

Y. H. HARRIS, FINANCES.

In Gov. Brayman's message to the Legislature of Idaho he has given a statement of the financial condition of the Territory, which shows badly. He has also made suggestions for their improvement which are worthy of attention. We quote as follows:

The financial condition of the Territory seems to require your first and most careful consideration. In the Organic act, and by continued annual appropriations, Congress has made provision for nearly all our legitimate expenses. A Territorial government is but a temporary arrangement for the preservation of order and the protection of life and property. Congress may, at any time, abolish the organization, and attach its area to contiguous states and territories. Its government has few of the attributes of sovereignty; no constitution; no power of perpetuating its own existence—not even of making and enforcing laws, further than Congress may permit.

With such limited powers, and so precarious an existence, it is not to be inferred that the General Government conceded the necessity, or intended to leave excuse for the creation of a permanent Territorial debt. It was more reasonable to expect, that after a full and economical use of the annual appropriations of Congress, the local Legislature would make up, by a small tax, the amount needed for purely Territorial service, and take care to keep the expenditure within the limit of actual income. Such considerations, however, do not seem to have prevailed, for to-day the Territory staggers under a fast increasing debt, that demands at once, increased taxation, or economy in collections and expenditures, or confessed repudiation.

To enquire how or why this debt was incurred, or what became of the money it represents, would be a painful and profitless task. The results do not appear in the improved navigation of our rivers, in railroads, in bridges or highways. No ample buildings have been erected for your honorable bodies and your public officers, with their convenient furnishings; no public library; no colleges; no prison for the punishment and reclamation of criminals; no asylums for the insane; the blind, the deaf, the dumb, no home for the orphan and the poor—none of these attest the wisdom, humanity and foresight of the past, or offer to our people of to-day, and of the future years, any equivalent for the burdens of this debt, which honor, rather than a sense of benefits received, compels them to bear.

It appears that on the 4th day of December, 1865, not two years after the organization of the Territory, a debt had accumulated, of \$60,529 13, beyond the means of payment. The following deficiency was permitted to increase from year to year, without any apparent effort to impose check or limit until at this time, you encounter a coin debt of \$71,396 45, and a currency debt of \$72,461 57. The people pay their taxes in currency. Coin debts must be met by purchase of that commodity in the market. The present rate is ten per cent. It requires \$111 11 of the people's taxes to buy \$100 in coin. Applying this mode of computation to our coin debt, our outstanding indebtedness is \$151,91 02. Deducting \$15,854 75 now in the Treasury, it follows that the Territory of Idaho now owes, beyond its means of payment, one hundred and thirty-five thousand nine hundred and thirty-five dollars and twenty-seven cents.

The coin conditions of the Territorial debt are as follows:—The coin debt comprises—First—\$21,964 80 now ten per cent. bonds under the funding law of January 8th, 1875, payable December 1st 1885.—Second—\$43,075 twelve per cent. bonds issued under the funding law of 1866 and 1867, now past due. Adding accrued interest on all specie bonds, the coin debt now past due and to be provided for, is 49,421 65.

The unfunded debt outstanding in the form of Comptroller's warrants, is, principal \$66,164 70; accrued interest \$12,296 87, being \$78,461 57. From this, deduct as before \$15,854 75, now in the Treasury, and is \$62,606 82.

Being unable to meet our obligation at this time, it is due to our creditors, as well as to the people themselves, whose honor is involved, that at this session, measures be taken which will afford sufficient time, and what is more important still, provide the means of payment according to the new promises we make. The actual amount is not so large as to discourage effort. With time and prudence it can be easily mastered. The danger lies in permitting its accumulation, and in the losses incurred through a ruined credit.

It is recommended that an act be passed, supplemental to that of January 8th 1875, providing for a new series of ten per cent. bonds running fifteen years from December 1st 1876, with interest semi-annually, both payable at the Territorial Treasury. Let the principal of the coin debt, yet unprovided for, be merged in these bonds. Al-

low to creditors ten per cent. difference upon the principal of their old bonds, but none on accrued interest. Permit creditors to make exchange immediate and direct at the Treasury, repealing so much of the Act of 1875 as require advertisement, proposals and sale. The new bonds, already issued, have now but eight years to run. As the Territory gains seven years longer time, and does not pay the interest or differences on the interest now due them having already exchanged at par, and are to be first paid, will suffer no hardship by reason of their generous acceptance of the terms of the existing law; especially as it would be proper to place them on the gold coin basis established for the new issue. The prompt adoption of a measure of this character, will, it is hoped, so far improve the credit of the Territory as to justify a provision allowing but five per cent. difference on bonds exchanged after the expiration of the first half year and none after one year—assuming of course, that certain and full provisions will be made and carried out, for paying the interest when due.

It is also worthy of consideration whether it is not sound economy to put the warrant debt into currency bonds having sufficient time to run to give us the advantage of growth in population and resources. Let this be done, and a sure income provided to pay as we go, all our current expenses as well as interest. This will justify the repeal of the law under which we now pay ten per cent. interest on warrants which we sell at thirty per cent. discount. For example, your present contract to pay the United States one dollar per day in currency for boarding prisoners, is complied with by giving a warrant for one dollar and thirty-three cents, bearing ten per cent. interest. In just five years, the one dollar becomes two. All purchases made for the Territory and all service must be paid at the same rate. Thus poverty becomes a crime, to be punished by increasing the burden, as we become more and more unable to bear it. It will be better economy and more satisfactory to public creditors, to provide with certainty for all current payments of interest and all expenses as we go, thus bringing our credit up to par, before undertaking to pay the principal, for when in this condition our bonds will be sought by capitalists as a profitable investment, instead of being spurned from the market.

While it is desirable that the rate of taxation in the counties be uniform, and the burdens imposed made equal, it remains necessary that the Boards of County Commissioners, who best understand the wants and resources of their own constituencies, have charge of that matter.

In the present condition of our industries, and the diminished resources of the people, compared with former times, it is not regarded wise or necessary to increase rates of taxation. The sum now levied, if carefully collected and expended, is enough to serve all county purposes, and bring sufficient to the Territorial Treasury to pay in cash all current expenses and interests on the public debt; also, under necessary reforms in our financial management and the return of prosperity, to provide for the steady reduction of our deferred debt. All that is wanted to secure this result, is to so adjust the laws that a certain sufficient amount shall be brought into the Territorial Treasury, above and beyond all costs of collection, and all appropriations by county authorities. It appears to have been formerly the habit of County Commissioners to make allowances upon and charges against the Territory and ordering them paid out of Territorial funds—the receipts therefor being returned to the Territorial Treasurer, and improperly allowed by him as cash; whereas the money ought to have been paid in and the claims presented for audit to the Comptroller who is charged by law with that duty. The solution does not seem difficult. It is only necessary to ascertain what per centage, or proportion of the amount collected, will be required for Territorial uses, leaving the remainder at the disposal of the proper authorities of the counties, who, acting in the presence of their immediate constituents, will not be likely to fall into error. It is certainly the desire of every good citizen and public officer to restore the public credit—to save as well as to get: and to so adjust the machinery of administration as to accomplish the object without clash of interests, or conflict of authority. There are many ways in which expenses may be reduced, at the same time giving greater efficiency in the public service.

The cost of conveying prisoners to the penitentiary is a heavy tax upon the Treasury, and the discount on warrants increases the cost of their support beyond a reasonable amount. If possible, means should be provided for their instruction, and for employing them at steady labor, whereby they can be made to pay all or a part, of the expense of keeping them. In many States their labor is a source of actual income over their expenses. The wholesome rule, that idleness is the parent of mischief and crime, is not out of place, even within prison walls.

The number of pardons issued during

the past two years, is, by my predecessors, two; by myself, two, leaving in custody at this time fifteen. The cost of keeping prisoners for the years 1875-6 is \$8,327 18, against \$4,320 54 for the years 1873-4.

It is suggested whether economy and efficiency of service would not result from a change in the mode of electing and paying Prosecuting Attorneys, whereby each county should elect its own officer who should receive fees upon conviction with a small annual salary, each to do all business of his county, civil and criminal—the incumbent for Ada county to be also *ex-officio* Attorney-General for the Territory, with an addition of salary according to the service required. As it is now, the Territory has no legal advice—no officer to bring suits in its behalf in case of forfeited bonds or official delinquencies; nor has any fund heretofore been provided for such service; by reason of which, persons so inclined, may plunder the public Treasury and the tax payers with almost perfect impunity. The counties are in the same condition. The District Attorneys, while receiving liberal salaries for holding their offices, and large fees for the business actually done, which may be, and is often performed by deputy, are understood as required to transact criminal business only, except in collecting delinquent taxes, for which a generous commission is provided.

The law providing for the public printing and furnishing supplies, to be paid for by the Territory, may be profitably amended so as to give fuller opportunity for competition, and by regulating the receiving and opening of proposals and the awards made upon them.

Though it may not be well to change the frame work of the Revenue Laws, there are provisions requiring amendment. As now administered, the parties are to bring suits against delinquent tax payers, in similitude of suits at law, thus burdening each with a bill of costs.

J. K. VINCENT,

AUCTIONEER,

LEWISTON, I. T.

ALL BUSINESS ATTENDED TO Promptly and Faithfully. 1-tf

CALIFORNIA

BREWERY,

NEAR HEAD OF FIRST ST., LEWISTON, I. T.

Call and see them. WEISGERBER BROS. 1-tf

C. E. SPALDING,

DEALER IN

WATCHES, JEWELRY

AND PLATED-WARE.

WATCHES & JEWELRY REPAIRED and WARRANTED; also, all kinds of

Jewelry Made to Order.

ALL ORDERS SENT BY EXPRESS WILL BE PROMPTLY ATTENDED TO. 1-tf

HEXTER & ALEXANDER,

Wholesale and Retail Dealers in

Merchandise

OF ALL KINDS.

A GENERAL ASSORTMENT OF DRY Goods, Clothing, Groceries, Crockery and Glassware, Cutlery, Tobacco, Miners' Goods, Etc., Etc., Etc. 1-tf

LEWISTON

BAKERY,

MONTGOMERY STREET,

LEWISTON, I. T.

BREAD, PIES AND CAKES; ALSO Groceries, Confectionery, Liquors and Cigars. CONRAD WINTSCH, S. WILDENTHALER. 1-tf

C. C. BUNNELL,

DEALER IN

HARDWARE, STOVES,

Tin, Copper, and Sheet-Iron

WARE,

Mining and Farming

IMPLEMENTS.

CARPENTERS' TOOLS, LOCKS

BOLTS, NAILS, ROPE,

PITCH, OAKUM, AM-

MUNITION, HOUSE-

HOLD ARTICLES,

ETC., ETC.

SOLD AT GREATLY

REDUCED PRICES.

EVERY VARIETY OF WARE IN THE Line Manufactured and repaired.

All Orders Promptly Attended To.

1-tf C. C. BUNNELL.

LIVERY STABLE,

M. NOLAND & W. A. CALDWELL

PROPRIETORS.

AT THE OLD STAND FORMERLY KEPT by H. Crites, on the north side of E Street,

LEWISTON, NORTH IDAHO.

GENERAL FEED, SALE

AND

LIVERY BUSINESS.

Old and new Patrons are invited, who will find the management

"Not So Coarse." 1-tf

JAMES GAGE,

GENERAL RETAIL DEALER

IN

Groceries and Merchandise.

ALSO

CONFECTIONERY.

Give "The Neighbor" a Call. Lewiston, Oct., 21, 1876. 1-tf

ORO FINO

EXPRESS,

BY

DUNWELL & SON.

CARRYING U. S. MAIL AND PASSENGERS to and from Lewiston and Pierce City, transacting business with WELLS, FARGO & CO'S., Express, leaving Lewiston on Monday and arriving at Pierce City on Wednesday, leaving Pierce City on Thursday and arriving at Lewiston on Saturday of each week. 1-tf

J. C. BALDWIN,

Wholesale and Retail Dealer in

GENERAL

MERCHANDISE

LEWISTON, I. T.