

Cloudy to partly cloudy; cooler. Friday, light to fresh south to east winds.

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BIG CORPORATIONS WILL DODGE TAXES ONCE MORE

HAVE FAILED TO LIST THEIR FRANCHISES WITH COUNTY ASSESSOR, WHO CLAIMS THE LAW WILL NOT ALLOW HIM TO COMPEL THEM TO DO SO—RAILROADS ESCAPE WITH RIDICULOUSLY LOW ASSESSMENTS—FIGURES TELL THE STORY

Thanks to a state revenue law as full of odd and aimless sections as a patchwork quilt and a system of assessment as antiquated as it is inadequate to modern needs, the big corporations will evade this year, as usual, their just share of the burden of taxation in King county. The assessment rolls for the year 1904 are now practically completed, and within a few days will be ready to be turned over to the county board of equalization, which will go through the empty form of reviewing the assessor's work and doing justice(?) to all property owners. Except that the various railroad companies have been assessed on something more nearly approaching the true value of their rolling stock and right-of-way, due in great part to the rules of valuation adopted by the state convention of county assessors last year, the taxes of the big corporations will be but slightly increased over 1903, notwithstanding the popular demand for a just division of the burden of taxation between the small property owner and the big companies owning and operating public utilities. The franchises of the big corporations, which are the real foundation of their financial prosperity, will, as usual, escape taxation. Not one of the big companies has seen fit to list its franchises among its taxable assets, taking advantage of the many loopholes in the state law relative to taxation, and County Assessor Peter admits that he has done nothing to bring them to time. He claims that his hands are tied by the revenue law, which he unhesitatingly condemns as unjust and worthless, and furthermore asserts, with more than a suspicion of truth, that even were he to attempt to act without plain authority of law his efforts would be promptly defeated by the board of equalization. The county board of equalization, which meets in August of each year, is composed of the three county commissioners and three members of the city council, who are invar-

ably selected from among the loyal friends of the corporations in the municipal legislature. Although the equalization board has full power to raise or lower any assessment, it is noteworthy that no board in former years has ever espoused the cause of the people against the corporations. In fact, a few years ago, when one county assessor attempted to make the local street car monopoly pay taxes on something like the real value of its holdings, the board promptly lopped a cool million or so off the assessor's valuation, without even allowing the courts to pass upon the matter. The street car monopoly, the Seattle Electric company, which is one of the largest single taxpayers in the county, is this year assessed at \$1,868,000 on its personal property, as compared with \$1,703,000 for 1903. Assessor Peter has accepted the company's own valuation of its holdings, exclusive of real estate, notwithstanding that it is the list of taxable property returned by the corporation no mention is made of franchises. The assessor believes, however, that he can justly consider \$400,000 of this lump sum as representing the value of the company's franchise, which, as the Star pointed out a year ago, has a cash value of not less than \$5,000,000, figuring on the basis of the company's own annual financial statement. In view of the muddled state of the revenue laws I consider that the county is lucky to get even taxes on a \$400,000 valuation of the electric company's franchise. Assessor Peter told a Star man yesterday, "I look upon the money as a clean 'pick-up' for the county, for I doubt whether the law really requires the taxation of franchises." As to the tangible property of the Boston street car crowd, Mr. Peter stated that it was, as he believed, fairly assessed, even over-assessed as compared with the holdings of other similar corporations. For example the electric company is taxed on a valuation of \$5,000 per mile for its tracks within the city

limits, and \$5,000 per mile for those outside, while the steam railroads of the first class (the transcontinental lines) pay on right-of-way and tracks but \$7,392 a mile, and the "jerk-water" lines are assessed even less. According to the schedule adopted by the assessors' convention, railroad rights-of-way all over the state are this year to be taxed considerably higher, and Assessor Peter, disregarding the ridiculously low figures listed by the railroad companies, has largely increased the valuations on rolling stock. But the following figures, showing the assessed valuations of the various railroad companies in King county, indicate how lamentably short of just are the taxes to be collected from those corporations for 1904, unless by some strange freak of fortune an honest board of equalization should have courage to revise the assessments. Columbia & Puget Sound Railway Company, operating entirely in King county, between Seattle and various coal mining centers, assessed valuation of roadbed and right-of-way, 1904, \$201,280; rolling stock, \$62,379. Assessment for 1903, roadbed, etc., \$179,525; rolling stock, \$59,232. Northern Pacific Railway Company, roadbed, etc., for 1904, \$1,421,680; rolling stock, \$339,647. Assessment for 1903, roadbed, etc., \$1,119,322; rolling stock, \$230,855. Great Northern Railway Company, roadbed, etc., for 1904, \$354,434; rolling stock, etc., \$129,018. Assessment for 1903, roadbed, etc., \$341,152; rolling stock, \$87,216. Puget Sound Electric Company, operating Seattle-Tacoma Interurban road, roadbed, etc., for 1904, \$99,961; rolling stock, \$71,047. Assessment for 1903, practically the same. Comment on these assessments is superfluous in view of the fact that the three big railroad companies first mentioned practically own the waterfront of the entire city through franchises granted by amiable councils in past years, none of which franchises are even hinted at on the assessor's books.

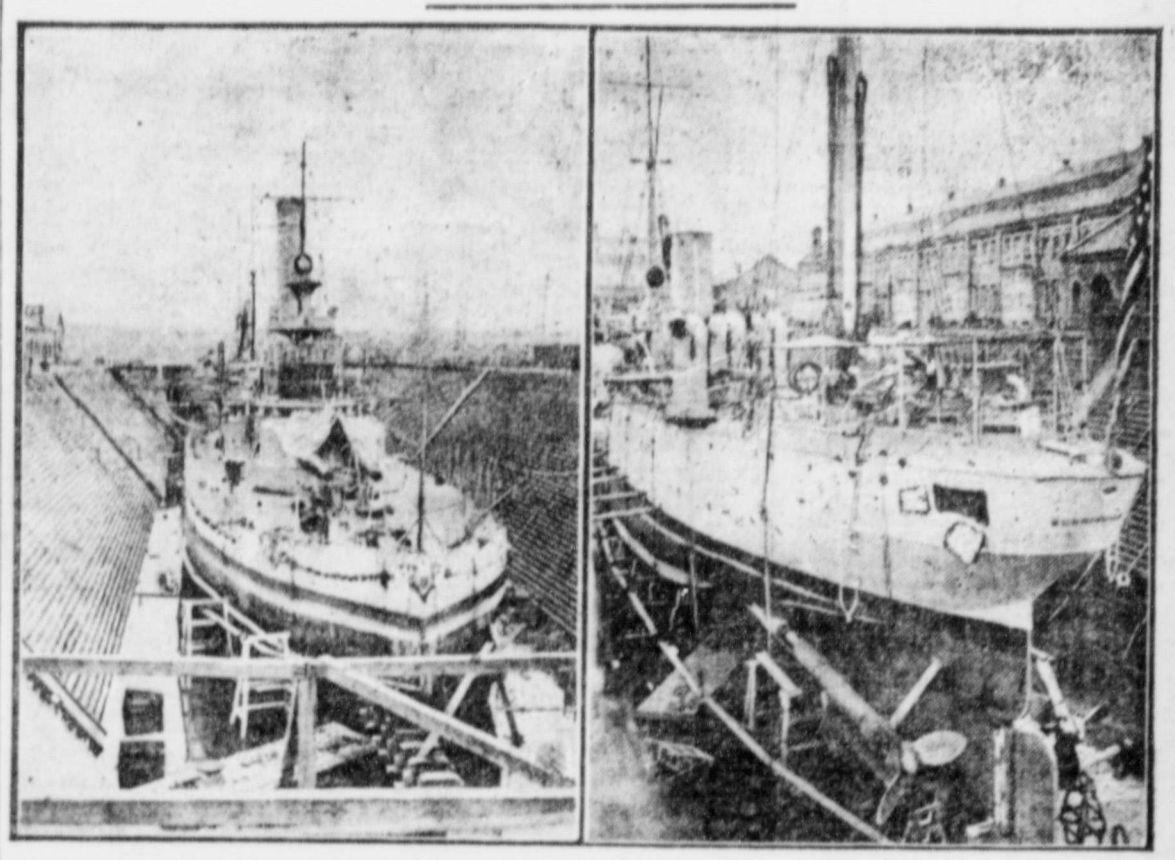
99 In Portland (Special to The Star) PORTLAND, July 21.—The thermometer reached 95 degrees here today. This is the hottest day experienced in years.

BRITISH PUBLIC DEMANDS ACTION

RUSSIAN PRIZE CREW STARTS FOR BALTIC SEA PORT WITH STEAMER MALACCA—BALFOUR PROMISES TO DO SOMETHING

(By Scripps News Ass'n.) LONDON, July 21.—Jingoism is rampant throughout Great Britain today and the Balfour ministry faces a situation which will require the exercise of the most careful diplomacy if the nation is not to be plunged into a war involving all Europe. There is an enormous demand for drastic action in the Russian seizure of British ships in the Red sea made by the press and people. The majority of the people want the steamer Malacca taken by force from the Russian prize crew, if not instantly released. On the other hand continental circles appear to believe Russia is entirely within her right in taking the Malacca to a Russian port for trial by a prize court. A prominent French diplomat is authority for the statement that Russia became possessed of information that the Malacca had aboard besides ammunition an immense steam crane intended for the Japanese naval dock at Moji. Balfour will act LONDON, July 21.—Replying to questions in the house of commons today Premier Balfour stated it was a fact that the Malacca had left Port Said in charge of the Russian prize crew and that this fact undoubtedly raised a most serious question. He said he most certainly would make a statement to the house on the subject, but at present such action would be ill advised. He was loudly cheered. He evaded answering a number of questions by asking that they be postponed till Monday. ALEXANDRIA, July 21.—The British cruisers Furious and Venus have arrived here. MORE COMPLICATIONS TIENSIN, July 21.—A New Chung message states that the commander of a Russian torpedo

OVERHAULING THE SEA-FIGHTERS



The above cut shows the Moni for Wyoming (on the left) and the gunboat Bennington (on the right) in drydock at the Puget Sound navy yard, where a big force of workmen is overhauling them and putting them into seaworthy condition.

WOULD FORM A NEW PARTY

George F. Cotterill is sending letters to democrats throughout the state, asking them to join in organizing an independent party. Mr. Cotterill outlines his plans and urges that some party should be organized that would be free from the dictations of Wall street. He believes that many democrats and republicans will join in the movement. One of the slogans of Mr. Cotterill's new party will be honesty in the administration of public affairs and a government for the people. Upon these doctrines he desires to go before the people in an effort to win a victory for honest government.

ELLIOTT ARRIVES

Howard Elliott, president of the Northern Pacific, reached Seattle from southern points at 10:15 o'clock this morning and left fifteen minutes later for the northern part of the state in company with L. A. Nadeau, local agent of the Northern Pacific. Mr. Elliott will probably return to the city to complete an inspection of the railway's properties here before departing for the east. The officials along with him on his trip are Second Vice President J. M. Hanford; Thomas Cooper, general land commissioner; Charles M. Levey, assistant to the president; B. S. Grouse, general counsel; Assistant General Superintendent A. E. Law; Division Superintendent W. C. Albert; C. W. Bunn, G. R. Cliff and two of Mr. Elliott's classmates at Harvard, Jabes How of St. Paul, and Abial Mills, of Portland.

SUBMIT STRIKE TO ARBITRATION

PACKERS, STRIKERS AND ALLIED UNIONS REACH AN AGREEMENT IN THE PACKING HOUSE LABOR TROUBLES

(By Scripps News Ass'n.) CHICAGO, July 21.—The big strike which has been on for the last 10 days will be settled by arbitration. This agreement was reached at a three-sided conference held yesterday between the packers, representatives of the strikers and representatives of the allied unions which proposed to go out in sympathy with the strikers if the packers would not agree to a peaceful settlement. By the terms of the agreement the strikers will go back to work at once and the whole trouble will be submitted to a board of arbitration. KANSAS CITY, July 21.—Hundreds of strikers returned to work this morning working side by side with the non-unionists without trouble. The packers agree to take back the strikers as fast as work can be found for them, and any of the strikers not being given work within 45 days shall submit his or her case to the board of arbitration for settlement. There was much joy in the stock yards district today over the settlement of the strike. Many men applied for work in advance of the time set for the general return. President Donnelly received replies from a majority of the members of the executive board indicating an endorsement of his action. A special meeting of the Packing Trades Council has been called tonight to ratify the agreement.

ADVANCE IN RATES

FRISCO AGENCIES WILL ONLY TAKE WAR RISKS AT ADVANCED RATES SAN FRANCISCO, July 21.—War risks on merchants vessels of all nations bound for Japanese ports were advanced all along the line this morning as a result of the reports that the Vladivostok squadron had started on another raid. Local agencies, while admitting a decided advance, refuse to give figures. Insurance men, agents and owners of vessels operating between this port and Japanese ports while affecting an optimistic air, are plainly ill at ease. They claim even if their vessels are captured they cannot be held as no contrabands of war are carried.

BLOWN UP

Safecrackers Demolished Bank Building in Illinois Town (By Scripps News Ass'n.) EAST MOLINE, Ill., July 21.—Two robbers early this morning placed a pint of nitro-glycerine at the doors of the safe at the New York State bank and blew the building to pieces. They got away from the posess that started in pursuit, but secured no booty. The safe was installed a week ago.

AMERICANS SHOT DOWN

WASHINGTON, July 21.—Consul Kaiser, at Mazatlan, Mexico, cables the state department that two Americans were shot down from their office in Aguas Calientes de Vaca by government officials. "I have wired requesting prompt investigation," he concludes.

FELL FROM CAR

William Rayburn, bartender at the Congress saloon, while riding down town this morning fell from a Broadway and Pike car at Sixth avenue and Pike street. Bystanders carried him to the Pike Street Pharmacy, where his injuries were temporarily dressed. He was later

PARADE TONIGHT

BIG FUNCTION OF MARDI GRAS STARTS AT 10:30 O'CLOCK THIS EVENING

The big Mardi Gras parade is billed for tonight. It is promised to be the finest of its kind ever seen in the city. Extensive plans have been made to make this an event to be remembered. A great deal of time and money have been spent in preparing the floats and some very novel features are promised. There will be two bands in the parade and a goodly supply of music by other means will be furnished. One unique design is a huge watermelon, to represent the new south. A band of darkies will occupy this float and dispense southern music all along the line of march. The parade will start from Sixth avenue and Pike street at 10:30 this evening. It will go down Pike street to First avenue, on First avenue to Jackson street, on Jackson to Second avenue, on Second to Pike, and back to the starting point. When the parade reaches Pioneer square, there will be a magnificent display of fireworks. The entire line of march will be illuminated by red fire and a beautiful effect is promised. The crowd of Tuesday night was duplicated last night, when the ticket sellers were kept busy disposing of the paste board slips. The success of the carnival has been attested properly by the immense attendance of the two first nights and the increasing number that are visiting the grounds each afternoon. The future afternoon performances will be especially arranged for women and children. Manager Middleton announced this morning that everything would be arranged for this and all programs will be designed for their especial entertainment. The grounds will be properly wet

DRINKING FOUNTAINS NOW ALL INSTALLED

All the new drinking fountains have now been installed by Street Superintendent Walters and are proving to be popular during the present warm weather. There is, during the hotter portion of the day, an almost continual line of horses and thirsty pedestrians lined up on opposite sides of the fountains, which are of a design entirely new in Seattle. A person is supposed to lap or suck up the Cedar river liquid, as a dog would from a spring. The water bubbles up in the form of an artificial spring, so that it can be drunk without the use of a cup. This is done to prevent the spreading of contagious diseases through the use of cups. For the benefit of those who do not desire, however, to learn the aboriginal method of quenching thirst a cup and means of filling it is provided. William Kelly, a waiter at the Olympus Cafe on First avenue South, met with a serious injury to his hand yesterday through the premature explosion of a giant firecracker. The fuse attached to the cracker, while seemingly a long one was of the quick-firing variety and exploded before the waiter could get away from it. A surgeon was summoned and bound up the injured hand. The divorce suit of Mrs. Blanch Grant, against her husband, Robert Grant, was dismissed by Superior Judge Griffin this morning.

HE MUST ANSWER

JOHN CONDOTTI BOUND OVER FOR SHOOTING AT ISSAQUAH MARSHAL As a result of a little gun practice at Issaquah, on Wednesday of last week, John Condotti, a coal miner, is now awaiting trial in the superior court on a charge of assault with intent to kill. A transcript of the proceedings before the Issaquah justice court and Condotti's bail bond in the sum of \$1,500 were filed in the county clerk's office this morning. The charge against Condotti was filed by J. H. Case, town marshal at Issaquah, who alleges that he stopped Condotti and attempted to search him for deadly weapons, whereupon Condotti hauled out a revolver and fired three shots at him. It was Case's lucky day and the bullets made holes in his air.

WILLIAM RAYBURN FELL FROM CAR

NEW YORK, July 21.—Henry G. Davis, the vice presidential nominee, left today for Bedford Springs, Pa., where he will pass the next few days preparing his letter of acceptance. He thinks Gorman should have the national committee chairmanship.



MR. JAP IN HIS GREAT JUGGLING ACT.