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That was a bad piece of judgment that permitted the county court house to be used as the basis for Fourth of July fireworks. The court house is the property of the people, built with their money and maintained at their expense and the use of it as a miniature arsenal is not one of the purposes for which it was designed. Were it private property, situated as it is, in the business center of the county seat, ordinary caution would forbid that it be converted into a place where people play with fire and explosives in the dry summer time. No one has a right to set fire to his own property nor to endanger that of others. The charitable view of the court house incident and the one that should be taken is that there was nothing bad in the intent of the parties responsible. The character of the men in charge of the fireworks forbids criticism as to intentional wrong. Judge Sibley, custodian of the court house, saved himself from being roasted alive in his own fireworks by leaping through a second story window and landing on a balcony outside. Lee Fenton, with scorched eyebrows and blistered hands escaped with his life from a fire imprisoned station by a dash through fire to a door. Fred Fisk and Mr. Dunn escaped unscathed. Their many friends are thankful the injuries of those so imperilled are so slight. They are thankful Dallas was not wiped off the map by a conflagration and that the court house was not burned down. But the interior of the circuit court room remains charred and broken and blackened window panes present an unsightly appearance. The insurance companies are not inclined to recognize a claim under such circumstances. The new county court as representative of the people, don't care to take the matter up and there you are.

The wonderful strides of the rural free delivery system in four or five years is the most marked feature of recent national growth. In 1899 only 200 routes were in operation. At the close of the present fiscal year there will be over 25,000 routes running, bringing a daily mail service to more than 12,500,000 people residing in rural districts. The appropriation for this service during the next year is \$20,616,600. It is impossible to estimate the educational benefits that will accrue from this magnificent system which, as an aid to the higher civilization will outrank any agency now in operation for the betterment of conditions and the uplifting of the human race. While primarily for the benefit of farmers, it really confers benefits upon ev-

ery man, woman and child in the Union, and no money was ever so well spent as that set aside for the extension and improvement of this great agent for the extension of intelligence and quick communication among the masses.

Independence perhaps enjoyed as "sane" a Fourth as any town in Oregon. There were no hundred year old speeches, no parades with plug uglies, no greased pig, no fat man's race nor lean man's race, no sack race, potato race nor pie-eating contest. There was no red lemonade for the country girl in white, no canes to ring nor "nigger" babies to throw at. There were no snake charmers talking through megaphones, no merry-go-rounds or confetti throwers. There were no fires, no fatalities, no people maimed. The only reminder that it was the anniversary of our natal day was the booming of cannon and explosion of fire crackers in the forenoon. Those who could not resist the temptation to get into the midst of the fray, presenting their bodies as a burnt offering sacrifice upon the altar of 4th of July fireworks in the hands of licensed incendiaries, went to Portland, Dallas or Corvallis.

Governor Chamberlain, as commander-in-chief of the Oregon National Guard, has ordered

seven militiamen employed at the state insane asylum into camp at American Lake, Wash. The board of trustees of the asylum, of which the governor is chairman, has refused to grant the guardsmen leave of absence. Probably a good way to test the heroism of aspiring soldiers.

The party of railroad surveyors in the mountains keeps people guessing as to what route it will select coming out of the Siletz country. Sometimes it threatens to come out at Bridgeport on the Falls City road, and again it looks like they would come out by way of Lewisville. Any way so a practical outlet to the Siletz basin is found.

Why, Clackamas county alone could support a larger population than inhabits all Oregon today.—Portland Journal. Don't get too extravagant. Clackamas has the highest tax rate of any county in the state.

There was nothing done by the city council Tuesday evening for the reason there was not a quorum present. There are matters needing attention and tonight (Thursday) has been set for a special meeting.

The Salem Statesman can find no legal objections to the State Fair being held on the Siletz Indian reservation. But it would not be right to hold it

"THE WILLAMETTE" At Salem



THE re-lease of the Willamette hotel at Salem by J. C. Conner for a term of six years, is a guarantee that there will be at least one house south of Portland kept up to the standard of a first-class hotel. The Willamette is equipped with steam heat, electric bells, gas and electric lights. The rooms, including the dining room and office have been retouched and new furniture added. New linoleum has been put on the office floor and the dining room frescoed by an artist. The thick brick walls keep the rooms cool and pleasant these summer days, as well as comfortable in winter. There are over a hundred well-furnished rooms in the Willamette, and hard indeed is he to please that cannot find suitable accommodations at this hostelry as it is now kept.

there without the consent of the Indians.

Independence needs a sewage system.—Portland Telegram. And Portland is 76 miles away.

Dallas has a new sport. It is pillow fighting.

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