

BRIEF NEWS OF OREGON

The number of graduates from the Oregon Normal school for the present term will far exceed 100.

Logging operations in eastern Oregon are greatly hampered this winter by lack of snow in the mountains.

Counties of Oregon paid a total of \$88,498.99 interest on warrants during the nine months ending September 20.

The Sluslaw port commissioners during the week authorized the sale of \$109,000 bonds for the improvement of the Sluslaw harbor.

First company, coast artillery, of Ashland, has asked that Governor Withycombe, reappoint W. E. Finzer as adjutant general of the Oregon National Guard.

Although the past season was the most dangerous one on account of dryness, for many years, the total loss at timber by fire in Coos county was only 7,000,000 feet.

Ed Bostwick of Floras Creek district was brought into Coquille by Game Warden Thomas, following the discovery of evidence that indicated that he had killed 40 deer.

An aggregate of 32.72 miles of railroad was constructed in Oregon in the year 1914, according to records compiled by the Railway Age-Gazette. The state of Washington built 206.34 miles and Idaho 130.11 miles.

Records of the city engineer and building inspector show that the city of Marshfield expended \$337,000 in the construction of new buildings, repairing others, and for paving and other street improvements during the year.

No more liquor of any kind under any circumstances will be sold in the drug stores in Coos county. This was decided upon at a meeting of the Coos County Pharmaceutical association when resolutions to this effect were passed.

State Dairy and Food Commissioner J. D. Mickle has prepared drafts of two bills for presentation to the coming session of the legislature, looking toward the correction of existing evils in the present sanitary and cold storage laws.

The Dallas city park association has sold its fairgrounds, just west of the city, to Wasco county for \$11,000. The property will be used by the county for a poor farm, but will be maintained in such a way that the grounds will be available every fall for the Wasco county fair.

The Oregon Irrigation congress closed its fourth and largest annual session at Portland. The following officers were elected: President, A. A. B. Thomson, Echo; secretary, Fred N. Wallace, Laidlaw; vice presidents, J. W. Brewer, Portland; John Rigby, Vale, and A. M. Crawford, Salem.

County Judge Maloney, who could have held office two years longer, in accordance with a ruling of the supreme court, resigned in favor of Charles W. Marsh, who defeated T. P. Gilliland for the office in the November election, and who was appointed to the position by Governor West.

The legislative committee of the state editorial association met in Portland and decided to recommend to the association that it approve a law requiring a uniform rate on all publications required by law, and that the unit of charge be the line of type, rather than the linear measurement.

Innocent purchasers of lands within the Benson and Hyde school sections will be given confirmatory deeds to the property on payment to the state of \$2.50 an acre if the provisions of a resolution adopted by the state land board become effective. The interior department will be asked to approve the plan.

Representative Hawley, since his return to Washington, has been laboring with the forest service trying to expedite action on the classification of lands in the various forest reserves in his district, and especially the Sluslaw reserve, from which he hopes to have eliminated a considerable area in Lincoln county.

That the state may be saved \$100,000 by doing away with the census this year seems probable. As a result of the suggestion of Secretary of State Olcott to abolish the census, which has been taken every 10 years since 1865, the secretary has received assurances that a bill will be introduced making the new law effective May 10 of this year.

The state highway commission has placed a petition, presented to it by the citizens of Columbia county, asking for the removal of State Highway Engineer Bowby, on file without discussion. The signers of the petition charged the state highway engineer with extravagance and incompetency in the construction of roads in Columbia county.

Pronouncing the present law providing that the fiscal year shall commence on the first day of January of each year, and that it shall close on the day preceding the first day of the same month unsatisfactory and unbusinesslike, Secretary of State Olcott in his biennial report to the legislature recommends that it be amended to read that the fiscal year shall commence on the first day of July of each year, and close on the thirtieth day of June.

FURY OF THE CULBIN SANDS.

Tragic Fate of a Once Fruitful Spot on the Scottish Coast.

Beneath the drifted sands on the west side of Findhorn bay, Scotland, lie what were once sixteen fruitful farms, orchards and a hamlet. There also is buried the mansion house of an ancient family. Now all this is a wild waste, known as the Culbin sands.

The estate was overwhelmed in the year 1694—and in a single night, according to all accounts. From the west a great wind sprang up. It lifted the sand along the coast, gathering force as it drove along, its increasing momentum sweeping great masses of loose sand along with it. This horror, scarcely imaginable, swept with irresistible force down toward the mouth of the Findhorn. It covered the fields and overwhelmed the estate, burying swiftly, beyond hope of respite, the mansion house, farms and village.

A smiling, happy countryside was transformed as by black magic into a wilderness of sand, and today, standing on one of the great mounds, the eye rests on a succession of huge billows of gleaming sand, literally a desert some four miles long by two miles broad, bare as the palm of one's hand of vegetation, the very picture of loneliness and desolation. The titanic strength, the suddenness of the strange disaster, the pigmy impotence of man before it, seize the imagination. So swift fell the tragedy that, to save his life, a man ran from his plow in the furrow and never saw it again. It was found years afterward and is now in a north country museum, says Chambers' Journal.

Some of the bewildered folk managed to get into their houses from the east side next day and rescued a few household goods, but the demon of the storm rose again, and next morning not a vestige of man's handiwork was visible. An ocean of sand, dashing like spray in the gale, covered the land like a stormy spring tide, and when the gale and the sand drift died down a mocking waste had taken the place of the barony of Culbin. And there the miniature desert can be seen today.

Alexander Kinnaird, the luckless owner, was ruined. The poor man petitioned the Scots parliament in July, 1695, for a relief from the cess or land tax on a statement that "the best two parts of his estate of Culbin, by an unavoidable fatality, was quite ruined and destroyed, occasioned by great and vast heaps of sand (which had overblown the same), so that there was not a vestige to be seen of his manor place of Culbin, yards, orchards and mains thereof, and which within these twenty years were as considerable as many within the county of Moray."

What He Calls Her.

"Now, Willie," said the teacher of the primary class, "let us see whether you can tell us the name of this graceful looking animal with the big pronged horns? Hunters go up into the woods every fall to shoot this beautiful creature. It is very cruel of them to do so, is it not? Can't you tell us what the animal is called? Come, now, think. I am sure you know what it is. What does your father call your mother when he comes home at night?"

"He calls her Betsy 'cause it plagues her."—Chicago Herald.

Damascus.

Damascus claims, with very good reason, to be considered the oldest city in the world. The place remains very much what it was before the days of the patriarch Abraham, an island of verdure set in the Syrian desert, and has martial and sacred associations extending through thirty centuries. According to Josephus, Damascus was founded by Uz, the son of Aram and grandson of Shem. It is first mentioned in Scripture in connection with Abraham, whose steward was a native of that place (Genesis xv, 2).

Patchouli.

The odor of patchouli was known in Europe before the material was introduced, in consequence of its use in Kashmir to scent the shawls with a view of keeping out the moths, which are averse to it. The genuine cashmere shawls became known by their scent until the French found out the secret and imported the herb for use in the same way.

The Serbian Colors.

The flag of Serbia is the flag of the Russian merchant service reversed; for, whereas that is white-blue-red, the flag of Serbia is red-blue-white, arranged in three horizontal stripes running across the flag. The royal standard is similar, save that the royal arms are placed in the center of the blue stripe.

HE WAS A BRAVE GUIDE.

Likewise Persistent, but He Believed in Safety First.

Mr. Stanley Washburn in "Trails, Trappers and Tenderfeet" declares that the most unpleasant day he ever experienced was when camping on the Saskatchewan, in western Canada, he was persuaded to attempt the ascent of a mountain.

The sides of the mountain were ragged and rocky, writes Mr. Washburn, and every few minutes we would trip over bowlders, cutting our hands and barking our shins. But no crusader, bent on the capture of Jerusalem, was ever so keen on the job as our mountain climber.

By and by we got up to about 10,000 feet. I suggested that we could see the view from this point as well as from the top, but at this I got a look from our leader that nearly froze my blood in my veins. What had gone before was mere child's play to what was to come. Long fingers of ice and snow reaching down from the summit had to be crossed again and again. Every time we crossed one of these the expert would exclaim to us that a single false move would precipitate us to a sudden death, which looked perfectly feasible to me.

After we got over some dangerous ledge and on to firmer footing, with our hair standing on end—I speak particularly of my own—the mountain climber would sit down in great glee and explain to us how any moment we might be carried off with an avalanche, and back up his statement by a dozen anecdotes about sudden deaths in similar places.

Finally we came to an abrupt ledge of ice. "Ha!" said our leader. "We must cut our way in this ice step by step, but remember, fellows, a single false move and naught but our crushed and mangled bodies will remain to tell the tale."

I did not want to be a crushed and mangled body, neither did "Doc," and in desperation we both said so. The mountain climber looked at us in disgust and pointed out that another thousand feet would see us at the summit. We would go down through the annals of history as the conquerors of Mount Whatever It Was. We objected that we stood a better chance of going down into the ravine. Anyhow, we said that we would wait while he climbed up the annals of history to his own glory.

The mountain climber was very much annoyed and said he would go on alone, at which we all shook hands and off he started. After twenty minutes of fiddling about, he came back and said he could not make it alone, so we turned and started for camp, which we reached at 10 that night.

Jamaica's Rat Plague.

It is supposed that rats destroy every year at least a twentieth part of the sugar canes in Jamaica, amounting in value to a little short of a million dollars. The sugar cane is their favorite food, but they also prey upon Indian corn, on all the fruits that are accessible to them, and on many of the roots. Some idea can be formed of the immense swarms of these destructive animals that infest this island from the fact that on a single plantation 30,000 were destroyed in one year. Traps of various kinds are set to catch them, poison is resorted to, and terriers and sometimes ferrets are employed. They are of a much larger size than the European rat.

His Feelings Under Fire.

At the battle of the Modder river an officer observed Pat taking shelter from the enemy's fire. After the engagement the officer, thinking to take Pat down a peg, said:

"Well, Pat, how did you feel during the engagement?"

"Feel?" said Pat. "I felt as if every hair of my head was a band of music, and they were all playing 'Home, Sweet Home.'"—London Standard.

Sorry He Spoke.

"He's not what you call strictly handsome," said the major, beaming through his glasses on an utterly hideous baby as it lay howling in its mother's arms, "but it's the kind of face that grows on you."

"It's not the kind of face that ever grew on you," was the unexpected reply of the indignant mother; "you'd be much better looking if it had!"—Liverpool Mercury.

Whirlwinds.

Whirlwinds are great storms produced by violent currents blowing from contrary quarters and meeting and striking upon each other, the effect being the creation of circular motion. Whirlwinds usually occur after lengthy calms which have been accompanied by excessive heat, and they generally indicate a breakup of settled weather.

TROOPS IN THE TRENCHES.

Watching Through a Telescope the Shellier Message at Dawn.

The general's aid took me to one of the telescopes and aimed the barrel of it in the proper direction, while I focused for distance. Suddenly out of the blur of the lens there sprang up in front of me, seemingly quite close, a zig-zagging toy trench cut in the face of a little hillock. This trench was quite full of gray figures of the size of very small dolls. They were moving aimlessly back and forth, it seemed to me, doing nothing at all.

Then I saw another trench that ran slantwise up the hillock, and it contained more of the pygmies. A number of these latter pygmies came out of their trench—I could see them quite plainly clambering up the steep wall of it—and they moved, very slowly it would seem, toward the crosswise trench on ahead a bit. To reach it they had to cross a sloping green patch of cleared land. So far as I might tell, no explosive or shrapnel shower fell into them or near them, but when they had gone perhaps a third of the distance across the green patch there was a quick scattering of their inch high figures. Quite distinctly I counted three manikins who instantly fell down flat, and two others who went ahead a little way deliberately and then lay down. The rest darted back to the cover which they had just quit and jumped in briskly. The five figures remained where they had dropped and became quiet. Anyway, I could detect no motion in them. They were just little gray strips. Into my mind on the moment came inconspicuously a memory of what I had seen a thousand times in the composing room of a country newspaper, where the type was set by hand. I thought of five pica slugs lying on the printshop floor.

It was hard for me to make myself believe that I had seen human beings killed and wounded. I can hardly believe it yet—that those insignificant pygmies were really and truly men.—Irvin S. Cobb in Saturday Evening Post.

"Billingsgate."

The word "billingsgate" is said to have been derived from Belinus Magnus, a somewhat mythical British prince, father of King Lud, about 400 B. C. More probably it came from some unknown person called Billing. It is applied to the celebrated London fish market, existent at least as early as 979 A. D., which was made a free market in 1699, extended in 1849, rebuilt in 1852 and finally exposed to the rivalry of another market begun in 1874 and completed in 1876. The word also is used to indicate foul, abusive language, such as is popularly supposed to be mutually employed by fishwives who are unable to come to an amicable understanding as to the proper price of fish about which they are negotiating.

Her Apology.

The local singer was resenting mildly to the hostess the large amount of praise which her guests were bestowing upon the visiting vocalist.

"They didn't applaud me that way," he complained.

"Oh, well, you know," she said apologetically and sympathetically, "he is a visitor whom we don't hear often, while we think of you as the Bible says, 'The poor we have with us always.'"

Then she was very much hurt because he refused to accept her apology and left the house in a huff.

The Bridal Veil.

The wearing of the bridal veil was an old Anglo-Saxon custom, the veil being held over both bride and groom. The wearing of white is likewise an old custom and one that prevails in many countries, even including far Japan. Neither is there anything of modern origin in use of wedding favors and wedding cake nor having bridesmaids, all these customs having the sanction of long usage.

The Sick Air.

"This expression of yours, Miss De Muir," said the teacher of the class in rhetoric, who had been examining her essay, "is exceedingly faulty. You say, 'It made the very air sick.' How can you think of the atmosphere being 'sick'?"

"It seems to me," replied Miss De Muir, "I have read somewhere of an ill wind."—Chicago Tribune.

Too Much Business.

Mamma—Ha! Mr. Dorrance given you any reason to believe that he means business?

Clara—Business! I should think he did mean business! I'm sick of the word—sick of it! All he has talked about the last three times he has been here was papa's business.—Exchange.

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