

STATE TAX LEVY.

Governor Geer, Secretary of State Dunbar and State Treasurer Moore, acting jointly, on January 12th, fixed the state levy tax at 6.3 mills, which, upon valuation of \$120,282,878, will raise \$757,783.13.

As explanation why the state levy for 1900 is 0.6 mill higher than it was in 1899, the Portland Oregonian's Salem correspondent, Joseph L. Reed, says in his Salem letter:

"The higher levy this year was due to the lower valuation and to several other causes. First, under the act of the last legislature abolishing the fee system, \$55,000 must be paid in salaries to the district attorneys of the several districts. Formerly, these officials were paid mostly in fees in the counties. Second, three items amounting to \$45,000, which, on account of press of business had been omitted from the estimate made by the old board last year, had to be met. These were: Compensation for rejected Oregon volunteers, \$5,000; replacing a building of the agricultural college, which had been destroyed by fire, \$25,000; to reimburse the commission which represented Oregon at the Omaha exposition, \$15,000.

"A noticeable feature of the levy is that Multnomah county, by the reduction of valuations, will pay \$44,903 less than last year, when it contributed \$244,362."

Governor Geer, discussing the question of relative valuations in the various counties, said to the Portland Evening Telegram:

"Unless something is done in the way of remedial legislation as to the duties of assessors and the gradual decline in the assessed valuation of the property of the state levy will soon reach ten mills. This is not caused by an expensive state government, for we have a system that has reached practically the maximum of economy. As long ago as 1892 about \$400,000 more, but the strife among county assessors to reach the lowest possible estimate in order to escape state taxation has, considering the oaths they have taken, reached a point that is simply astounding. When we had a state board of equalization that had sufficient power, as the legislature thought, to equalize these discrepancies, and was elected by the people for that purpose, the total amounts returned each year, and that in a state that is growing right along, decreased with a degree of regularity that was simply appalling. The total in 1893 was \$158,000,000, in the next year \$150,000,000, and the regular decrease was by millions, 144, 143, 134, 133, until this year it is less than 120.

"Our neighboring state of Washington has returned this year a total of \$229,000,000 or \$110,000,000, more than Oregon, when everybody knows that our state is far in excess of Washington in actual wealth.

"The difficulties in the matter of equalizing the returns of the assessors are illustrated by the summary of one of our principal counties as returned to the secretary of state. There are headings prepared for the amounts and value of 'miles of railroad,' 'miles of telegraph and telephone lines,' steamboats, sailboats, stationary engines, etc., and railroad rolling stock.' Instead of returning these separately, as contemplated by law, and as provided in the printed form, the miles of railroad bed and telegraph and telephone lines are returned in a lump sum, as to value and as to miles. So is the value of steamboats, sailboats, engines and railroad rolling stock! No board of equalization on earth could even begin to 'equalize' the values of railroad rolling stock, for instance, nor of telegraph and telephone lines, for they are not returned separately. Accordingly to the return there is no way of knowing how many miles of railroad bed there are in that county, although the law requires such return, nor of the value of railroad rolling stock, for it has been returned with the value of steamboats in a lump sum!

"Of course this low valuation would not cost the people anymore for taxes if the low valuation were uniform. But it is an injury to the reputation of the state abroad where the results alone are known and the causes are not understood. It must be said for the assessors, however; that there has been a partially developed public sentiment that has, in a measure, justified this method of undervaluation evidently thinking that in some way it made the burden of taxation lighter. We cannot fool ourselves in this matter much longer, and if this ridiculously low valuation and inequality will serve the purpose of stimulating the next legislature to investigate the question of securing fair assessments and to provide a board of equalization of three members elected by the people with power that will approach arbitrary authority in the matter of completing the work of partial assessors, the people will in the long run have gained by the result of it. There will be no question before the next legislature that will compare in importance with this one, and it is to be hoped it will be successfully met and solved."

THE Portland Dispatch, not the most reliable authority on republican politics, is inclined to limit Senator McBride's support to the Heppner Gazette and the Oregonist. The weary old editor must be sleeping. Record of Senator McBride's important work for Oregon is on file in every republican newspaper office in Oregon, and we predict an awakening for the Dispatch.

CROOK county's republicans are booming Representative Williamson for congress. He is a sheepman and their motive is to have the sheep interests guarded in congress.

ARLINGTON.

The Condon Globe says: "The business men of this place are making a move to improve the road from here to Crook creek in a substantial manner. The plan is to grade the road, make it straight and then give it a dressing of fine gravel. The proposed improvements have been talked of before but only since the assurance of a line of steam boats on the river and a knowledge of the amount of wheat and wool that naturally belong to this shipping point, have the business men seen their way clear to put so much money into the road as is required to make them first class, although this place has been very liberal in the matter of making roads, having spent large sums of money for that purpose in this county and on the Washington side of the river. This is the only natural point on the Columbia river in this section of country for a good, easy grade, in fact the only place where a road can be made with a grade less than 100 feet to the mile for the first ten miles. The people of Condon should look to this place as their shipping point. Although the railroad is near them on the west, the John Day is and always will be a barrier to a practicable outlet that way.

The Columbia River Railroad and Navigation Co. has given notice to some of the settlers on the Washington side of the river that on February 6 they will begin action in the courts to condemn rights of way through their lands.

Now is the time to pay up your subscription to the Gazette.

WANTS BETTER MAIL SERVICE.

WAGNER, Or., Jan. 13, 1900. MR. CORLENS MERRITT, Dear Sir: I write you at the request of the people of this country in regard to our mail facilities. Some time ago the route from Hardman to Wagner was discontinued, for some cause unknown, and we sent in a petition to have it re-established, and have just received a letter from the mail department refusing to grant the route. Now what we want is for the Heppner people to get in and help us pull this thing through. We have a petition for a route from Wagner to Caleb with over 200 names, and have written to W. R. Ellis to write up one from Hardman to Wagner, which will give Heppner a southern line of 70 miles through a country which does all its trading and banking at Heppner, and it is to your and our interest to have a line in here. As it is, we get the Fossil Journal two days ahead of the Gazette and the Oregonian from one to two days later. So I wish you would see Messrs. Ellis, Minor, Conner, Smead and any of the Heppner people, and when we send our petition see if there can be some pulling done. Any suggestions that you people make in this matter we will follow. About all we can do is to get a good big petition and send it to you people, and you try to get it through. Hoping you will do the best you can in this matter, I am Yours respectfully, J. F. SPRAY.

Here is a chance for the people of Heppner to help themselves by helping others. A petition signed by the business men of Heppner should at once be circulated and forwarded to Washington. The people of Wagner are entitled to a daily mail via Heppner. Who will take the lead?

GILMORE'S STORY.

The Lieutenant Tells of His Experiences During Captivity.

The released American prisoners were barefooted and in rags when they arrived at Manila. Only one of the Yorktown's crew, Venville, is unaccounted for. The Yorktown's men, who were rescued with Lieutenant Gilmore, were W. Walton, chief quartermaster; Vandoit, sailmaker's mate; J. Ellsworth, coxswain; L. P. Edwards, landsman; A. J. Peterson, apprentice; F. Anderson, landsman; and S. Brisolez, seaman. At Baler, J. Dillon and C. A. Morrissy, landsman, were instantly killed; O. B. MacDonald, seaman, and E. J. Nyegard, gunner's mate, were mortally wounded, and D. W. Venville, apprentice, and O. W. Woodburg, seaman, were seriously wounded.

Lieutenant Gilmore made the following statement to a correspondent of the Associated Press: "The Filipinos abandoned us on the night of December 16. We had reached the Abulit river, near its source, that morning, and the Filipinos rafted us over. We then went down the stream along a rough trail, guarded by a company of Filipinos. That night we were separated from this guard, and another company, armed with Mausers, was put in charge of us. I suspected something, and questioned the lieutenant in command. He said: "I have orders from General Tio to shoot you all, but my conscience forbids. I shall leave you here."

"I begged him for two rifles to protect us from savages, adding that I would give him letters to the Americans, who would pay him well and keep him from all harm. He refused this, however, saying he would not dare to comply. Soon afterwards he left us with his company.

"We had seen some savages in war-paint around us, and we prepared to fight them with cobblestones, the only weapons that were available to us. The next morning we followed the trail of the Filipino soldiers, feeling that it was better to stick to them than be murdered by savages, but we could not catch up with them. Then I ordered the men to build rafts, in the hope of floating down the river. It was a forlorn hope, but I knew the river must empty into the sea somewhere. I was so weak myself that I did not expect to get out, but I thought some of the men could.

"On the morning of December 18, while we were working on the rafts, the Americans came toward us, yelling. One of my men shouted: 'They are on us.' He was lashing a raft of bamboo. I, however, knew it was not the yell of savages, but the yell of Americans. The rescuing troops thought we had Filipino guards and called to us in English to lie down so that they could shoot the Filipinos. That was the finest body of officers and men I ever saw."

Lieutenant Gilmore could not speak enthusiastically enough about the 140 picked men who had rescued him and his party. The command spent the day in making rafts. Colonel Hare thought Lieutenant Gilmore too weak to live through the trip, but there was no alternative. They shot many rapids, the men losing all their effects, and Lieutenant Gilmore some valuable papers. Only 14 out of 37 rafts survived the first night's experience, and 80 men were practically unable to walk when Vigan was reached. Describing the flight from Benguet, when the Americans approached, Lieutenant Gilmore said:

"The Filipinos, completely terrified, left Benguet on December 7. They hurried the prisoners from town to town, often retracing the trail, not knowing where the Americans would attack. After being without food for almost three days, they killed several horses, and we lived on horse flesh for several days. I did not have a full meal from December 7, until I reached Vigan. Indeed, the rescuing party lived largely upon rice without salt. There was one day when I was reduced to chewing grass and bark.

"While we were in the hands of General Tio's men he issued an order that any person aiding an American by food or money should be treated as a criminal. One citizen of Vigan, Senor Vera, was probably killed for befriending us. We would have starved but for the kindness of some of the residents of the towns and some of the Filipino colonels, but others treated us brutally. Wherever there was a prison we were kept there. Where there was no prison they would lodge us in a convent. We suffered greatly from want of exercise as well as from lack of food."

Lieutenant Gilmore, although tanned and ruddy from exposure, is weak and nervous, showing the results of long hardships. He speaks warmly of Aguinaldo, and very bitterly against General Tio, declaring that while in the former's jurisdiction he was treated splendidly, but that after he fell into Tio's hands, he suffered everything. "The Filipino treatment of the Spaniards," said Lieutenant Gilmore, "was brutal in the extreme. The insurgents had old grudges to wipe out against them. Many talk about the reconquerados in Cuba, but I have seen Spaniards dying at the rate of two or three per day of starvation in the hospitals at Vigan. I have seen Tagal officers strike Spaniards in the face with whips and revolvers."

Lieutenant Gilmore declined to speak regarding political conditions, except to say that he thought the insurrection would last as long as there were any Tagals left. Among the prisoners arriving with Lieutenant Gilmore were: F. J. Hubert, Edward Burke and J. J. Farley, sailors from the Ordaneta; Von Glisen, of the Baltimore; A. H. Gordon and George Sackett, of the Third infantry; Leland Smith and Frank Sloan, of the signal corps; Harry Hubert, of the hospital corps; William Bruce and Edward Honeymay, of the Nevada cavalry;

Martin Bronson and James Curran, of the Sixth infantry; Aubert Bishop, of the Third artillery, and John O'Brien and David Brown, civilians. Brown, who was formerly a preacher in Honolulu, twice revealed to the insurgents the plots of the Americans to escape, in the hope of gaining the good will of the Filipinos. The rest of the party openly accuse him of treachery, and entertain the bitterest feeling toward him. Charles Baker, of the Third artillery, was formerly one of the prisoners, but he became too weak to travel, and the Filipino guards bayoneted him in the last flight through the mountains.

GOLD IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Washington Volunteers Found it in the Streams.

A son of Mrs. Julius Keithley, of Heppner, and at one time a compositor on the Gazette, Charles R. Wyland, who went to the Philippines as a member of the First Washington volunteers and recently returned with the regiment, has written a letter to a friend in Portland, which contains several photographs which are of public interest. Extracts from the letter are as follows:

It appears to me that the people of the Northwest do not realize the richness of the region called the Philippine islands. What I saw of the country makes me desire to return there, though not as a soldier. My patriotic spirit for the present is satisfied. When peace is restored in the islands, which will probably be soon, a surprisingly large trade will be opened up with the coast. That is a country of vast resources.

The average American would like Manila. To stand on the Bridge of Spain (Manila) and look around, first down the river at the immense shipping, then over to the right, the busy Escolta, with its surging mass of people, the streets jammed with vehicles; over to the left the historical "walled city" and the gay Luneta, and then about to the beautiful and rich tropical country, always makes an American feel proud, indeed, to know his country owns and rules this Oriental paradise, although it cost many lives.

Manila itself is not an unhealthy place. So much sickness among the soldiers is caused by their hardships, which, of course, to do good work cannot be avoided. The principal causes of sickness are sleeping on the ground and drinking bad water. Old inhabitants or natives, like the instinctive rooster, always spend the night several feet from the ground. The houses there are invariably built up at least six or seven feet from terra firma. Before hostilities started, while quartered in Pao, I never felt better in my life, and even after enduring many long marches of from 20 to 30 miles a day and sleeping when we could, usually in swamps, I felt very well. From February 4 till March 10, we had no change of clothing (what little we wore), continually sleeping on our guns, and if a soldier secured permission to go to the river for a bath it was at his peril, for Filipino sharpshooters were always lying in wait, and when he plunged into the refreshing waters a shower of Mauser bullets would splatter around him. Only mud and lizards could tolerate that very long.

My sickness, which almost killed me under the baked sod of Malate cemetery, came from drinking bad water—green water. On a day about the middle of April we covered 35 miles, chasing and fighting insurgents, and, incidentally, burning their houses and destroying everything in sight. Having lost my canteen, I was soon splitting cotton. Finally, when almost choked for water, I came upon a pool of green stuff, alive with wigglers. But it was wet, and I drank deep, not knowing when I would get any more. Well, I used my stomach as a sort of incubator for snakes. Shortly after that I was compelled to go to the hospital with a severe case of so-called dysentery. The doctors laughed at me when I intimated my suspicions of being devoured internally by reptiles. I suffered all the tortures of hades, I suppose, and in the meantime drifted down from 190 to 110 pounds. My misery in the hospital was an experience not soon to be forgotten.

After the regiment's return to San Francisco, unknown to the surgeon, I procured and took some medicine that was guaranteed to kill anything that crawls. After a few days the medicine seemed to have the desired effect, for it brought from me a dead snake 14 inches long. It had no eyes, but there was no doubt about it. No worm, but a proper snake. Ever since then I have grown better, and now weigh 160 pounds.

Many more of the soldier boys have drunk from the same pool or similar pools in Luzon, and are dying from the same cause, after being treated for months for dysentery.

Surely when business is resumed in the Philippines there will be grand chances for Americans and American money in almost all lines of business. You hear much about the "poor" Filipino, downtrodden by Spain, but they all seemed to have money.

The Filipinos in and about the towns, generally, speak Spanish, besides their native tongue, and are very bright. They are natural musicians, and show talent, especially on the violin, playing classical European music. They should not be classed with Indians nor Chinese; they are far superior.

One evening a Filipino, former mayor of Pao, Senor Quirino del Prado, and myself were enjoying a dinner at the Hotel de Espana (Escolta), when a drunken American soldier came staggering in and commenced abusing our entertaining hostess in all the vocabulary of American expletives. I was declining to my Filipino "amigo" of what a grand nation was America and in what a high state of civilization were her people. He interrupted me, calling my attention to the boisterous soldier, who was acting most disgraceful, and giving me a dig in the ribs, the senior asked, "Do you mean to say that fellow came over here to civilize us?"

Of course, out in the interior they are ignorant, and their clothing is "nisi", but they are quick to learn, easy to lead, but hard to drive.

By the way, some of their officers gave our commanders some good pointers on how to flank the enemy. But the Filipinos can't stand the American yell. Sometimes they show wonderful nerve, but when they once get on the run, they are "easy." But in a few days they return for another "go."

The United States soldiers who were in the Philippines all thanked their stars that the insurgents had very little artillery and did not know how to handle even that. They would make canons out of bamboo and iron bands, sneak around our old camping grounds and gather up the corned beef and tomato cans, fill them with chunks of iron and rock and shoot them at us. These missiles never did us any damage, but sounded like freight trains coming through the air.

I believe there will be a gold excitement over there in a few years that will eclipse the Klondike. Along creeks where we were camped, far from the mountains, I found many colors, using old Filipino rice pots for panning out. Natives from the mountains all say there is "mucha oro," and frequently bring in nuggets, but they do not understand mining of any kind. The gold is inferior to American gold, going about \$16 to the ounce. CHARLES R. WYLAND.

The Latest X-Ray Invention

is the endoscope, which is for the purpose of examining the interior of the stomach. It is claimed that with this instrument the treatment of stomach troubles will be revolutionized, as it locates the cause of disease. With due respect to science, however, would state that the cause of stomach troubles have been known for the past fifty years, and likewise their cure, which is Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, a medicine that has many imitators, but no equals. It cures dyspepsia, indigestion, biliousness, constipation, nervousness, insomnia. It also prevents malaria, fever and ague, and keeps the bowels regular. When not feeling right, take a dose. It is the standard medicine of the American people. Look for private revenue stamp over neck of bottle.

CARDS THE CAUSE.

Mike Rosendorf, a Former Heppner Merchant, Suicides at Baker City.

BAKER CITY, Jan. 12.—Mike Rosendorf committed suicide this morning by shooting himself twice in the head. Despondency was responsible for his act. He left a number of letters addressed to relatives and friends, stating that he had made a failure of life. He said he was a member of Independence lodge of Workmen, and carried several thousand dollars of insurance in a life insurance company, and that the premium would be due on the 15th instant. He said that the money which he left would provide for his family, and without this he could see no way of supporting them; that he had wanted a fortune, having a mania for gambling over which he had no control, and he admonished young men to leave cards alone—that they were responsible for his downfall and his sudden taking-off.

His family reside at Independence, Or. His half brother, Herman Hirschberg, is a leading citizen there.

On his person were found several letters to his family, and the following to a minister, with its warning against gambling:

"Rev. J. R. N. Bell—Dear Friend: I wish you would telegraph or telephone to Joe Hirschberg, Independence, about this mishap. He will pay all the expenses. Tell him that under no consideration shall he allow my wife or children to come up here, as it is a dangerous and rough trip, and they can do no good. Please impress that upon his mind. I belong to Industry lodge No. 8, A. O. U. W. of Portland, who allow \$50 for burial expenses. There is no need of spending that much money on me, as any old chance coffin will do for me, and I hope the balance will be paid to my family, who will need it. I want no embalming, but would like to be buried here by the Workmen lodge. If Joe should happen to be away from Independence, then telephone to Zed Rosendorf for him to tell Joe. I am sure Joe and Zed will come, and if they do I want them to pay Mrs. White, at the hotel, \$1 and get my valise and overcoat. Pay to the St. Lawrence restaurant 75 cents, and redeem my watch at E. P. Vorse's second-hand store for \$2.00 and give it to Gordon Gustor Rosendorf to keep.

"I am sick and tired of the foolish, extravagant life I have lived, and am glad to get out of it. Please be sure you tell Joe not to let my wife or children come, and if possible bury me here at as little cost as possible. Remember, Industry lodge pay \$50 toward the expenses. I hope the master working here, to whom I am under great obligations, will certify to my death as soon as possible so my wife can get the insurance money.

"Now, Brother Bell, be easy on me for old acquaintance sake and see to it that my request is fulfilled. Tell Joe to give you \$2.25; my wife will pay him back. If you want a good theme to preach on, preach to young men to never learn to play a game of cards.

"Good-bye to you and all my friends. Yours truly, M. ROSENDORF."

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