

RAILROAD BUILDING.

Surveyors Remain in the Inland Empire all Winter.

With the approach of winter there is no cessation of the work of surveying parties in central Oregon. This is taken as a sure sign that active railroad building operation will begin in the spring. A virgin territory rich in trade is said to await the first road to penetrate the Inland Empire.

It is claimed that the most powerful agents against the development of the country are large sheep and cattlemen, who are adverse to having the ranges cut up into small farms. The stockmen are the kings of the Inland Empire and have large interests which will naturally suffer to the extent that the country is settled. These men now have range for their stock on thousands of acres of unsettled land. Railroads will change this condition of affairs. Immigration, which has already begun to a considerable extent, will follow much more rapidly once the railroads open the way. Before this onward march the herds of stock will recede further into the backwoods and mountains.

Once the railroads begin construction work it is likely to be a neck-and-neck race between them to see which one will capture the most territory. The Columbia Southern is the road nearest the goal, by having a road in operation from Biggs, on the O. R. & N. line near The Dalles, to Shaniko, 75 miles inland. The same company has incorporated another road for a route down the Des Chutes river, and also completed the preliminary surveys for the route. It is intended to extend this line into southern Oregon, and finally to the eastern borders of the state. Several parties of surveyors are out on the work.

Another road with the same goal in sight is the Corvallis & Eastern, which proposes to enter the interior country through a pass in the Cascade range, by extending its present line. Parties of surveyors now in the field have been identified as belonging to the Corvallis & Eastern. Latest reports from the interior say that the parties are locating permanent grade stakes, which, if true, is conclusive proof that no time is to be lost in getting started on construction work.

Several other prospective roads are in the field, with gangs of surveyors, but some of them will never be built, although there is territory enough to furnish trade to a number. In railroad circles considerable significance is placed upon the fact that the Burlington has had a party of surveyors in the same field most of the summer. This, in connection with the Burlington's expressed eagerness for reaching the coast, is taken as something more than a mere coincident.—Portland Telegram.

Organize a "Booster Club."

Several young men of the city are talking of forming a "Booster club," like one that has been formed in Chicago. The motto of the Chicago club is: "If you cannot say anything good of a man, keep still." The object of the club is the discouragement of unkind criticism, and the encouragement and boosting of everything that is public spirited or praiseworthy. Every member wears a booster button, which, whenever seen, is a token of warning that harsh criticism, gossip and evil remarks are decidedly distasteful to the owner, and almost in the nature of an open challenge. Indeed, members have got into more than one fight for standing up for the principles they represent. Their grit, however, has won them respect from the class most prone to gossip about other people, and the warm approval of the better classes. John A. Heusner, president of the Chicago club, in speaking about

his experience, said: "My bitterest disappointments have come from people upon whom, from friendship or relationship, I thought I had the most right to depend for encouragement, if not aid. My experiences have caused me to classify men under three heads, boosters, knockers and rangers. These are not very elegant terms, but they have the merit of being expressive, and the business world understands their meaning."—Portland Telegram.

Bunker Hill Consolidation.

From a private letter the Democrat learns that Colonel Ray, of Ray, Street & Co., bankers, of Port Arthur, Ontario, Canada, have effected a consolidation of the Bunker Hill, White Elephant and Montezuma properties, with John J. Penhale as manager. The same shareholders own stock in all these properties and the arrangements are understood to be perfectly satisfactory to all concerned. Mr. A. L. McEwen, who is largely interested in the White Elephant, will be a resident director with headquarters in Baker City. Colonel Ray and Mr. John J. Penhale are now in Canada and have been for some time past. They are expected to arrive here soon. The White Elephant mine is situated in close proximity to the Bonanza mine at Geiser, while the Bunker Hill and Montezuma are on the Cracker Creek lode. A consolidation of these properties is looked upon in the mining community as being a very important arrangement and one that means the expenditure of a large amount of money in the development of very valuable properties.—Baker City Democrat.

Gold Brick Swindle an Easy Game.

"The gold brick swindle," said a business man quoted in the New Orleans Times-Democrat, "is one of the most plausible propositions ever advanced and has landed some of the cleverest business men in the country. A number of years ago it used to be a common thing for banks in the West to buy gold bricks—I mean real ones—and frequently there were the best of reasons for keeping the transaction quiet. It often happened that the owner of some partly developed mine would make an unexpected strike and wish to buy the adjacent property. Naturally he would want to hold back the news of his discovery until he secured the land and if he had any bullion to dispose of would make the sale as quietly as possible. The banks became accustomed to deals of that kind and were consequently pretty easy prey for the gold brick swindler who turned up with a precisely similar story. "I don't believe I exaggerate when I say that fully one-third of all the banking houses in the western mineral belt were at some time victimized by this game."

One of Oregon's Oldest Voters.

One of the oldest voters in Oregon is General John H. Stevens, aged 97 years, the veteran La Grande republican, ex-register of the United States land office, and a man who has had a most active life. General Stevens is a Mason of the Royal Arch degree, and a member of the Protestant Episcopal church. He was born in Vermont in 1803, his varied occupations having included school teaching, successful wrestling in the prize ring, merchant in Boston, lumberman in Western Pennsylvania, stage line owner, and twelve years a sheriff in southern Michigan. His experience in Oregon, whither he came in 1852, includes farmer and hotel landlord in Willamette valley, pack train owner and hotel man in early days of eastern Oregon mining, federal office holder in La Grande, stockraiser and general rancher in Union county. The General is now passing his declining years kindly cared for by his son, Jap H. Stevens, and his daughter-in-law, as well as other relatives.—La Grande Journal.

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