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OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE CITY.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22.

The INDEPENDENT does not wish to monopolize street matters for the reason it wants to leave some ground for another.

Currency at a premium. We of the West hardly ever put it that way. With us it is securities are at a discount.

The federal election laws have been repealed by the house. That body can repeal anything. Next it will be repealing the XII, XIV and XV amendments to the constitution.

The political battle of '94 and '96 will practically be fought in Iowa and Ohio this fall. The struggle is fierce there. We of the outside can only look on as interested spectators.

The Ohio campaign is completely absorbing the attention of the Buckeye voters, McKinley is speaking to immense audiences. At one of his recent appointments 15,000 people were present.

Joe Waldrop has enlarged his pasture and presumably to a corner where the grass is greener. He is now boring Washington audiences at Olympia. Soon they will know him better over there.

The late news reports speak cheerfully of the revival of business in the East. The great sugar trust is having a period of prosperity not enjoying for many months. The canning season is creating the demand.

Young men should embrace this period of depression for completing school work. It is to them like a rainy day. Let the time be improved so that when activity is resumed in the business world, they will be equipped for the occasion.

The state fair held at Salem last week failed to pay expenses. The management even admits that changes must be made, but no one yet has pointed out the weak spots. The new president, Honorable William Galloway, will have an opportunity to try his skill.

This is how Bert Bowersox, of Corvallis, seems to oppose free coinage of silver. Bert was in the post-office at Victoria, B. C., and offered a dollar of our daddies in payment for postage stamps. The postal clerk took it back saying, "We don't take United States silver coins." The Yankee at once shook the dust from his feet. The Corvallis Times tells the story.

Senator Faulkner proposes to retire all bank notes under \$10. This plan would bring much silver into actual circulation, but it would not be satisfactory, for there is reason to believe that the people of the East and of the Mississippi states will not take kindly to the policy. Indeed it is a difficult matter to make gold circulate in those sections on account of its great bulk, and silver is sixteen times more bulky.

The democrats seem to be unfriendly to any legislation that had for its object the suppression of the great rebellion in 1861-5 or even aided in its overthrow. Hence the antipathy that party has for national banks. The southern majority hate the men who voted for these measures. Indeed, now they are in control at the capitol, they despise themselves, because they are affirmatively connected with the government.

Sometimes difficult and perplexing questions are settled as they were by inspiration. During our rebellion the negro question in the army was put to rest by General Butler when he replied to Sambo the term "contraband." Now one phase of the Chinese problem has been dismissed by Judge Bellinger of the United States district court when he decided that people who voluntarily come to this country as passengers on steamers and are refused a landing are not entitled to the privilege of habeas corpus for the simple reason that they are not deprived of their liberty.

The footings of the totals column of the assessment roll in this county is given in another column. It will astonish some of the tax reformers. The gross valuation of property in 1892 was over \$7,500,000, but this year it is only \$5,500,000. It is explained by saying that last year mortgages were assessed, while they were not this year. That is just the point THE INDEPENDENT has always made that the repeal of the mortgage tax law would send notes secured by mortgages into hiding. Now these notes are not listed this year, or they are listed in other counties, and Washington county loses the revenue that ought to be collected from that class of property. The man who is best able to pay the tax escapes, but the landowner, because he can't hide his real estate has to pay on its full value notwithstanding he may own wealthy Jones half the purchase price. Washington county has by the change in the law gained but a paltry half million on the net valuation, a sum not greater than the growth of the county has given us. Where is the benefit? The gross valuation this year ought to be as great as in 1892 or greater.

FEDERAL ELECTION LAWS.

All parties ought to unite in passing and obeying a federal election law. The purity of the ballot ought to be so sacred that only individuals would so far forget their citizenship and manhood as to seek to perpetrate fraud. For this isolated few there ought to be a restraining law. If no party as an organization becomes restive under the wholesome restraint then the good men would be in so strong a majority that the machinery of United States marshals and their deputies would not be needed, as well might we, in our state elections, object to the presence of the municipal police. In country precincts electors are so well disposed that constables are not required. Yet in the cities there are a few individuals who, were there no officers in sight, would disturb the election and corrupt the ballot box. In view of this fact no one is angered when he meets at the voting booth a man wearing a star. It ought to be so when federal officers are being elected.

But if salutary and proper regulations for the purity of elections is to be nullified by a whole party, and that party in a large majority as is the case in the south, then the law might as well be repealed, and elections themselves be dispensed with, officers being chosen in conventions. The opposition to all federal supervision very naturally leads one to believe that the southern congressmen know that their methods will not bear investigation, that with a free vote and an honest count, they would find themselves in a minority and that their attitude is only for the purpose of keeping themselves in office, or of insuring the election of friends.

THE CHEROKEE STRIP.

South of Kansas or between Kansas and Oklahoma lies a parallelogram about fifty-four miles wide and 140 miles long, known as the Cherokee strip. This land, by act of congress, was thrown open to settlement last Saturday. The western part was appraised at one dollar per acre, the central at one and a half dollars, while the eastern part was valued at two and one-half dollars per acre. Two lines of railroad pass through it and during the wet season it is drained by three streams with lesser branches. The strip was Indian territory and but little seems to have been known of its real value, though exaggerated stories of its fertility had inflamed the public mind till the homeseeker seems to have gone mad. For days and even weeks before opening day immigrants journeyed to the boundary line and camped to be ready to make a rush for the coveted plot of ground that was confidently expected to be found. Soldier guards were stationed for the purpose of keeping the people back till the signal gun should be fired so that all might have an opportunity to get land. To facilitate matters, the interior department sent agents and skilled clerks from Washington two weeks ago.

At noon on Saturday the signal gun was fired and the mad rush was begun. In the tract there are by estimation 27,000 homesteads. To these are to be added the lots in townsites taken up under the pre-emption laws. To occupy this territory 25,000 souls went up from Arkansas, Florida, 9,000 from Tennessee, 7,000 from Stillwater, 3,000 from Hannowell, and from 5,000 to 8,000 from other places—in all 80,000 people. At dawn a wilderness, at sundown a complete settlement. In the morning was a virgin soil untrampled by the foot of man. At evening a population of 80,000 souls. The excited boomers rushed from the north and from the south—poured themselves at this dry season on to the parched plains without preparation. Water is scarce and in many places only to be obtained from stagnant pools hooded by a thick green scum. The report of a railroad engineer sent out to investigate the feasibility of building a road through the strip is graphically true though somewhat profane: "As well build a road through hell; traffic would be better." Under such circumstances and in such a country can anything else than physical suffering be expected? The people going in are disappointed. Grass burned and no food for stock. No water, so they perish of thirst; no shelter and wasting disease attacks them. They went in by thousands, they come out by hundreds. The stories of disappointment and suffering are heart rendering.

Yet the land, while it will not average with our Oregon, is fairly good and equal to Kansas which joins it on the north. The climate is hot in summer, but reasonable in winter, and after all, in time, there will be pleasant homes built there. The terrible suffering entailed by the mad scramble for place and gain might have been avoided by a more deliberate procedure.

Of the democrats the republicans have taken lessons, and have put in practice some of the teachings with this difference, republicans use the peculiar tactics only on political questions, whereas democrats would resort to them on all occasions. It must have been amusing to gallery spectators at the house of representatives to see the republicans sit silent for the purpose of breaking a quorum, and how some of their opponents raved when they perceived in what predicament they were. Tom Reed enjoyed the situation.

CIVIL WAR IN BRAZIL.

Two years ago when Brazil deposed Don Pedro and in place assumed a republican form of government men were astonished, and attributed to the Brazilians more enlightenment and patience than they possessed. For it was not many months before the mutterings of discontent were heard. Louder have they grown till now actual civil war has broken out. No cause for hostilities has been given, but it is more than probable that the origin of the quarrel reaches back to monarchial times. Anyhow, the factions are fighting. It, from meager advices, appears to be from the Chili struggle over again—the navy against the land forces.

A long warfare in Brazil will be felt in United States in the rise in the price of coffee, rubber goods and in some kinds of dyestuffs. At any rate dealers will make the war an excuse for putting up prices. On the other hand it may benefit us in that the coffee industry of Central America will be stimulated and American interests be strengthened, especially in Nicaragua, where we ought to be the controlling influence if we expect to do anything with the ship canal there surveyed.

WORK OF THE EQUALIZATION BOARD.

The equalization board met on the 25th, and it will be to the interest of the taxpayers of Washington county if the members fully inform themselves as to the assessments of real and personal property in other counties. It is evident that the taxation of real estate, especially in Washington county, is as high as on the assessment of 1892; though there has been a heavy depreciation in real estate values since that time. As this assessment determines the amount of state tax that will be paid by Washington county, it is a matter of the utmost consequence that an over assessment should be avoided. The taxpayers can be relieved and justice done in this matter by a proper equalization by the board, and we believe their intelligence is equal to the occasion.

The centennial of the laying of the cornerstone of the capitol was celebrated at Washington on the 18th with parade and speeches. The president, his cabinet, both houses of congress, the supreme court and the army took part in the ceremonies. The president's remarks are worthy of careful study, but one paragraph has particular significance just at this time and is here reproduced: "If our law makers ever forget their duty of broad and disinterested patriotism and legislate in prejudice and passion, or in behalf of sectional and selfish interests, the time when the cornerstone of our capitol was laid and the circumstances surrounding it will not be worth commemorating."

The fact that labor gets the principal benefit of tariff duties is being presented to Mr. Wilson's committee in a very distinct and forcible manner.

MR. CLEVELAND'S BANKING BILL.

The repeal of the Shearn law is now assured, and the administration is preparing to take hold of another branch of the currency question—the carrying out of the plan of the national democratic platform demanding the repeal of the 10 per cent. tax on the circulation of all banks of issue not organized under the national banking law. That tax, and was intended to be prohibitory, so as to put an end to the "wildcat" currency with which the people were cursed for many years before the war.

For nearly thirty years the people of the United States have been enjoying the benefits of one of the best and safest banking systems ever devised. The older men can remember when every business man subscribed for a "Bank Note Detector," and whenever a note was offered with which he was not familiar, he turned to the "detector" to ascertain (1) whether the note was genuine, and (2) the description of the genuine note of that denomination; (3) the solvency of the bank, and what discount, if any, was exacted by bankers in the large cities. As a rule, here in Ohio only the bills of the State Bank of Ohio and of the State Bank of Indiana were taken at par; notes of banks at a distance, even when the institution was perfectly solvent, were discounted 1 1/2 to 2 per cent. because it would cost that much to send them to the issuing bank and get them redeemed. The young men know nothing of this abundant system, and, consequently, no one ever looks at a national bank note to see where it was issued. It may be of a national bank in Maine, or in Texas, or in South Dakota; but he knows the government guarantees the note, and it passes from hand to hand as readily as gold or silver.

Two conferences have already been held looking to the elaboration of a bill to repeal the 10 per cent. tax on state bank circulation. The first was between Mr. Cleveland, Secretary of State, and Senator Gorman; the second, of Speaker Crisp, and Representative Hall and Warner, of the house banking and currency committee, with Secretary Cassile. The general lines of the bill have already been decided upon. It is to provide that banks organized under the state laws, may deposit state, municipal or other bonds, or such other securities as are approved by government authorities, in the treasury; the 10 per cent. tax on circulation is to be suspended in the case of any bank making such deposits to secure its notes, and it is to receive 90 per cent. of the value of the securities so deposited. If any state bank does not reorganize in compliance with the law, the 10 per cent. tax will be operative against it.

The democratic party has always been bitterly opposed to the national banking system. The southern branch of the party is especially strong in its opposition, because they think the law an invasion of state rights—as they are opposed to the 10 per cent. tax on the ground that it is an unconstitutional interference with the rights of the sov-

erign states." They want wildcat banking. It is safe to say a bill on the lines proposed will meet with fierce opposition from the democrats themselves. To those who adhere to the state rights view it will be as objectionable as the present law, and those who want wildcat banking pure and simple, for their own selfish ends, will antagonize it. It is in no wise an improvement on the national banking law. State and municipal bonds are not as solid security in times of financial depression or stringency as are national bonds. It has the feature of federal control which so many persons object to. In point of fact, the mixture of state authority and federal control is as objectionable to the democracy as is the present law. And the question would instantly be raised whether the law did not discriminate against the state rights view by permitting certain banks to issue notes without federal taxation, while denying that right to others. And if the supreme court should overthrow this provision of the law, the door would be open to a return to wildcat banking. As the Blade has remarked before, the democracy finds it a task of tremendous difficulty to substitute anything half as good for the tried and approved financial legislation of the republican party.—Toledo Blade.

WHO PAYS THE TAXES UNDER THE NEW LAW? If the wish of the last legislature had been to place the burden of debt upon that class of the population who were so unfortunate as to be in debt, this object has certainly been accomplished by the repeal of the law that provided for the deduction of bonded indebtedness by any taxpayer when returning a list of his or her property held and owned on the first day of March, A. D. 1893, and annually thereafter. This change in the assessment law was made in accordance with the expressed wish of the governor of the state in his message to the legislature, he is in a great measure responsible for the evils resulting from such change. It must be forcibly impressed upon all who have occasion to refer to the repeal of the old law, that justice and equity would have been more subserved if his excellency had defeated its repeal. It certainly would have done the debtor class of this state more good by far than a law to dishonor amounts to secure that the payment of his just debts, to pass which law he barely escaped a visitation of an extra session of the legislature. Public opinion, however, was so pronounced that this demagogical effort for the benefit of the debtors failed to materialize. The repeal of the law, that justice and equity would have been more subserved if his excellency had defeated its repeal. It certainly would have done the debtor class of this state more good by far than a law to dishonor amounts to secure that the payment of his just debts, to pass which law he barely escaped a visitation of an extra session of the legislature. Public opinion, however, was so pronounced that this demagogical effort for the benefit of the debtors failed to materialize.

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mediate supervision of their own officers. A change on this line in all probability would be better, and it is scarcely possible could be worse than the present law. TAXPAYER. GOLD BULLION STOLEN. Some days since Secretary Carlisle issued orders to coin the gold bullion stored at the mints. In gathering up the bars it was found that \$134,000 was gone—been stolen. Suspicion rested on Henry S. Cochran, weighing clerk of the Philadelphia mint. Pressure being brought to bear he confessed and led the way to his hiding place, where \$100,000 was recovered, \$7,000 more was obtained at his residence. His own property valued at \$50,000 and is under \$10,000 bonds, hence it is thought that the government will lose nothing. For the past ten years Cochran has been abstracting bullion bars from the vault. During that time he had taken \$54,000 worth. Within the last ten days he had taken \$100,000 worth. The method he employed was substantially this: By means of a crooked wire he pulled the bullion bars from the top of the pile, where they were placed crosswise like railroad ties. When they fell upon the floor he would, by means of this hook, pull the bars to the iron lathe door, the bottom of which was a little lower on one side, the bolts having rusted. By pushing the door inward on the side the bars, of gold could easily be removed. His habit was to do this stealing before the employes of the mint came to their work in the morning. As the gold bars only weigh twelve to fifteen pounds each, he could carry them home secreted in his lunch basket. In this way he took out of the vault and carried away \$34,000 of gold bullion. By means of the same wire he took out of the vault within the last ten days \$100,000 in gold bars. Instead of removing his from the mint building, however, he secreted it in a ventilator, where it was found after he had made his confession, he, himself, showing the officials the hiding place.

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