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It will cost Umatilla county \$50,000 to put the roads and bridges back in the condition they were before the floods. Much of this expense would have been obviated so far as bridges and culverts are concerned if they had been constructed in a proper manner. An illustration of this fact is shown in the construction of the bridge which crosses Greasewood, west of Adams. This bridge, which rests on stone abutments took care of all the water coming into that stream from feeders above, while bridges resting on soil for pillars, and not having near the amount of water to handle, went out on all sides of it. In many instances small bridges and culverts simply settled into the flood and floated out, after the soil at both ends had been undermined by the action of the water and crumbled away. In bridge construction, a few dollars more, expended on substantial abutments, is money saved.

The prospects of an early withdrawal of American authority from Cuba do not brighten. On the contrary every week's developments seem to point toward the necessity of a long if not a permanent, control of the island by such authority. The Liberal party, whose revolt against the alleged usurpations of the Palma government induced the present intervention, is divided into factions ready to spring at one another's throats. With one or another of these factions the more volatile elements of the former Conservative party appear to have united; and the stronger faction openly threatens violence to compel the withdrawal of the Magoon provisional government and the immediate surrender of the offices to its leaders. Of course, if a withdrawal should occur, civil war between the factions would be the immediate result.

The other night, according to press dispatches, a prima donna named Miss Alice Nielsen saved a panic in the theater at Chicago by singing the "Star Spangled Banner." Now if Miss Nielsen really did such a thing she is certainly entitled to great credit for the lives she saved, but this sort of a gag may come to be the press agent's main stay. The race horse stant has worn out and so has the jewelry proposition, observes an exchange. About the only thing left for a poor actress to do is commit murder or else save the lives of some people.

Prospects in this vicinity are considered good for a fruit crop this season. The cold weather has kept the sap down and if spring is really here, all is favorable for a good yield.

It is now in order for somebody to "boost" for young man's club. From

indications the older heads were not equal to the task of keeping a commercial association going, so it is up to younger blood to give the town something of the sort.

There is moisture sufficient in the ground now to start alfalfa growing on any old hillside. If the weather keeps up its present lick, dry land alfalfa will not have to be resorted to any longer in Eastern Oregon.

One thing all must admit. The governor has his ax well sharpened and he knows how to wield it. If he continues to plant his blows with present regularity, few legislative measures will remain.

The gentle spring seems to be headed this way, but like the slow train through Arkansas, it is taking its own time.

These are the days when you think of taxes—even dog tax.

MUZZLING THE PRESS.

Two or three obtuse State Senators at Olympia are engineering a legislative scheme to muzzle the press. They have introduced the bill, familiarly known as the Pennypacker law, and are urging it upon the Legislature with great vigor. They have also devised another interesting measure by which every newspaper within the State of Washington is to be prohibited from printing criminal news, including accounts of public executions, lynchings, divorce proceedings, reports of police court trials, and the like. These designing legislators fancy, perhaps, they are doing the public service in censoring the press. But they are not. They are contributing to the security of every criminal or would-be criminal in the state by suppressing public information as to his methods and operations; and they are making a secret machine of the law and of the courts which would be a grave menace to the safety of individuals and the welfare of the public. Of course, if such a law were passed, it would be a dead letter, for no newspapers would regard it, and no prosecution under it could possibly be effective. The average newspaper prints what the public wants, and the public, being controlled in the long run by a sound sentiment and healthy opinion, wants and gets, in the main, what is best for it to have. A newspaper that violates continually sound tenets of decency and propriety will not survive; but a newspaper that informs the public best as to all current phases of human life and experience may be sure of appreciative and generous public support, for it deserves such support.

The Pennypacker law, enacted first by a Pennsylvania Legislature at the instance of Governor Pennypacker, proposed severe penalties for libel, besides providing specific maximum sums for actual damages and punitive damages. The immediate motive for enactment of the law was the venomous hostility of Governor Pennypacker towards the Pennsylvania press for lampooning and cartooning him. This was a species of lese majeste that the Governor resented and endeavored by law to prevent. He failed. No newspaper paid the slightest attention to the law, and there has never been, so far as The Oregonian has heard, a successful prosecution of any kind under its provisions. Such a law would undoubtedly be innocuous in Washington. —Portland Oregonian.

WOMEN AS DAIRY INSPECTORS.

In some parts of the country committees of women are being appointed by medical societies to visit the farms of dairymen who furnish milk for general consumption and inspect the sanitary conditions prevailing. The new movement will be watched with interest. It will at once be apparent that women ought to be admirably adapted for a mission of this kind.

Presumably, of course, only those

who have given the subject of pure milk intelligent study will be appointed. Being practically equipped for the work they are likely to be more thorough and systematic in their inspection than many men would be. The importance of having a pure milk supply appeals to them with a directness and force not always influencing the male inspectors, though it is but fair to say of the latter that, as a rule, they probably perform their duties conscientiously.

One of the most potent causes of the existing epidemic of disease in Chicago is said to be an impure milk supply. Boards of health and medical authorities everywhere recognize in tainted or impure milk a most serious menace to the public health, especially in its effect upon the young children. It is natural, therefore, that the women, having to do directly with the dietary conditions of the homes, should be asked to take a personal part in the inspection of dairies.—Spokesman Review.

Washington Chat.

Senators and Representatives, irrespective of politics, continue to discuss the resolution recently adopted by the Senate calling upon the heads of the various Government departments to supply the names, number, compensation, etc. of employees who have been assigned to work by the President during the past year and whose appointments were made outside the civil service. It is claimed by many that the executive without legal warrant, has appointed college classmates, Rough Riders and other friends of all kinds of special officers, ignoring entirely the civil service regulations. The resolution, when it was brought up in the Senate, was acted upon without a dissenting vote, not a voice being raised in defense of the President. Now, the departments called upon are busily engaged in gathering the information in order to have it before the Senate during the present session.

It is said that within the last few years, probably during the term of the present administration, the number of special appointments of employees who have no fixed legal statutes, has increased from 700 to 3000. Many legislators believe that an appointment in the clerk class, made outside of the civil service, is manifestly unfair and unjust to the hundreds of people in all parts of the country who spend weeks and months preparing for civil service examinations, who are placed on the eligible lists but who are superseded by those who are not required to come up to any special standard of fitness. Just what good will come from the recent resolution, remains to be seen.

Secretary Taft has begun preparation for his second trip half way around the world and back, upon which he will start the latter part of March. He will go first to the isthmus to inspect the canal work and make an elaborate report to the President but whether he will be accompanied by a Congressional party, as was the case on the last journey, has not been decided.

After Panama and a short rest in the United States he will turn his steps to the Philippines where great things political are expected. His visit will be so timed that by leaving this country the latter part of August, he will arrive in the Philippines at the opening of the legislative assembly. He will bear to the members of the first parliament of our far East possessions a message from the President, and it is understood that he will also have a little advice of his own to submit.

If he outlines to the assembly a policy by which the islands would be turned over to the Filipino people, it is believed that his supporters for the Presidential nomination will use it as a slogan to win favor with the growing number of people who are clamoring for the relinquishing of the islands to the Philippines.

Washington is about to lose what is probably the most interesting and valuable collection of civil war relics in existence and which is owned by Mrs. John A. Logan, wife of the late major general. These relics have long been on display at the handsome residence of Mrs. Logan but within the next few weeks they will be placed in the State Capitol of Illinois, the legislature of that State having accepted them and made provision for their removal and exhibit.

Among the most interesting things in the collection are the battle flags of the Army of the Tennessee, commanded by Gen. Logan. The flags are torn by shot and shell and stained with exposure. There is a valuable Mexican hat, placed upon Logan's head by the first President of Mexico, also the old muzzle-loading Enfield that Logan, then a Congressman, carried into action at Bull Run, where he fought all day wearing a frock coat and silk hat. Many photographs are in the collection, among which is one of the grand review of the troops in Washington in 1865, and others of prominent men of the time.

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Sirius and the Sun.

A new estimate of the comparative amount of light received on the earth from the sun and from the brightest (apparent) fixed star in the heavens, Sirius, has been made by Mr. Ceraski of the Astronomical observatory of Moscow. The sun, according to his estimate, sends us about 17,000,000,000 times as much light as Sirius does. But this of course is a matter governed by relative distance, so that if the earth were halfway between Sirius and the sun Sirius would appear between sixteen and seventeen times as bright as the sun.

Croquet.

Croquet stands as high in favor today as it did when Leech immortalized the game in the Punches of the sixties and seventies of the last century. Croquet is played in London and the country, at Ranelagh and at Hurlingham. Several men and women in smart society have become experts, and much high betting takes place when a match is in progress.—London M. A. P.

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