

EVENING CAPITAL JOURNAL.

VOL. 3.

"THE PEOPLES' PAPER."

SALEM, OREGON, MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 1891.

"TO-DAY'S NEWS TO-DAY."

NO. 261

== FOR 1891 ==

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HOFER BROTHERS, - - - Editors.

PUBLISHED DAILY, EXCEPT SUNDAY.

BY THE

Capital Journal Publishing Company.

(Incorporated.)

Office, Commercial Street, in P. O. Building

Entered at the postoffice at Salem, Or., as

second-class matter.

THE PRESENT RAILWAY COMMISSION AND THE DUTY OF THE PEOPLE.

One of the vital issues before the people, in connection with the legislative assembly, is that of sustaining the present railway commission. These officials will submit their first report to the session of the legislature now to convene, together with their findings and recommendations. There is no report of their work, except their findings in the case of the Labish wreck, made public. The commission has labored at great disadvantage from the first. Their title to office was assailed by the governor, tho' unsuccessfully, in several lawsuits to remove them from office. This kept the commission suspended in the courts, deprived them of that weight and authority in the discharge of their duty, which only rests upon those whose official powers are unchallenged. Along with this came almost continuous newspaper abuse and following the belittling efforts of the governor and press, the railway officials came to consider it smart to display little or no respect for the recommendations of the commission.

But there comes a time in all public affairs when the real character of men in office must be shown. The character of the gentlemen of the commission was fully and fairly revealed in the manner in which they investigated and reported upon the Labish wreck. They not only went deliberately at work to make thorough investigation into the causes of that disaster, but they reported to the public fully, fearlessly and carefully their findings and were prepared to defend them. The derailment and tramp theory proposed by the railroad company and persistently advocated by its employees and a hiring press, were effectively exploded by a calm and dispassionate showing of the facts and has now no more existence than before having been elucidated from vacuity.

In the newspaper discussion which followed, the commission more than held its own, and the railway magnates of the Southern Pacific have left the public in suspense by failure to make any reply to Mr. Commissioner Colvig's trenchant statements, showing the infinite tenacity of Mr. Kochler's theories.

We are not apprised of the contents of the forthcoming report of the commission. We do not know whether any of the gentlemen desire a re-election. There are a number of candidates in the field already besieging the legislators for the position of railway commissioner. What are the elements opposed to the present commission? The corporations are interested in their removal, as they prefer anyone on the commission to men who have the brains and pluck to stand up for the rights of the people. Sensible and honest corporation managers should not fear such a commission, but it seems those in Oregon do not belong largely to this variety.

The governor's attitude toward the commission has been most unfortunate for its usefulness. The commission has not been sustained by the executive; much more truly may the direct opposite be affirmed. It seems the governor was prepared to be friendly to no commission but one of his own creation, and he has practically ignored the legislative commission.

There is a small element in the state opposed to any railway commission. This element is composed of the most radical corporationists and anti-monopolists. Contrary to the practice of nearly every state in the Union, they want a crippled one man, or woman commission. We shall not argue with such, as the almost universal logic of state and national legislation is against them.

The legislature and the people should promptly sustain the present commission for the good work they have done, and to encourage these able men in a responsible public position to fearlessly find the facts in the interest of the public and not be swayed by corporation theorists to render such decisions as the company's attorneys would have. Let it be remembered that upon every question where there is a conflict of interest between corporations and the people there are shrewd attorneys retained to press the corporation theory. It requires men of brains, incorruptibility, courage and backbone to stand up for the rights of the people. So far as the present commission has made its public record it cannot be said that it does not measure up to these requirements, and it is the duty of the people and their representatives to recognize the fact by continuing them in the public service and strengthening their hands for further usefulness.

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SUGGESTED COMMENT.

The JOURNAL welcomes a number of new readers, beginning with this number.

The Dallas Daily Chronicle is springing up into a very nice evening paper.

Nearly all the Oregon towns that are bumping themselves got out New Years Editions.

Judge F. A. Moore, of Columbia county, is mentioned favorably for President of the Senate.

The Oregonian is a very good paper to keep people out of Oregon with and send them to Washington.

A birds eye view of Salem with the rich country back of it left out is as bad as the play of Hamlet with Hamlet omitted.

Local talent is having a fair show in Albany this winter.—Albany Democrat. But what kind of a show do the people have.

Gentlemen find it pays best to be courteous, tolerant and avoid ignoring even their superiors, tho' they may be envious of them.

The Marshfield News wound up the year with a complete account of the claims for recognition by capital of Coos Bay and Coos County.

The Oregon City Enterprise says in point of speed the new river steamer Manzanillo will be able to lead nearly all the boats on the river.

Baker City wants a railroad to the Seven Devils. It will be in order for a Pendleton paper to remark that Baker is afraid it is not going to the D—I fast enough.

A SENTIMENT.

Let us meet with affection, and part without dejection, as we walk toward the sunset of life.

The Northwest Christian of Portland has appeared. It is to be the organ of the Christian or Campbellite denomination. David Wetzel and D. D. Hawley are editors and Rev. J. B. Johnson, of Salem, associate editor.

The Woodburn Independent says: "If the JOURNAL is an independent paper, why does it not help us in the row over the county records?" The designation is most apt. It is only a row, and a one-sided row at that, and lacking a basis of fact.

Pendleton Tribune: So long as the leading papers of the state, and at Portland, and capitalists, take a greater interest in the development of Washington than Oregon, we may expect this state to be second and Washington to be first fiddler.

For a complete write-up of its city and country and towns the Roseburg Plaindealer came out Jan. 1, in a large twelve-page, eighty-four column, cream-tint book-paper, illustrated edition. It was a very fine paper, surpassed only by the Oregonian.

The JOURNAL favors Mr. Geer for Speaker because he offers the producer and shipper a chance, so far as speaker can secure that end, to give the railway commission power to make lower freight rates. If some other candidate offered a better thing for the people we would not favor Mr. Geer's election.

The Dallas Chronicle: The Oregonian may be correct in its editorial in Wednesday's issue wherein it says, "gold is king," but it does not look that way. The dispatches the same day announce trouble in the senate, and the probable defeat of the election bill, on account of the silver bill. Silver, just now, is king.

The Roseburg Plaindealer says it well: "The secret of Mr. Hermann's popularity is his remarkable display of one admirable talent, an indefatigable worker, ever ready to look after the people's interests without distinction to party, and to respond to their claims upon his attention at the capital concerning department matters in which they are interested."

Portland Oregonian: The school census of the state of Washington for 1890 shows that the number of children of school age in that state was 87,513. The school census of Oregon for 1890 showed the number of children of school age in this state to be 99,597. The largest vote ever cast in Washington was 58,531. That is, Oregon had last year 12,000 more school children than Washington, and cast 15,000 more votes than Washington; yet the census of the United States taken last year gave Oregon 35,000 less population than Washington. There can be no possible doubt that Oregon contains from 40,000 to 50,000 more inhabitants more than Washington, and that the United States census is a piece of grossly incompetent and fraudulent work.

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