

OREGON STATE ITEMS OF INTEREST

FOR EQUITABLE TAX.

State Commission Proposes Revision of Present Law.

Salem—With a view to securing a more equitable assessment of property in this state, the Oregon Tax commission has recommended a revision of the law governing the equalization of assessments by the county board. In this connection, the commission gives its flat disapproval to the plan often agitated of having the assessment rolls published in the newspapers in the locality in which the property assessed is located.

The proposed revision of the law relating to equalization of the assessment is largely based upon inconsistencies in the present law, but also upon a laxity in the law by which wealthy property owners have been able to coerce county courts into allowing an inequitable assessment to stand. The commission proposes a law which seems to have "teeth in it," and which will be effective if county officers are disposed to do their duty.

The inconsistency in the present law lies in the fact that the county board of equalization is required to meet on the last Monday in August, while the assessor is given until the first Monday in September to file his roll, or until the first Monday in October if the county court makes an order to that effect. At the same time there is no authority of law for an extension of the time of meeting of the county board of equalization.

Assessors usually take the full time to prepare their rolls, and very frequently ask for and are granted the extension of time. Commenting upon this condition of the laws, the commission says that "the board of equalization is thus required to meet perhaps six weeks before the assessment roll is completed, and as its functions lapse when it has been in session a week, it must have passed out of legal existence at a date before the assessor is required to have the assessment roll ready to equalize."

"Under the present system we have practically two boards of equalization," says the commission, "one meeting after the other, and having full power to undo the work of its predecessor. The county board of equalization continues in session one week, and if it does not complete its work within the week, the county court, at its next regular session, completes the examination and correction of the roll."

The new law is to do away with this, making provision for the board meeting after the roll is completed.

This proposed law contains several provisions that seem to be an improvement upon the existing law. In the first place, a taxpayer will not go before the county board of equalization unless he has a real grievance, for the court has power to raise his assessment, and his formal petition will serve to call the attention of his neighbors and the public generally to the representations he is making governing the value of his property. Placing the matter of equalization entirely in the hands of one board instead of two will centralize the responsibility and give time and opportunity for careful and well advised work.

Fire Precautions at Asylum.

Salem—Lest friends and relatives of the 1,420 patients confined in the insane asylum may be unduly concerned as to their welfare on account of the recent fire at that institution, an official of the asylum says that none of the patients were in danger, and would not be even in case of a fire serious enough to destroy a considerable portion of the building. The facilities for getting patients out of the building are such that a disastrous fire need not cause the loss of a single life. In this particular the building could scarcely be improved.

Umatilla Canal Contract Let.

Washington—The secretary of the interior has awarded the contract to the Puget Sound Bridge & Dredging company, of Seattle, for the construction of the storage feed canal of the Umatilla irrigation project. The work of the contract involves the construction of 25 miles of canal from the Umatilla river, near Echo, to Cold Springs reservoir, and consists of 700,000 cubic yards of earth excavation, 6,000 cubic yards of rock excavation, 2,300 cubic yards of concrete and 2,600 cubic yards of riprap. The bid was \$161,888.

Wheat Yield About Normal.

Pendleton—The harvest in all parts of Umatilla county has commenced. The threshing up to this time has been too limited to make a very close estimate of the yield, but from what has been threshed on the reservation, and around Athena it is thought the yield in those districts will be about normal. and had it not been for the hot winds the yield would have been at least 25 per cent above the average.

Flour Mills Closed Down.

La Grande—The flouring mills of La Grande, Island City and Union have closed down, having utilized all the old supply of wheat.

LAW UNCONSTITUTIONAL.

Household Goods Not Entitled to Exemption, Says Supreme Court.

Salem—By holding, in a decision just rendered, that the householder's tax exemption is unconstitutional, the Oregon Supreme court has declared void a statute that has been in force in this state almost continuously since 1859. Householders' exemptions have been allowed every year except 1904, when the exemption law had been repealed. It was re-enacted by the special session of 1903, but went into effect too late to be applicable to the assessment of 1904.

Approximately \$8,000,000 has been exempted from taxation in this state from year to year, and legislators, county officers and the people generally have recognized the exemption as valid. Now the Supreme court has declared all these exemptions invalid.

This decision will make it necessary for county assessors in many counties to make a reassessment of property in their counties for 1906, for it is the practice of many assessors not to list property that is exempt. In some and perhaps most of the counties the assessors list the exempt property and make the deductions afterward.

Clackamas Farmers Are Happy.

Oregon City—There is an abundant yield of all hay and grain crops in Clackamas county this year that surpasses the average in quality. Early fruits and vegetables yielded heavily, while the vineyard, field and orchard with maturing crops, give the producer every assurance of increased prosperity with the harvest. In celebration of the large and satisfactory crops, a number of harvest festivals have been held and others are being arranged. It has been years since Clackamas county farmers were as prosperous and contented.

Yields 90 Bushels an Acre.

Weston—A remarkably heavy yield of barley has just been harvested on the farm of O. C. Turner, two miles north of this place. The yield from 14 acres was 529 sacks, or 1,267 bushels, an average of 90 1/4 bushels to the acre. Turner Bros. were expecting a good yield, but did not look for more than 70 bushels to the acre, which is a big yield.

Half Million to Clackamas Roll.

Oregon City—By the decision of the Supreme court on the tax exemption law, Assessor Nelson reports that there will be added to the Clackamas county assessment rolls about \$400,000 additional on which next year's tax levy will be made. Revision will delay the task of completing the rolls which were received from the state authorities ten weeks later than the usual time.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Club, 71c; bluestem, 73c; red, 69c; valley, 71c; new club, 70c; new bluestem, 72c; valley, 71c.

Oats—No. 1 white feed, \$30; gray, \$29 per ton.

Barley—Feed, \$23.50 per ton; brewing, \$23.50 per ton; rolled, \$24@24.50.

Rye—\$1.50 per cwt.

Hay—Valley timothy, No. 1, \$11@12.50 per ton; clover, \$8.50@9; cheat, \$6.50@7; grain hay, \$7@8; alfalfa, \$11.

Fruits—Apples, \$1.50@2.25 per box; apricots, \$1.25@1.35; cherries, 6@10c per pound; currants, 9@10c; peaches, 75c@1.10 per box; plums, \$1.25; Logan berries, \$1.35@1.40 per crate; raspberries, \$1.40@1.50; blackberries, 8c per pound; gooseberries, 8c.

Vegetables—Beans, 5@7c per pound; cabbage, 1 1/4@2c; corn, 15@20c per dozen; cucumbers, 40@50c per dozen; egg plant, 10@15c per pound; lettuce, head, 25c per dozen; onions, 10@12 1/2c; peas, 4@5c per pound; radishes, 10@15c per dozen; rhubarb, 2@3c per pound; spinach, 2@3c; tomatoes, \$1.25@3 per box; parsley, 25c; squash, \$1@1.25 per crate; turnips, 90c@1 per sack; carrots, \$1@1.25 per sack; beets, \$1.25@1.50 per sack.

Onions—New, red, 1 1/4@1 1/2c per pound; new yellow, 1 1/4@2c per pound. Potatoes—Old Burbanks, nominal; new potatoes, 75c@1.25.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 20@22 1/2c per pound.

Eggs—Oregon ranch, 21@21 1/2c per dozen.

Poultry—Average old hens, 13@14c per pound; mixed chickens, 13@13 1/2c; springs, 16@17; roosters, 9@10c; dressed chickens, 14@15c; turkeys, live, 15@17c; turkeys, dressed, choice, 20@22 1/2c; geese, live, 8@9c; ducks, 11@13c.

Hops—Oregon, 1905, 11@12c; olds, 9c; 1906 contracts, 12@15c per pound.

Wool—Eastern Oregon average best, 16@20c per pound, according to shrinkage; valley, 20@22, according to fineness; mohair, choice, 28@30c per pound.

Veal—Dressed, 5 1/2@8c per pound.

Beef—Dressed bulls, 3c per pound; cows, 4 1/2@5 1/2c; country steers, 5@6c.

Mutton—Dressed fancy, 7@8c per pound; ordinary, 5@6c; lambs, fancy, 8@8 1/2c.

Pork—Dressed, 7@8 1/2c per pound.

LOSS BY DISASTER.

Insurance Companies Make Returns in San Francisco.

Albany, N. Y., July 31.—State Superintendent of Insurance Otto Kelsey tonight made public the results of his investigation as to the losses of fire insurance companies in the San Francisco disaster.

All joint stock fire and inland marine insurance companies transacting business in the state were called on for a sworn statement as to their losses in California. The companies were asked for the gross amount of insurance involved in risks destroyed or damaged, the deduction for amounts recovered by reinsurance, the deduction for estimated salvage, the total deduction and the net amount of loss as shown by the records June 30, 1906.

The New York state companies, 47 in number, show the gross amount of insurance involved as \$41,110,069; the reinsurance to be recovered, \$10,834,195; the estimated salvage, \$7,137,183, and the actual amount of loss \$23,138,000.

Returns from other joint stock fire and fire marine insurance companies, 84 in number, show the gross amount of insurance \$80,423,704; reinsurance to be recovered, \$22,180,167; estimated salvage, \$11,358,25; actual amount of loss, \$51,983,111.

The foreign companies, 32 in number, made these returns: Gross insurance involved, \$101,430,533; reinsurance to be recovered, \$32,281,808; estimated salvage, \$153,18,859; actual loss, \$57,701,856.

The gross amount of insurance involved by all companies was \$222,836,307; reinsurance, \$65,246,771; salvage, \$33,814,468, and actual loss, \$132,828,067.

TIE-UP IS NOW COMPLETE.

Kruttachnitt Forbids More Freight Cars in San Francisco.

San Francisco, July 31.—The embargo of the Southern Pacific on lumber, lime and hay has been increased, and now includes all articles from the north. Not a pound of freight can be shipped into San Francisco from Portland or adjacent territory until the freight tie-up at San Francisco has been loosened.

This is the latest edict of Julius Kruttachnitt, who has been threatening to do this for some time unless the situation speedily cleared. It has been decided by the local authorities to take no further chances but to stop at once all shipments from the north.

For the embargo there is only one remedy—to clear up the congestion in the freight yards. Efforts in this direction are being made by all the freight agents, and the missionary work among the consignees is having a salutary effect. The unloading in the yards is going on at a faster rate, but not fast enough to suit Kruttachnitt, who has taken the precaution to see that no more cars are added to the glut that is already crowding the tracks.

The tie-up is working to the detriment of the city, as many merchants throughout the state are sending East for their goods instead of patronizing the wholesalers of San Francisco, believing that they can secure their stocks just as quickly under present conditions.

ARREST CAUSES MUTINY.

Battalion of Russian Troops Attempts to Rescue Prisoners.

Poltava, July 31.—A grave outbreak occurred yesterday in the Sevsky regiment owing to the arrest of a private of the First battalion, who was discovered with some other soldiers in a shed where the revolutionists are in the habit of holding meetings. After the arrest the entire First battalion, accompanied by a large crowd, paraded the streets in defiance of the military authorities.

The soldiers proceeded to the artillery barracks, where they seized several guns and marched with them to the prison, where the political prisoners are confined. At this stage all the remainder of the Poltava garrison was called out.

The loyal troops fired on the mutineers with machine guns as they were engaged in breaking down the gate of the prison. Several men were killed or wounded. The outbreak was not suppressed until 2 o'clock this morning.

Patent Office Behind.

Washington, July 31.—Patent attorneys throughout the country are arranging to send a delegation to see President Roosevelt at Oyster Bay and request him to either remove Commissioner Allen or cause such change in methods as will place the patent office on a satisfactory basis. The work of the patent office, attorneys declare, has been running behind since the appointment of Mr. Allen, five years ago. There are now 23,000 applications for patents unacted upon, besides numerous, copyrights, trade marks, etc.

Viborg Manifesto Seized.

Kharkov, July 31.—The authorities have seized copies of the Viborg manifesto issued by the outlawed parliament to the weight of 400 pounds which have been surreptitiously shipped into Kharkov.

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