

OREGON NEWS OF INTEREST

IDLE MONEY AT WORK.

School Fund Surplus Is Being Put Out at Interest.

Salem—The semi-annual report of State Treasurer C. S. Moore shows a heavy decrease in the surplus of money lying idle in the common school fund. A year ago, the balance in that fund was \$724,772.25. On January 1, 1904, the balance was but \$562,177.53. Since January 1, about \$10,000 has been sent out on loans and \$90,000 will be paid out in a few days on the Portland School District bonds.

Applications have been approved for loans to the amount of over \$60,000 more, so that it appears that the state has now but \$400,000 which it can offer to those who wish to borrow upon gilt-edged real estate security at 6 per cent interest. If the present demand for loans from the school fund continues, the balance will be out at interest within a year. The loaning of this fund, and consequent decrease in the amount of the idle surplus, means an increase in the revenues for school purposes. The interest on this fund is apportioned among the counties annually according to school population.

The report also shows a balance of \$85,640.50 in the general fund, from which the ordinary expenses of the state are paid. State Treasurer Moore says that a large portion of this amount will be used in paying the claims for the last quarter of 1903. During the next three months, however, nearly \$40,000,000 will be received from insurance companies under the law requiring them to pay a 2 per cent tax on their net receipts, and this sum will be sufficient to pay the ordinary expenses of the state until state taxes begin to come in, about April 1.

HEAR RAILROAD'S PLEA.

Timberland Assessment in Land Reduced to \$2.50 Per Acre.

Eugene—The county board has decided to reduce the assessment on the timber lands of the Southern Pacific company in this county from \$3 to \$2.50 per acre, after considering the argument of the attorney of that company. The reduction, however, was not made until the company should agree that there would be no contest on that figure.

The lands of the railroad company were assessed the same as all timber lands, but the argument was made that these lands were less valuable than the lands held by other corporations, for the reason that the railroad grant consists of certain sections by numbers, regardless of whether they are valuable or not, while the lands of other corporations and individuals have been selected and it is reasonable to suppose valueless claims would not be acquired.

Makes a Good Showing.

Pendleton—The annual report of Assistant Postmaster French shows that Pendleton has one of the few self sustaining offices in the state. The total revenue of the year was \$13,687.43, while the total expense was \$5,867.77. The total receipts for 1902 were \$13,539.07. The net increase of the office for 1903 over the previous year was \$148. This the officials consider is a good gain, since Pendleton has a free delivery. For a while when the free delivery was established the receipts from box rent fell off, but the demand at the present time for boxes seems to have outgrown the office, and 60 more have been asked for. This will make a total of 600.

Stockmen Feel Better.

Pendleton—The cattlemen and sheepmen of the Blue mountain district are rejoicing this winter because of the extraordinary open season. Up to the present spring like weather has prevailed, and only in a few sections has the temperature been but little below the freezing point. So far, the sheep to be held over the winter have not required feeding, remaining on the pastures, the grass of which is holding out remarkably well. Considerable rain has fallen during the fall, and so far grass has been growing.

Good Winter for Farmers.

Salem—Captain Hunt, a prominent farmer of the Waldo hills, says that the season thus far has been a very favorable one for farmers and winter wheat is in excellent condition. Farmers in this part of the county have not fed their livestock a fork full of hay or a measure of grain this winter, and probably will not do so. Pasturage has been good and cattle do well with the grass they can get, and the straw that is stacked for them in the fields.

Coal Vein Struck Near Union.

La Grande—At a depth of 280 feet a vein of coal has been struck in W. J. Townley's artesian well near Union. Just what the depth or the thickness of the layer of coal has not been ascertained. Work will be immediately resumed on this proposition, and its development is being awaited with keen interest throughout the county.

APPLIES FOR APPORTIONMENT.

Pilot Butte Company Wants to Begin on 10,000 Acres.

Salem—A. M. Drake, president of the Pilot Butte Development company, has applied to the state land board for an apportionment of the lien upon some 10,000 acres of the land for the reclamation of which his company has a contract. The company has a contract for the reclamation of 86,000 acres and the contract price is \$10 per acre.

The reclamation company holds a lien upon the land for the cost of construction. The lien upon each acre is not uniform, however, but is to be apportioned upon each 40-acre tract according to the relative value of the land. Thus one 40-acre tract may bear a lien of \$15 an acre, while another, not so valuable, will bear a lien of but \$5. An intending settler is required to pay to the company the amount of the lien, whereupon he receives a deed from the state.

PLANT EXHIBIT AT EXPOSITION.

Regents of the Agricultural College Much Taken With the Idea.

Corvallis—At a recent board meeting, the plan for the agricultural college to plant and maintain a growing exhibit on the exposition grounds at the Lewis and Clark fair was discussed and referred to the executive committee for direction. The committee is: Weatherford, chairman; Apperson, Daly, Keady, and Leedy.

The sentiment of the board was universally favorable to the plan, and the expression general that the occasion offered the college opportunity to do all the people of the state great and enduring benefit. The growth of forage grasses and plants, the cultivation of vegetables of all kinds, the production of small fruits and many other features were mentioned as among the possibilities for converting the tract into a compact and valuable display of Oregon productions and resources.

To Lease Hatchery.

Salem—Negotiations are pending between the state board of fish commissioners and the United States fish commissioner with a view to a lease of the new state salmon hatchery at Ontario to the government. If the lease can be effected as desired, the expense of operating the hatchery will be borne by the federal government, the result to the fishing industry will be the same and the state will save some \$6,000 a year, which can be devoted to the development of the fishing industry elsewhere in the state.

Big Hogs of the Grand Ronde.

La Grande—J. W. Spencer now holds the honor of having raised the largest hog in the county. Dexter Eaton has always held the championship, the largest being 760 pounds. His neighbors, John McAllister and J. W. Spencer entered into the hog raising business also and the two latter gentlemen brought two monster hogs in from their ranches near Island City a few days ago and had them weighed. McAllister's weighed 775 pounds and Spencer's 870, which breaks all former records in the weight of Grand Ronde valley hogs.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 73c; blue-stem, 79c@80c; valley, 78c.

Barley—Feed, \$20 per ton; brewing, \$20@20.50; rolled, \$21.

Flour—Valley, \$3.75@3.85; hard wheat straights, \$3.90@4.10; clears, \$3.55@3.75; hard wheat patents, \$4.20@4.50; graham, \$3.75; whole wheat, \$4; rye flour, \$4.50@4.75.

Oats—No. 1 white, \$1.07½@1.10; gray, \$1.05@1.07½ per cental.

Millstuffs—Bran, \$17.50@18 per ton; middlings, \$26; shorts, \$19@19.50; chop, \$18 linseed, dairy food, \$19.

Hay—Timothy, \$16 per ton; clover, \$12; grain, \$12; cheat, \$12.

Vegetables—Turnips, 65c per sack; carrots, 75c; beets, 90c; parsnips, 85c @ \$1; cabbage, 1@1¼c; red cabbage, 1½c; parsley, per dozen, 25c; tomatoes, \$1.50@2 per crate; cauliflower, 75c@1 per dozen; beans, 12c; celery, 75c per dozen; pumpkins, 1c per pound.

Potatoes—Fancy, 70c@80c per sack; common, 50c@60; sweets, 2½c in sacks; 2½c crated.

Fruits—Apples, fancy Baldwins and Spitzenbergs, \$1.50 per box; cooking, 75c@1; pears, \$1@1.50 per box; grapes, \$1.50 per box.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 27½@30c per pound; dairy, 20@22½c; store, 12½@14c.

Cheese—Full cream, twins, 14@15c; Young America, 15@16c.

Poultry—Chickens, mixed, 12@13c; per pound; spring, 12@13c; hens, 12½@13c; turkeys, live, 17@18c; dressed, 20c; ducks, \$7@7.50 per dozen; geese, live, 8c per pound.

Eggs—Oregon ranch, 27@27½c; Eastern, 25@26c.

Hops—Choice, 26@27c per pound; prime, 25c; medium, 22c.

Wool—Valley, 17@18c; Eastern Oregon, 12@15c; mohair, 32@35c.

WAR AGAIN SEEMS SURE.

Japan Receives Second Reply of Russia, Which Is Unsatisfactory.

London, Jan. 13.—The Times' Pekin correspondent, cabling under yesterday's date, says the Chinese minister at Tokio, at the request for the Japanese foreign office, telegraphed the following communication to Prince Ching:

"The second Russian reply to the Japanese proposals has been received at Tokio, but it is unfavorable and cannot be accepted by Japan, who will, unless Russia recedes, be compelled to promptly resort to arms.

"In view of such an eventuality, Japan urges and expects China to maintain the strictest neutrality, to preserve order throughout the empire, to guard foreigners resident in the interior, and to take special care to preserve order in the provinces of Shantung and Yunnan, lest foreign powers might seize the pretext of disorder and make aggressive movements therein."

The correspondent says that the dispatch has deeply impressed the Chinese who now believe war to be inevitable.

Wild Rumors of War.

London, Jan. 13.—The St. Petersburg correspondent of the London Daily Mail wires that there is great excitement in the Russian capital, and that many wild rumors are in circulation. One reports that the czar has drafted a declaration of war. Still another declares that actual hostilities have already broken out. None of these reports can be confirmed, however, and while not generally credited, the feeling is increased that war cannot much longer be averted. This is significant in that until the last day or two everything in St. Petersburg has pointed toward an amicable settlement of the dispute.

IN NATIONAL CONVENTION.

Woolgrowers and Livestock Association Meet in Portland.

Portland, Jan. 12.—The great national convention, which are in Portland for their annual meetings commenced work yesterday under most favorable circumstances. The sessions of the Woolgrowers' association were notable in the high tone of the addresses delivered and the earnestness with which the voting delegates approached the great questions to be considered. The Livestock convention will not get down to business until this morning, but the machinery was set in motion yesterday which assures profitable results from the meetings which are to occupy the remaining days of the week.

The visitors continued to pour in all day long, and, by a conservative estimate, they will number 1,500 when President Springer's gavel falls on the first session of the Livestock convention today. An official welcome to the state and city will be extended to the visiting stockmen this afternoon by his excellency, Governor George E. Chamberlain, and Mayor George H. Williams. There will be responses on the part of the visitors and with the annual address of President John W. Springer the great national gathering will be fairly under way.

STRIKE AT COAL MINE ENDS.

Union Leader and Utah Mineowner Make Agreement.

Salt Lake, Jan. 13.—The labor troubles in the coal fields of Carbon county have been practically settled as a result of a conference between G. W. Kramer, vice president of the Utah fuel company, and Attorney S. A. King, representing the strikers. By the terms of an agreement satisfactory to both sides, the company agrees to lease for a period of six months all of the 225 houses erected by the miners on the company's property, paying therefor the lump sum of \$75,000, the amount to be paid for each individual lease to be determined by three appraisers who have already been appointed. If at the expiration of the agreement, the houses have not been removed they become the property of the company.

While the agreement does not affect the claims of either side in the way of adjustment of grievances, it destroys any apparent reason for the strikers to remain in the district and avoids the possibility of serious trouble arising from the eviction of miners from their homes.

Removing Duty on Coal.

Washington, Jan. 13.—Congressman Jones, of Washington, has been assured by leading representatives of the house that the emergency bill approved by the president on January 15 last, removing for one year the duty on coal, will not be continued in effect after next Friday. On that date the former duty will be restored, and it is the intention of the house leaders to grant no further concessions on coal, or any other commodities, until the time comes when they deem a general revision of the tariff necessary.

Russian War Preparations.

Paris, Jan. 13.—A special dispatch to the Patrie from Harbin, a town on the Manchurian railroad, describes the Russian war preparations. The Russian officials declare war is inevitable, but add that they are ready. Port Arthur, it is further asserted, will be occupied by 100,000 men, and in ten days reinforcements of 100,000 can reach Manchuria.

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