

The Tillamook Headlight.

Fred C. Baker, Publisher.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION.

(STRICTLY IN ADVANCE.)

One year	\$1.50
Six months	75
Three months	50

EDITORIAL NOTES.

MR. W. C. CASSELL in a letter to the Headlight last week said that Tillamook county would get no railroad only "from the same source that built the Astoria road, and no other." Evidently the Oregonian is not of that opinion, for it continues to agitate for an independent line from Portland to Tillamook, for this is what it said on Friday:

As a region without railroad connection with the rest of the world, but full of promise for profitable business, the Oregon Coast region has few existing parallels. Product of farm, field, orchard, dairy, mine, forest and fishery are already great in quantity, and some of them unsurpassed for richness of quality. That whole Coast region ought to be in close touch with Portland by railroads. This is an additional reason for the construction by Portland or under Portland auspices of the proposed line to the Nehalem coal fields. Thence it could readily be extended down the Coast to the California line, or beyond. It may make a great difference to Portland what the railroad connection is that is first made with Tillamook, Lincoln, Coos and Western Douglas and Lane Counties. If that connection is with Portland, the center of business for the Columbia Basin will be fixed here for all time, and the West Coast trade secured. Otherwise this Coast trade may be divided between San Francisco and Astoria. Plenty of money can be had in the East for such an enterprise, if responsible men here will take it up and present it.

The Oregonian would never pen an article like the above if Mr. Cassell's assertions are correct. Those who understand the situation readily see that an independent railroad from Portland is most desirable, and as far as Tillamook county is concerned this is preferable, for this reason. By way of Astoria it would be in the neighborhood of 160 miles by railroad, while that of an independent road would be under 100 miles, and at a rate of four cents a mile it would cost at least \$6.40 more for a round trip ticket to Portland via Astoria than by an independent line. Freight rates will of necessity be higher by the Astoria route. In discussing the railroad question perhaps few people have considered it in this light, but this is not the only reason why an independent road is the best for Tillamook people by a long way.

Not a few persons express an opinion that kidnaping should be punishable with death. If, however, kidnapers can avoid the death penalty as successfully as murderers, this would have no terror for them. But there is no reason why the Oregon legislature should not enact a law extremely severe upon the culprits, as some of the states are remodeling their laws in this respect. If the state legislators think the death sentence too severe, then let them fall back upon the best remedy of all, that of whipping the kidnapers with a cat-o'-nine tails at a public exhibition. We do not want to be considered inhuman, but the cruelty with which kidnaping is being committed justifies extreme measures. It would not be a bad plan to serve safe crackers, footpads, train robbers, housebreakers, highwaymen and the gang of toughs who infest Oregon from time to time with that treatment. One thing is certain, if Oregon had such a law that element would consider it prudent to keep away from this state, for besides the excruciating pain of a flogging, there is the humiliation and the groans of the victim as the lash is laid on as a warning to others. And it is a good one, for although the criminal class may not witness it, a graphic description of the flogging in the newspapers is sufficient to make the toughest character put on his considering cap before running the risk of undergoing such an ordeal. This is our remedy for the above class of criminals. What is yours?

WE feel sorry for the City of Portland for it is undergoing one of those spasmodic moral

wave crusades which die out after a little time without accomplishing any good. It may be the means of closing up a number of gambling houses for a time but to stop gambling seems almost impossible, for the gamblers only migrate to new quarters. This hot and cold process of trying to moralize the world is a failure, as those who have watched them from time to time readily admit. Nearly all classes are infatuated with gambling, and to stop it a different sentiment must exist or politics must be purified. A few months before the next election in Portland will show what little good the present crusade against vice accomplished.

AN effort is to be made at the state legislature to make the term for assessors four years. County judges, the county commissioners and the school superintendents are elected for four years, and it is not too long when these officials are competent and conscientious in the discharge of their duties, but when they run everything to suit themselves two years is too long to endure them. However that may be, we hardly see the justice of electing some officials for two and others for four years. What is the state legislature going to do about it?

THE office of state printer is coming in for a good deal of criticism. Well, the printer generally gets it in the neck, anyhow, for that is one of his perquisites. If this office is retained—it is hard to kill off printers—why not make the state printer a little more useful and profitable as well to the state by having him print the school books? Most people who have had to pay exorbitant prices to the book trust feel that it is time something should be done to kill off the book monopolies.

THE senate has voted to do away with the army canteen. As this was one of the bones of contention with the prohibitionists at the presidential election our cold water friends have gained a moral victory where they least expected it. As so many army officers and temperance men have testified that the army canteen is a blessing rather than a curse, the next thing in order should be to deprive the senators drinking intoxicants in or near the national buildings.

THE director of the last census, Robert P. Porter, has predicted that the population of the United States at the end of the present century will be 300,000,000, and the director of the present census, William R. Merriam, has handed in a forecast of 30,000,000 people within the limits of New York City at the expiration of the same period. Unfortunately, neither of them will be able to verify their own prophetic visions.

THE current issue of the New York Financier, a recognized organ of financial interests, publishes a statement of the profits of New York national banks for 1900. It shows large profits and dividends by some banks and small ones by others. The dividends range from 4 per cent, the lowest, to 15, the highest, a majority being below 10 per cent, with considerable additions made to surplus funds besides.

Berlin starts the century with a story that will keep the rest of the world busy until its close in the effort to match it. The Spree river froze so suddenly that the swans were unable to get out and were frozen in the ice. It is really discouraging to start the century with a mark which the most accomplished can hardly hope to reach.

HERE is a matter which the people of Oregon would like to be enlightened upon. What is the intrinsic value of a senatorial vote in the Oregon legislature? Perhaps those who have had some experience will inform us if they come as high as in Montana, or is it that the gentlemen who are sent to Salem are proof against being bribed?

THE big sugar manufacturers

all decline to talk regarding the report that the war between the companies has been settled and that prices are to be pushed up. In case the report proves true, the public will not be so backward in speaking its mind regarding the matter.

IT has been demonstrated by Dr. Reed in Havana that mosquitoes are responsible for the spread of yellow fever. Having solved one problem the next for Dr. Reed to fathom is how to exterminate mosquitoes.

A KENTUCKY minister who made a living by breeding race horses has gone into bankruptcy. He could have done better than that by coming West and starting up a gambling joint.

THE putting of a price on Pat Crowe's head is likely to turn up a whole flock of Crowe's, for there are not many men at large who are valued at \$100 per lb.

Question of Indemnity.

The indemnity which the powers will demand of China will probably be the most troublesome question in connection with the negotiations and it appears that our government desires that it be deferred until the other matters are disposed of. The Department of State has been informed by the American minister at Peking that no agreement by the foreign ministers on this subject is to be expected and that it is necessary to a solution that the question be removed from the joint council and dealt with directly by diplomatic exchange between the powers.

This was to have been expected. It has been apparent all along that Germany intended to demand an enormous indemnity, all her military movements in respect to China since the beginning of the trouble clearly pointing to this. It is said that German officers on service in China are allowed five-fold their regular pay and of course the Chinese government will be required to reimburse Germany for this, which undoubtedly will constitute a very small part of the extraordinary exactions the German government will make. It is an opportunity for putting a generous sum into the German treasury which the government will take the fullest advantage of. Whether or not Russia will be equally rapacious is a question, but it is safe to say she will not be at all modest in her demands, while Great Britain will want a very liberal indemnity and probably France also. Indeed, no magnanimity toward China in this direction is to be looked for from any of the powers, with the exception of the United States. This government will ask only such indemnity as it believes to be fair and just and it is for the reason that it will do this that an agreement cannot be reached by the representatives of the powers at Peking. Whether our government will be able to arrive at an understanding through diplomatic exchange is problematical, but at all events it is to be hoped that it will firmly refuse to countenance any scheme for the spoliation of China, or be a party to demands for indemnity not strictly fair and just to that empire. If any power is contemplating the replenishment of its treasury by ruthlessly plundering China it should get no support or assistance from the United States.

Industrial Consolidations.

The consolidation of capital into so-called trusts reached its highest development in 1899, in which year the aggregate capitalization of industrial combinations amounted to \$2,500,000,000. Last year there was a marked decline in such consolidations, the aggregate capitalization being about \$945,000,000. The chief cause of this decline was the enormous mass of industrial securities created the previous year, which so glutted the market that promoters found it almost impossible to induce underwriters to finance their projects, so that many attempted consolidations had to be abandoned. The appearance of new competition also had something to do with it, though how potent an influence this exerted cannot easily be determined. It is the judgment, however, of some careful observers of the new competitive movement that while it has not yet attained its full proportions, enough has already been accomplished to demonstrate that any fear that American industry was to be dominated by monopoly is with few exceptions needless.

The New York Journal of Commerce says the history of combinations shows that the suppression of competition is almost impossible and where it seems to be effected it is of brief duration. "Capital," remarks that paper, "is accumulating with unprecedented rapidity; it must find investment; it goes into the fields where the trusts are reaping large harvests and where most of them are experiencing some competition from concerns not taken into the original combination. The new concerns have two advantages; they are not over-capitalized and overcapitalization is an

advantage only where the main purpose is stock speculation. The new concerns have the further advantage of having entirely new machinery. The combinations have absorbed plants much of whose machinery is old. The new competitors have the latest machinery there is." The opinion of the Journal of Commerce is that the combination as a manufacturer of common stocks for purposes of speculation has had its day, that combinations will hereafter be formed primarily for economic reasons, but of these it has been proved that competition is almost impossible of suppression and the economics of centralized control have been overestimated.

It may be a sound view that most of the industrial combinations are doomed to eventual failure, under the operation of natural economic laws which they appear to violate and from the force of competition, but it would seem to be unwise and unsafe to leave wholly to these agencies the solution of the trust problem. Something may certainly be done through legislation to regulate the combinations and to at least lessen the power for oppression and exaction they now possess. Natural economic laws will assuredly assert themselves in time. Doubtless it is not possible, in most cases, to entirely suppress competition. Yet much can be done to protect the public against the rapacity of the monopolistic combinations by judicious legislation and the demand for this should be heeded by congress and by the state legislatures.

One Canal or Two?

It may be regarded as certain that congress will not give serious consideration to the Panama canal. There are a few members in either house who look with favor upon that route, as having some very decided advantage over the Nicaragua route, but the large majority favor the latter. The president of the Panama Canal company, who is in Washington to look after the interests of that enterprise, it is said does not expect that congress will do anything for the project, but is not without hope that his company will be benefited by the contention over the Nicaragua canal and the Hay-Pauncefote treaty, regardless of what may be the decision of Great Britain. He professes to think that if the British government accepts the amended treaty Germany will unite with France to complete the Panama canal, while if Great Britain does not accept the treaty a combination will be made by the three great commercial powers of western Europe which will revive the financial credit of the Panama company and enable it to float a loan sufficient to complete the undertaking.

This idea is entertained in other quarters. It has been suggested in British newspapers. Admitting the possibility of a combination of European powers to complete the Panama canal in the event of the United States carrying out the Nicaragua project is now proposed there are some considerations which render such a movement very improbable. In the first place the interest of Great Britain commercially in an isthmian canal is not so great as it is commonly supposed to be and it may well be doubted whether it is sufficient to induce her to take any action unfriendly to the United States, such as uniting with other nations to construct a competing canal. Germany has less interest in the matter than Great Britain and would hardly be disposed to assume any large financial responsibility in a project which might prove unprofitable. As to France, the fact that a large amount of French capital is represented in the enterprise might lead that government to make an effort to carry it to completion, but it would not assume the task of completing it alone. In view of these considerations, therefore, there seems to be little basis for the Panama company's hope of securing foreign assistance to complete its enterprise, in the event of the United States going on with the Nicaragua project as provided for in the pending bill.

It is not questionable that the Panama canal can be completed for one-half or less than it would cost to build the Nicaragua canal. It could also be completed in less than half the time and it is admitted to possess some important advantages over the Nicaragua route. The determination, however, to have a distinctively American canal, under the absolute control of the United States, is so general and strong that the conceded advantages of the Panama route will have little weight against it.

Blasts from Ram's Horn.

After all there is no holiday like a holy day. God approves our toil by setting us new tasks. There is always hope for a boy who can blush. The devil wastes no powder on stuffed prophets. Destiny is the measure of a man rather than descent. A man is not dry the minute he is saved from drowning. He who makes light of the bible will get no light from it. When evil men slap you on your back look into your heart.

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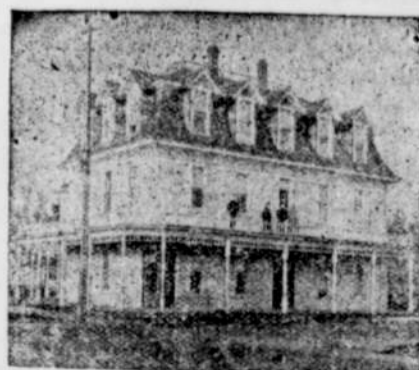
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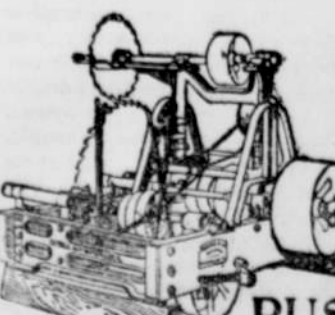
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