

POLK COUNTY OBSERVER

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NO. 30

NEWS OF COUNTY TOWNS

FALLS CITY.

Mrs. Julia Courter returned from Portland, Tuesday.

Miss Bessie Muscott has gone to Portland for an extended stay.

Mrs. Roy Graham and children are home from their visit to Vestaburg, Michigan.

Mr. and Mrs. T. D. Hollowell have returned from an extended visit in Portland.

Grandma Thoro, of Caldwell, Idaho, is visiting her daughter, Mrs. Ira Mehring.

The Rev. LaDow left for Walla Walla, Monday, for a two weeks' visit with his mother.

The approach to the steel bridge has been fenced and will be covered with crushed rock at once.

Miss Jessie Pugh left last week for a two weeks' visit in Portland, Salem and neighboring cities.

Miss Lillian Bogart and Miss Ethel Newman returned to their homes in Monmouth the last of the week.

Billy McAdams has given up his position at the Tavern and has returned to his home in Independence.

The case of Polk County against 26 of the men at Spaulding's logging camp, for refusal to pay road tax, was tried before the Justice of the Peace, Saturday. It could not be proven that all of them took care to settle the account before leaving town.

BALLSTON.

Brooks & Price finished threshing Saturday.

The clover hullers have had to lay off again on account of the cloudy weather.

J. W. Mayfield began picking hops Thursday.

George Ball made a business trip to McMinnville, Saturday.

William Fudge and sons, Lawrence and Vern, have gone to the coast for a few days' outing.

Richard Ctanfield returned Wednesday from an extended visit to his old home in England.

The fourth quarterly conference for Ballston circuit was held at the Methodist church here Thursday afternoon, District Superintendent C. F. Rowland presiding.

ANTIOCH VALLEY.

The Sullivan brothers have rented a place on the Luckiamute.

Clarence McCaleb will plant a fine walnut orchard in this vicinity.

W. M. Mack has secured the contract for building the new schoolhouse for district 67.

The threshing season in this vicinity has closed quite successfully, the yield being exceptionally large.

The corn on W. M. Mack's property measures an average height of eight feet and the crop is quite heavy.

A fine horse belonging to Tom Mark's father-in-law was gored to death by a cow a short time ago.

Millinery Opening.

Grand opening of Fall millinery at the Emporium, Saturday, September 12. Latest and most up-to-date line of goods on display in this city. Complete line of fine tailored suits. Ladies are cordially invited to attend. SMITH & SHELTON, proprietors. 9-8-2t

Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Garner, of Ida Grove, Iowa, are visiting at the home of his cousin, Superintendent H. C. Seymour. They may decide to make their home in Oregon in future.

SOME RAMBLING THOUGHTS

Notes By the Way From the Former Editor of the Polk County Observer.

TRINIDAD, Colo., Sept. 4.—(To the Editor.)—Colorado, in addition to her enormous production of mineral wealth, ranks high among the Western States as a producer of fruits and vegetables. Peaches and melons from the country surrounding Grand Junction are shipped to all parts of the United States, while Rocky Ford watermelons and cantaloupes are as well known in the Eastern markets as are Hood River apples, Willamette Valley hops, prunes and cherries or Rogue River pears. Apples, however, do not thrive in the higher altitudes. Within the last ten years, hundreds of acres of apples have been planted in the Arkansas River valley, near Canon City, but the experiment has not been profitable to the orchardists. The trees have made a rapid and luxuriant growth, but their bearing qualities are not to be compared with the productiveness of the orchards in the more favorable climate of the Pacific Northwest. Already, large numbers of farmers are planning to dig up their orchards and plant the ground to vegetables and alfalfa, crops which will assure a profitable yield every year. Colorado probably leads all states in the production of the sugar beet; and potatoes, corn, cabbage, tomatoes, and other vegetables thrive in the irrigated soil. The Arkansas River valley is a highly fertile strip of land along its entire length, and here the juicy cantaloupe and the luscious watermelon most nearly reach perfection. Which reminds me:

Over at the Arkansas Valley Fair, held in the city of La Junta, Thursday of this week was set apart as Watermelon Day. This day has been the big feature of the fair for many years past, and has gained National fame through its very novelty. It is a veritable watermelon feast, and people go from every part of Colorado and the adjoining states to participate in its delights. Old and young join in the festivities, and watermelons by the wagonload are served to the visitors without money and without price. Just think of that, you boys over in Polk county! Great, juicy watermelons—as big as your mother's churn—whole rows and stacks of them! And all a fellow had to do was to get out his jack-knife and help himself! Just think of burrowing your nose in a great slice of ice-cold melon, with the juice running down your chin, and the big, crisp, red heart fairly melting into sugary sweetness in your mouth! Wouldn't that be great? Well, that's just the kind of fun the boys in Colorado enjoyed yesterday, and they made the most of the opportunity. Every white boy and nigger boy and Mexican boy in Trinidad that could raise the price of a ticket went on the morning excursion, and all had the time of their young lives. When they arrived home at night, happy as larks, some of the boys looked like they had swallowed their melons without slicing them.

I have often wondered just how much good hard cash that word "Web-foot" has cost the State of Oregon? Tom Richardson places the amount at \$10,000,000. If I remember correctly—and, for once in our lives, Tom and I agree. The estimate is possibly too low. Started as a joke by some unthinking wag, the name has clung to the state through all the years, to be used by every smart-aleck paragon in the country, and, worst of all, to be scattered broadcast from our own cities and towns through the medium of post-cards, souvenir spoons, and the like, thus advertising the state as a place where the sun never shines, and where weeping clouds cast perpetual gloom over the landscape. Slander, most foul and damnable, and that one word, "Web-foot," responsible for it all!

The figures are not available, but I remember that there are a half-dozen cities in the United States whose annual rainfall is greater than that of Portland, Oregon: New Orleans, for instance; and Galveston, Texas, and Detroit, Michigan, and a number of cities on the Atlantic coast. I only wish that I had the Government figures at hand, so that I might name them all. Do you ever read in the newspapers of the excessive rainfall in any one of these latter cities? Have you ever seen one of them referred to as being located in a country where it rains "thirteen months in the year?" Oregon owes it to herself, in her own defense, to give these Government reports the widest possible publicity. They should be advertised far and wide to counteract the impression created in the minds of Eastern people by the jokes about "Web-foot weather." Every mis-statement should be answered with facts, just as the writer answered a prominent Colorado newspaper last week, when in an attempt to be facetious, its editor had asked: "How do the people live up in Oregon, where it rains all the time?" Answer these fool questions with facts, and insist that they be published. Tell the

people that Oregon has its wet season and its dry season; that during the summer months, it has only drops of rain where dry states like Colorado have inches. Tell them that during the month of July, 1908, Oregon had only slight traces of rain, while New Mexico—one of the driest states in the Union, dryer even than the cold-water brethren hope to make Oregon—had 5.96 inches. Tell them that in the absence of snow in Oregon, the winter and spring rains are necessary to the prosperity of the farmer and the stockman and the fruitgrower; and, above all, tell them that in the gentle rains that bathe the Pacific slope from October until May there is life and health for the people who have been wise enough to cast their lot with that favored portion of our country.

Tell the truth about the Oregon climate, and tell it everywhere. Prohibit by law, if possible, the sale of the "Web-foot" souvenir spoon and the postal card bearing the picture of the frog sitting beneath the spreading umbrella. And the next time you hear your neighbor referring to Oregon as "Web-foot," tread softly, but carry your big stick, and when you get within reach, swat him—and swat him hard.

Little interest, and no enthusiasm, has been aroused in Colorado so far in the Fall campaign—that is to say, in the National campaign. The contest between Peorless William and Hearty William promises to be close, with the chances slightly in favor of Hearty William. It is true that Peorless William has many strong friends and supporters in the state, but with free silver a dead issue, it is hardly probable that he will be able to overcome the Republican majority this year. The senseless factional row in the Republican ranks in the state invites defeat, and would doubtless result in defeat, were it not for the fact that there is just as big a row among the Democrats. Meanwhile, the National campaign languishes. It begins to look as if the "drum-beat and whoop-la" method of campaigning has become a back number in American politics, and that hereafter the voter will go quietly to the polls and vote as his judgment and conscience dictate. And who shall say that is not a hopeful sign?

The Democrats of Las Animas county held their nominating convention last Saturday. It was a typical Democratic gathering, made up of Bill Bryan Democrats, John Johnson Democrats, Grover Cleveland Democrats and Bill Hearst Democrats, each with an opinion widely at variance with those of his brethren, and each serene in the belief that in him there breathes and walks a true follower of the Immortal Thomas and of Andrew of blessed memory. Every delegate had a speech bottled up, and the convention had not proceeded far before the corks were drawn and good, old-fashioned Democratic oratory flowed in copious quantities. The platform "pointed with pride," and "viewed with alarm," as Democratic platforms have done from time immemorial, and undying support was pledged to William J., who, as the wording ran, is "the peerless leader who will carry our banner to glorious victory in November."

If there is any one thing in this world that I really admire, it is the hopefulness of a Democrat. Colorado still holds nominating conventions. It is a state that has been much inclined to follow after Populist gods, but it has not yet gone so far in that direction as to adopt the revolutionary direct primary. And, somehow, it seemed good to the writer to get back among a bunch of political pirates again and hear: "Starkville precinct!" "Voted!" "Weston precinct!" "Voted!" And then to hear the tellers reading the ballots from the hat and calling off the names of the candidates. I will frankly confess that this time-honored, red-blooded American method of choosing candidates for office appeals to me far more strongly than does the insipid, gumshoe system foisted upon the fair state of Oregon by Bill U'Ben and his selfish and designing lieutenants. The convention system has its faults, but it preserves party integrity and makes it impossible for the minority to triumph over the majority in choosing public officers. Any system that fails to accomplish these results is un-democratic and un-American.

Trinidad has an attractive, well-built, well-kept city. The council is composed of progressive business men, and the clean, well-lighted streets, beautiful public buildings, substantial bridges and attractive parks give evidence that the people's money is being wisely spent. Vitriolized brick is used for paving purposes, and all streets so improved are withstanding the heavy traffic with scarcely perceptible wear. A bid for improving portions of two of the city's important thoroughfares with asphalt was received by the council last night. The improvement will cost \$44,000, and the bid will in all probability be accepted. Cement crosswalks cost the city 17 cents a square foot, and sidewalks of the same material cost the property-owners from 10 to 12 cents a square foot. Crosswalks on the 60-foot streets cost the city \$18 each. Contractors pay common laborers \$2.25 a day and finishers \$4 a day.

Trinidad has a population many times as large as that of Dallas, but aside from the paved streets, I do not recall any municipal improvement here that is lacking in the live county seat of Polk county. The street work that is being done in Dallas this summer will prove of incalculable benefit to the city. I have not the slightest doubt that the improvement over former conditions will be so noticeable and pronounced that another year will find the property-owners in all parts of the residence district clamoring for macadam streets.

But with all of this betterment, I cannot help believing that within the next five years the property-owners in the business district will be regretting that they did not join hands as one man in the effort to secure the smooth pavement. Such an improvement would have cost considerably more money, it is true, but it would have been worth its cost, both in usefulness and appearance, and it would have relieved the taxpayers from farther street assessments for all time to come.

However, since we failed to get the smooth pavement, we should be thankful for the macadam streets, which are a thousand times better than we have had before, and we should also bear in mind the fact that not one town in fifty of the size of Dallas has street paving of any kind.

The scenery in the mountains surrounding this city is very wild and beautiful, and is a constant delight to the eye of the visitor. Fisher's Peak, near the New Mexico border, towers majestically above the city to a height of 10,000 feet above sea level. To the west is the great Sangre de Cristo range, rising to a height of 14,000 feet, and covered with perpetual snow which glistens and sparkles in the sunlight. A drive over any one of the numerous mountain roads leading out from the city will repay the traveler for his time, and will prove highly enjoyable, even though it should recall the following story of the stage-driver and the tenderfoot:

While seated on the top of the stage coach with the driver during a trip from Silverton to Ouray, a few years ago, a young traveler became exceedingly nervous. As they were driving along a hillside, with a ravine several hundred feet deep within a couple of feet of the road, the young tenderfoot suddenly turned to the driver and asked: "Do people fall over there very often?"

A broad grin spread over the driver's face. Slowly shifting his wad of tobacco from one cheek to the other, and looking up with a merry twinkle in his eye, he quietly answered: "No, son; only once."

Shall leave Trinidad about September 25 and go down to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where I shall attend the National Irrigation Congress, and remain through the winter, if the climate proves beneficial.

J. C. HAYTER.

Delivery Team Runs Away.

Sam Burke's delivery team in a lively runaway yesterday morning overturned the wagon on Main street near Clay, and dragged it for nearly half a block scattering groceries and packages in every direction. The team had been used to starting away from a house as soon as Mr. Burke reached the wagon after carrying his goods inside. On this occasion he found it necessary to make two trips however, and while he was carrying his second load in, the horses, started briskly away and had gone some distance before he discovered them. Finding that there was no one to guide them, the horses became frightened and broke into a full run. As they came down Washington street and turned southward into Main, the wagon was overturned and dragged for some distance before the team was stopped. The damage was very slight and was easily remedied.

An Indian Educator.

R. W. Long, a member of the Shasta tribe of Indians, who came to Oregon a year or two ago from Fort Jones, Siskiyou county, California, has been engaged to teach a school the coming year on the Grand Ronde reservation in the Grand Ronde valley. Mr. Long finished his education at Chemsawa and in addition to his other accomplishments, is an expert penman. He was in the city yesterday calling on friends. The reservation has recently been thrown open and the Indians, in order to keep their children with them and not send them away to government schools elsewhere, petitioned for a regular district school. This was granted and Mr. Jones has been selected as the teacher during the coming year. The attendance will be about 25 this winter.—Salem Statesman.

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