to the bar in 1864, soon after which he removed to New Mexico and opened a law office. He also engaged in mining and stock-raising there, from which he accumulated a fortune. In the same year he was chosen a delegate to the territorial legislature. Subsequently he served in the forty-third congress as a territorial delegate and was re-elected.

Previous to his election to congress he had been district attorney and attorney-general. He also held the position of United States district attorney. In 1872 he was elected to congress and at the expiration of his term entered into business pursuits. He possesses an ample fortune and his mining properties in Colorado, New Mexico and West Virginia, together with his other property, make him one of the largest land owners in the United States.

Mr. Elkins is married, his wife being the daughter of ex-Senator Henry G. Davis of Virginia, from whom he has acquired extensive business interests in that state.

Mr. Elkins was a member of the national republican committee from 1872 till 1884, and took an active part in the Chicago convention of 1884, which nominated James G. Blaine for the presidency. He is known as an efficient organizer and shrewd politician.

## THE WORK OF THE FIFTY-SECOND CONGRESS.

The new congress will have three important lines of work to follow—investigation, retrenchment and reform.

The course of the administration has been singularly uneven. The management of some department has been immaculate, while others reeked with scandals. Secretary Tracy has done admirable work in the navy department, winning the detestation of the bosses in his own party and the esteem of all men of parties who can appreciate an honest purpose. Ex-Secretary Proctor has taken care of the army in a fairly charitable manner. Uncle Jerry Rusk has run the agricultural end of the administration in a respectable way, barring an ineradicable tendency to claim the credit of importing the Australian ladybug for himself. The civil service commission have impartially administered the merit law in the face of a tremendous pressure against it.

Secretary Noble has apparently tried to do well in the interior department, but the jobbers have been too much for him. In four of the great bureaus under his control—the Indian bureau, the land office, the census office and the bureau of pensions—scandal has been rampant. Each of those offices must have the undivided attention of a congressional committee resolved upon hunting down the truth.

The post office under the rule of Wanamaker could furnish employment to a whole congress. The San Francisco postoffice site steal deserves a committee all to itself. The remarkable arrangements of star routes, by which it takes as long to carry the mails from San Francisco to some of the mountain towns of California as it does to New York, must be investigated.

Wanamaker's misdeeds are inextricably mixed up with those of the officials of the treasury. The Keystone bank scandal involves both the postmaster-general and the comptroller of the currency. Foster and Crouse are as deep in the San Francisco postoffice site steal as Wanamaker.

In the department of justice, to say nothing of eastern matters, congress should look into the management of the Benson cases and find out what gives Garter his pull with his superiors. This is only a part of the detective

work that will have to be undertaken by the new congress. But a still more important task will be the restoration of economy in the expenditures of the government. The apportionments of the billion-dollar congress must be reduced by a round hundred millions a term, or \$50,000,000 a year. This can be done without cutting off a single payment that ought to be made, but it will require the relentless amputation of every superfluous expenditure.

Lastly and above all, this congress must reform the tariff. It must not merely go through the motions of reforming it—it must actually accomplish something or show very good reasons for failing to do so. It will not do its duty by passing a general tariff bill through the house, to be strangled in the senate. It must not content itself with "making a record"—it must make an honest effort to lop off some of the enormities of the McKinley law. It must pass a series of separate bills, one abolishing the duty on grain bags, another on binding twine, another on cotton ties, another on wool, another on coal, another on iron ore, and so on. These bills, or most of them, would be certain to go through the senate—Senator Stanford has committed himself to free coal, both Stanford and Felton have been instructed by the republican legislature of California to vote for free grain bags, and the senate voted for free binding twine when its republican majority was much larger than it is now. If such measures got as far as the president, he would do some solid thinking before he vetoed them. If he did veto them, the democratic party could stand it. If he signed them, every one that went into effect would be an object lesson in the benefit of tariff reform.

To accomplish all this, the democratic majority will have to work. Fortunately, it has enough members to cover all the ground. There have been complaints that there are too many democrats to be accommodated with good places on the regular committees. The surplus can be set to work investigating.—Examiner.

The republican press hails with delight every dispatch announcing the closing of some manufacturing establishment in Europe. They do this on the assumption that it is caused by the McKinley bill and in some way is a benefit to the American people. Many of these failures are perhaps attributable to the action of that inquiry. But they are not a benefit to America in general, they are such only to manufacturing capitalists. The real meaning of these failures is that these people are no longer selling to Americans, because the free American is no longer allowed to spend his money where he can buy the most with it, but is compelled by law to buy an inferior article at an increased cost from certain protected manufacturers. The monopolist has increased his gains, the American consumer has less for his money and the foreign laborer loses his job. It is another step in the direction of converting the millionaires of this country into hundred millionaires, the hundred millionaires into billionnaires and the ordinary well-to-do American citizens into paupers.

The Chicago Inter-Ocean very pertinently and truthfully asserts: "If the reader wants to settle in a wide-awake community, all he has to do is to look at the local newspapers. A wide-awake, well supported home newspaper is always associated with good schools, churches, active business and intelligent people. It never fails. No business man or pioneer in any community makes any better investment than the dollars he gives to the support of a good home newspaper."

## MEDICAL SPRINGS ITEMS.

MEDICAL SPRINGS, December 22, 1891. "Uncle Billy" Wilson is at the Springs for his health.

Snow, the beautiful, beautiful snow is here and still falling in copious quantities.

We notice Eugene Selder, of Cove, on our streets this week. He is here on a visit with relatives.

Wm. Martin, of Park, will bacon something near one hundred fine fat hogs this winter. Go ahead Bill; it beats anything in the settlement.

The la grippe is abroad in the land and many are complaining, among whom are, W. D. Emele and Seigle Coffinan, who are wrestling with the monster.

Mr. Calvert, the Idaho Stage Co's agent is out on the line between Union and Cornucopia, paying off the boys, and otherwise arranging for the winter's run.

Quite a good deal of game in the neighboring mountains. While stockmen are hunting their animals, we hear of several of them that have been compelled to defend themselves and it has been all they could do to keep the vicious animals from biting them.

Tom Fisher and Bill Barnes will give a grand ball in Wright's new hall at the Springs on New Year's night. Tom offers a handsome prize for the best lady dancer, while Bill offers a prize for the ugliest man, and further agrees not to take a chance himself.

Quite a good deal of stock is being driven to Lower Powder for winter quarters. They have hundreds of tons of alfalfa to feed and offer for sale. They also have honey, all the same as Eagle valley. In a year or two more we expect to hear of a harvest home picnic in their settlement.

Fred Duncan certainly has harder luck than anybody. He has waited for the snow to come, then he starts in pel mel to build a sleigh from the stumps, while all the boys are sleigh-riding with their best girls, and what is worse than all, they are sleigh-riding with his best girl, which keeps him standing in the shop door most of the time. He will come to the front in full blast, with Grey Eagle and the sleigh, about the time the mud is as deep as the snow is now.

Mrs. Dunham Wright and Grace, also Miss Eva Emele are having a jolly time with relatives and old acquaintances in the Cove. A merry Christmas to them. Dunham is dancing to the tune of Jimmy Jumps, as usual, while they are gone, and as he feeds the horses, hogs and cattle, he makes alliance speeches to them, and promises them better times. He says they are always glad to see him, and possibly he is telling them the truth. One thing certain, the animals, like the two old parties, would more highly appreciate him if he would not talk the third party so much.

## The Examiner.

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