

# The Polk County Observer

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## TAXES TO BE REDUCED

### RAILROAD WILL NOT PAY FULL LEVY ON GRANT LANDS.

Decision of Court Makes It Compulsory That Tracts Be Sold at \$2.50 Per Acre, as Agreed.

Considerable interest was manifested in Polk county over the decision of the court in the Oregon & California land grant case, rendered on Monday, against the government and in favor of the railroad company, this county having 57,617.79 acres of land in the grant, on which approximately \$28,000 is due for taxes for the past two years. By the decision the railroad company is prohibited from making any further sales of the property until such time as congress shall by some appropriate legislation provide some manner for the disposition of the lands.

This means it is now up to congress to provide some way by which these lands may be opened for settlement. When congress has acted, then the lands can be sold in no other way than that provided by congress. As the lands are sold, the railroad company will get \$2.50 an acre and no more. Inasmuch as the court has declared the lands to have an actual cash value of only \$2.50 per acre, and assessments for taxation being made on a basis of 50 per cent of cash value, the court's decision will greatly reduce the sum of taxes due the several counties in which the company holds grant lands under this ruling. In the case of Polk county, instead of recovering the \$28,000 levied against these lands, if the assessment obtains at the valuation fixed by the court, only about one-tenth of that amount would be due.

There were two original land grants, one called the east side grant and the other the west side grant. The total amount of land received under these grants was 3,182,169 acres. Prior to the commencement of the government's suit the company had sold 321,677 acres, leaving unsold 2,860,492 acres. The value of the unsold land is estimated at all the way from \$30,000,000 to \$60,000,000. Evidence given in connection with the case shows that the railroad company has already received from the lands nearly \$2,500,000 more than it has paid out for all purposes connected with them.

## FIGHT GOES MERRILY ON.

### Williams Charges That Paving Job Was Below Specifications.

A fight is on with regard to the case of Dennis & Christensen, contractors, vs. the city of Williams, over paving work done more than a year ago. The contention of the council and citizens there is that the work was never done according to contract. Some stormy sessions of the council were held last summer in an attempt to settle the matter, but no settlement was reached. Some time ago the contractors began action for \$4200, the amount they claimed under the contract. City Attorney Shelling, assisted by Attorney Holmes and Connor of McMinnville, prepared a defense and went into court. When the case was called the judge decided that the council had delegated its authority to Mr. Flagg as city engineer, and that he had accepted the work of the contractors, therefore no evidence was admitted. Believing that they can support their contention in the supreme court, the attorneys have given notice of an appeal, and are now preparing the papers. The work done was far below specifications, according to statements made, and an effort will be made to show that this was the case.

## YOUNGSTERS MAY USE POWDER.

### Mayor Kirkpatrick Issues Permit, Except in Business District.

Mayor Kirkpatrick, believing that the youngsters should be allowed to smell powder on Independence day, has issued a permit for the discharge of firecrackers and fireworks on July 3 between the hours of 5 o'clock in the morning and 12 o'clock at night, in the following districts: That except in the following districts: That except in Main street between Oak and Washington streets; that part of Mill street between Jefferson and Church streets, and that part of Court street between Jefferson and Church streets. This includes the business district of Dallas, and the mayor's enforcement of the ordinance covering this subject, is a precaution against the destruction of property by fire, and should be rigidly obeyed by all his loyal subjects. In the restricted district the use of explosives of any kind is prohibited. The firing of bombs, giant crackers and dynamite in any part of the city is forbidden.

## FRANK'S SENTENCE COMMUTED.

### Governor Would Rather Plow Than Have Blood on His Hands.

Leo M. Frank's death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment on Monday by Governor Slaton. Announcement of the governor's decision came several hours after Frank had been secretly taken from the jail at Atlanta, Georgia, and hurried to the state prison farm at Milledgeville. Frank was sentenced to be hanged there Tuesday for the murder of Mary Phagan in April, 1913. Governor Slaton in making the announcement dictated the following brief statement: "All that I ask is that the people of Georgia read by statement of the reasons why I commuted Leo M. Frank's death sentence to life imprisonment before they pass judgment. Feel as I do about this case, I would be a murderer if I allowed this man to hang. It means that I must

## GRANDS ARE SELECTED

### CHAUTAQUA WILL BE HELD ON THE COURT HOUSE LAWN.

Next Tuesday Has Been Designated as Ticket Day, When Committees Will Visit Citizens.

The big chautauqua tent will be pitched on the east half of the court house square this season, and the entrance will probably be from Jefferson street. This has been made possible by Judge Teal's generosity in granting the request of the committee in charge of the affair. The chautauqua will open on Sunday, July 4, and will continue throughout the week. The list of attractions, already published in the columns of The Observer, is of an unusually high character, and cannot fail to meet with the approval of those attending this second annual event.

## NOW READY FOR TRAVEL

### AUTOMOBILES MAY NOW GO TO NEWPORT VIA FALLS CITY.

Grades Have Been Materially Reduced and Line Straightened, Making It An Ideal Highway to Coast.

"The new road to the Siletz basin will be ready for travel by Thursday, the work being well nigh completed for this year," said Judge Teal to a representative of The Observer on Tuesday. The highway has been changed in many respects, and distance has been saved by taking out crooks and turns wherever possible. This has necessitated felling innumerable monarchs of the forest, and the blasting of stumps from the roadway, but the improvement is said to be worth the money and labor expended. Several automobiles are now traversing this road, three having come out from Newport by this route on Tuesday.

The crew of road workmen is now working back towards Falls City, cleaning up places here and there that were left incomplete, but in passable condition for automobiles. In several places the road will be widened in order to provide turn-outs on narrow grades. There are some short turns in the canyon over the mountains, but to avoid these the construction of wider bridges would be necessary, and these the county court does not feel itself financially equipped to build at this time. None of these places, however, are dangerous, but travel at these points must be slower in order to avoid possible accidents.

This new highway to the coast at Newport shortens the distance between Portland, and other lower valley points, to this famous resort by about fifteen miles, and affords the tourist a most picturesque route over good roads. The heavy grades have been reduced wherever possible, most notably out of Falls City, the line having been changed at this point in order to avoid a long pull up the mountain. The sixty-five miles between Dallas and Newport may be covered easily in four or five hours.

## CLASS GIFT ABOLISHED

### NORMAL STUDENTS GIVE \$100 FOR LOAN FUND INSTEAD.

Registration Opening Day of Summer Term Sets Record—Girls Must Have Chaperones.

For the first time in the history of the Oregon Normal school a graduating class has abolished the class gift, and instead the June class has presented \$100 to the school for use in starting a student loan fund. Under the plan financially disabled teachers who desire to enter the Normal may secure installments to meet current expenses.

After an influx of students to the summer session of the Oregon Normal school since Saturday, the girls' dormitory on the campus and the homes of that city are filled. The session formally opened Tuesday morning. Every county in Oregon, in addition to the states of California, is represented in the student body. School boards in the county districts commonly have allowed the expenses of their teachers to and from Monmouth for the ultimate good of rural instruction, while some have paid all expenses there. Student rules issued for the session provide that no woman shall ride or drive without a chaperone approved by President Ackerman, that student walking in most cases shall be limited to the city limits of Monmouth, and that it is recommended that hours of study be maintained from 7:15 to 10:30 o'clock each evening. Assembly will be held daily, which all must attend.

Tuesday's enrollment is the highest for the opening of any session in the history of the Normal school. A delegation of fifty Portland teachers is to arrive shortly after the close of the school term in Portland. The ratio of men to woman at the session is 1 to 2.

## Rumor of Fire Unfounded.

It was reported on the streets of Dallas yesterday afternoon that Black Rock had that morning suffered a heavy fire loss, but the rumor proved to be unfounded. The Observer's correspondent at that place was communicated with, and this worthy informed the paper that there was nothing to it.

## \$200 FOR A HOMESTEAD

### SUGGESTED THAT GRANT LANDS BE SOLD BY DRAWING.

Divided Into Tracts of Forty Acres, Fifty-Seven Thousand Persons Would Get Homes for \$200.

One suggestion made for the disposal of the unsold 2,800,000 acres of grant lands of the Southern Pacific company, declared by the United States supreme court Monday to be a proper subject for congressional legislation, would bring about the biggest land drawing by homesteaders ever known. This suggestion is that the entire area be cut into 40-acre tracts, to be drawn by lot by bona fide citizens, irrespective of sex, under the direction of receivers appointed by the United States district court, the drawing to take place in Portland.

Subdividing the unsold lands of the railroad company in Western Oregon into 40-acre tracts would make approximately 57,500 of such tracts, and if only half of that number were taken by homesteaders of families, the unoccupied lands of the Southern Pacific in the Willamette, Umpqua, Rogue river and adjacent valleys in a rapid sequence of events would have an additional population of more than 125,000 persons, estimating five persons to each entryman, a low average for a farmer's family.

The merit of fixing 40 acres as the unit and limit land to be taken by an entryman, is that it would enable the filling of all the applications of the 30,000 or more who sought to obtain a homestead on these lands and were doomed to disappointment. On the basis of 160 acres, the unit fixed for the sale of the grant lands originally, there would be allotments for only a little more than 14,000 applicants.

The price proposed to be fixed for the lands to be sold will probably be about \$5 an acre instead of the original price of \$2.50. The increased price will be justified, it is declared, on the ground that according to the supreme court's opinion, the railroad company is entitled to the original price of \$2.50 and in pursuance of the equities enunciated during the trial and not denied, plus reimbursements for taxes paid and cost of administration and interest on the amounts disbursed. It is estimated that the land ought to sell for enough to cover these additions to the original price and that the land, with some exceptions, is well worth the proposed increased price. In many instances 10 acres will be worth the price the government will ask for 40 acres, it is said by persons who have followed the case closely.

## Homestead for \$200.

If this is adopted, it will mean that any citizen, man or woman over 21 years may be able to obtain a homestead location at a cost of \$200 for 40 acres. It is true that many of the alternate sections are owned by timber operators, who desire to round out their possessions, but members of the Oregon congressional delegation are known to be opposed to any thing that will result in the centralizing of any considerable quantity of the lands in the hands of timber operators, both senators and representatives standing for a policy that will aid actual settlers in obtaining areas for farms, gardens and homes.

Before congress convenes next December, several meetings will have been held by Oregon's senators and representatives with the Portland Chamber of Commerce, and representative civic bodies, together with county officials, who are interested in obtaining two years' unpaid taxes on the lands, and various persons concerned in the solution of the problem. (Continued on last page.)

## The Gullota Trio Always Makes Good



In professional circles the Gullota Trio stand high as individual artists and as a perfectly balanced organization. They will come here under the auspices of the seven day gathering known as a Chautauqua. An attraction expected at a large Chautauqua at Sycamore, Ill., canceled its engagement unexpectedly. At the last moment Gullota and his trio were sent to entertain them in place of the splendid company they expected to get. Going before a tired, waiting audience at 3 o'clock in the afternoon on a hot summer day, Gullota, with his charming group, began a program which simply overwhelmed those people with its beauty and richness.

## RACES DRAW CROWDS

### INDEPENDENCE BUSINESS HOUSES CLOSE DURING AFTERNOON

Results of Contests Thus Far Fulfilled—Meet Comes to End Tomorrow Afternoon.

The June race meet at Independence this week has attracted a fair-sized attendance from all parts of Polk county. The business men are closing their doors each afternoon at 1 o'clock, thus affording opportunity to employes to attend the gathering. An unusually large number of entries have been made, and the races thus far pulled off have been interesting. The meet will close Saturday afternoon. Preceding the races an automobile parade was held, in which Miss Florence Burton of Independence was awarded first prize and Dr. O. D. Butler of the same place second prize. The results of Wednesday's contests are as follows:

## SIEFARTH LOSES CASE

### VERDICT FOR SOUTHERN PACIFIC IN \$30,000 DAMAGE ACTION.

Present Deputy County Clerk Falls to Recover For Serious Injuries Sustained in October, 1913.

After having been out all night the jury in the case of Chester Siefarth against the Southern Pacific company, brought to recover \$30,000 damages because of personal injuries sustained while the plaintiff was in the employ of the defendant, on trial in Multnomah county, on Wednesday returned a verdict for the company. The case was of much interest here, Mr. Siefarth being a resident of this city at the time of the accident, and now a considerable number of witnesses from Dallas gave testimony before the court, practically all of which was in favor of the complainant, who was represented by Oscar Hayter.

The accident took place at Newberg on October 3, 1913. At the time Chester Siefarth was employed by the Southern Pacific as a brakeman. While attempting to pull a pin to uncouple two cars, he was thrown beneath the wheel of the moving train. One leg was broken in two places and the other limb was badly mangled, while the right hand was crushed below the wrist. The unfortunate man, who was then twenty-four years of age, was brought to the Dallas hospital still unconscious, and after long weeks of pain and suffering recovered from the effects of his injuries, but is and always will be crippled and unable to perform manual labor. Mr. Siefarth is now employed in the county clerk's office as a deputy, and has been so engaged for some time past, being physically unable to resume his previous occupation.

Negligence on the part of the company to provide proper equipment was charged, but the jury, which was composed to some extent of manufacturers, ex-railroad employes and liability insurance writers, did not see the matter in the light of the plaintiff, and rendered a verdict for the company. The case will not be appealed.

## CHAS. PRICHARD DEAD

### WELL KNOWN INSURANCE MAN PASSES AWAY TUESDAY.

Funeral Held From Chapel Yesterday Afternoon and Body Taken to Portland for Cremation.

The death of Charles L. Prichard, which occurred at the Dallas hospital Thursday afternoon after the patient had clung to life by a mere thread for several days, cast a gloom over the friends and acquaintances of the deceased in this community, where he had resided with his family for a number of years. Death resulted from a weak heart. Mr. Prichard failed to recuperate vitality following a surgical operation for the removal of gallstones. For several days he lingered at the verge of death, rallying at times and giving the attending physician encouragement, and then relapsing into a hopeless condition.

Deceased was a native of West Virginia, and was aged fifty years. In 1892, when a resident of California, he was united in marriage to Miss Emma L. Plumley of Bryan, that state, and to this union were born two sons, Herschel and Lloyd, who with the widow survive him. The funeral services over the body was held at Chapman's chapel Thursday afternoon at 2 o'clock, and the remains were shipped to Portland this morning for cremation. A considerable number of sympathizing friends and acquaintances attended the last sad rites, which were conducted by Rev. George H. Bennett, pastor of the Methodist church. The floral offerings were many and beautiful.

## Future Bring Good Price.

The Oregon Hop Growers' association recently made a sale of a block of hops for London delivery. In connection with this transaction the price obtained for the Oregon is particularly interesting. The exact amount disposed of in this deal is not given out. Thirteen and a half cents a pound, which is 2 1/2 cents higher than any other sale thus far made, was secured. The hops are of the 1915 crop for future delivery. Less than a thousand bales of the 1914 crop are now in the hands of the growers.—Statesman.

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Free-for-all trot, mile heats, purse \$150—Wild Girl won in two straight heats; Novela, third and second; Velma, second and third; Siesta and Mark H. also ran. Time, 2:21 in both heats.

Five-eighths-mile dash, purse \$125—Adri first, Alchemist second, Sturlin third; Maxwell, Lettie Ray, Pampa and Lettie also ran. Time 1:04 1/2.

2:30 pace, purse \$150—St. Elmo won in two straight heats; Sally H. third and second; Mack N. second and third; Crochet, fourth. Time, 2:19 1/2.

## BOOSTERS TO VISIT MONMOUTH.

### Concert Band and Citizens Will Invade School Town Monday Night.

In order to promote the interests of the chautauqua the concert band and many citizens in automobiles will go to Monmouth next Monday evening, where Prof. Marsh's aggregation of musicians will entertain on the college campus for an hour or more. Manager Miles will also make a short address, setting forth the advantages to be gained from chautauqua meetings. The people of Monmouth and vicinity are invited to assemble at the campus on this evening, and listen to the music by the recently re-organized Dallas band. The concert will begin at 7:45.

## 3200 GOPHERS TRAPPED.

### Millard McCaleb of Monmouth Earns \$800 on Riddell Farm.

Three thousand two hundred gophers was the mark reached by Millard McCaleb of Monmouth yesterday, on the big Riddell farm west of there. He received 25 cents a head, aggregating \$800. Catch traps were used and on some days thirty gophers were caught. Farmers are conducting an extensive war to rid the clover fields of the pests, which eat the roots and finally drag the plants into their holes. Several farmers in the Monmouth district pay trappers from \$50 to \$200 each season.

## Silverton Votes for Postmaster.

Over at Silverton the people recently voted for postmaster, following a plan long since suggested that community postmasters be selected by those whom they are to serve. There was an ugly fight on at Silverton, and Senators Chamberlain and Lane concluded to permit the people make the selection, which resulted in the election of John H. Brooks by a vote of almost two to one over his opponent, George Cusker. The senators will now recommend the appointment of Brooks, who will be the next postmaster there.

## High Bridge on Logging Line.

The high bridge across a canyon five miles above Black Rock, on the extension of the Willamette Valley Lumber company's logging road, will be finished about the first of August. The structure will be 450 feet in length and 114 feet high. At present fourteen workmen are engaged in its building. When the trestle is completed logging operations will be carried on beyond that point.

## Senator Hawley Named.

Governor Withycombe has appointed the following committee to investigate the county unit system of school administration: Senators C. L. Hawley, McCoy; C. P. Bishop, Salem; W. T. Vinton, McMinnville; W. K. Newell, Regners, and W. C. Bryant, Moreau.

## Game Warden Appointed.

Carl Shoemaker, editor of the Roseburg Evening News, was yesterday elected state game warden by the state fish and game commission, and will assume the duties of his office July 1.

The ladies of the Evangelical church will hold a bake sale at Silmerton & Scott's store tomorrow.