

**The Weekly Chronicle.**

OFFICIAL PAPER OF WASCOCO COUNTY.  
 Entered at the Postoffice at The Dalles, Oregon, as second-class matter.  
 SUBSCRIPTION RATES.  
 BY MAIL (POSTAGE PREPAID) IN ADVANCE.  
 Weekly, 1 year, \$1.50  
 " 6 months, .75  
 " 3 months, .40  
 Daily, 1 year, 6.00  
 " 6 months, 3.00  
 " 3 months, 1.50  
 Address all communication to "THE CHRONICLE," The Dalles, Oregon.

**MR. HARRISON'S OPPORTUNITY.**

A special from Washington says: "President Harrison, in his message to

character now afforded by the republican party. But the people have spoken, emphasizing a different opinion. That Mr. Harrison has shown himself to be a wise and worthy president is the verdict of republicans and democrats alike. The closing months of his service as chief executive of the nation are very generally expected to add in no small measure to his great and honorable fame. But the impression grows that the singularly clear expression of the people in favor of a change in the nation's tariff policy should receive ready recognition from the president. If the majority is fitted to rule, the unequivocal command of the majority, given with all formality and seriousness through the medium of the ballot; should receive the calm and ready acquiescence of the president and congress.

Being a republican because he believes that party's doctrine to be the best, and its rule the best for the nation, it is clear that Mr. Harrison should, with propriety, think the present administration at least as worthy as the coming one to begin the policy of tariff reform so ardently desired by those who lately made the democratic majorities. He and his party are unquestionably the friends of the protective tariff. If he and his party shall demonstrate at the coming session of the present congress that both are ready to bow to the will of the people, that both can take the people's view of tariff reform which still protect American industries and American labor, while giving relief to the consumers of American products, the present administration can cut out the work for the next, and can win the respect and admiration of all the world.

Mr. Harrison has been in the closest accord with his party from the time that he assumed its leadership at the call of the republican convention of 1888. If he shall take the wise view that the people know what they want, and are entitled to what they want, if he shall take up the work of tariff reform at the beginning of the coming session of congress, he will do a graceful act, an honorable act, an act of wisdom, that will render him great and his party strong. It is a situation worthy of his honesty of purpose and his cheerful obedience to the will of the people who have honored him with the highest office within their gift. He can render the second administration of Grover Cleveland merely a continuance of the administration of Benjamin Harrison if he chooses to do so.

In these days when the real soldiers of the war are growing few and fewer there is a marked increase of generals. The ready acceptance of military titles by men who never wore the blue is a trifle surprising. So readily are they put on that any general manager, general superintendent or general passenger agent becomes endowed with the glittering prize. We are a peace-loving people and should at least try to keep down the list of generals by bestowing the title only on those who have served three months in the militia or have viewed without finching the awful carnage of a battle cyclorama.

G. W. Williams, owner of the steamer Norma on Snake river, has petitioned Secretary Elkins to compel the U. P. R. company to put draws in its bridges at the mouth of Burnt river, at Huntington, and at Nyassa. The petition was received at the war department November 16th, forwarded to the chief of engineers the same day, and on the 17th forwarded with a letter of instructions to Capt. Symons, United States engineers, by whom it was received yesterday, which goes to show that there is not much red tape used by the war department. Capt. Symons is instructed to investigate the matter and submit a report.

A young lady of Sprague has just made final proof on 150 acres of land, located southeast of that city. She is one of many girls in Washington who has taken up and improved homesteads.

The Elzvir Publishing company have issued the finest edition of "Evangeline" extant—copy of which is acknowledged.

**THE SILVER QUESTION.**

The Engineering and Mining Journal believes that the only safe solution of the silver question is that advanced by President Harrison, an international agreement to restore bimetalism. Unless this shall be done, in its opinion, silver must suffer further debasement, and eventually decline to fifty and possibly forty cents an ounce in the open markets of the world. Viewed in this light, the international conference assumes tremendous importance. Should silver, by any possibility, decline to fifty or forty cents an ounce, a great American industry would be wiped out of existence. This evil, however, would be slight in comparison with the tremendous losses that would fall upon the industrial classes of the world. It is estimated that the silver coinage of the world now carries \$3,000,000,000, of which the United States holds twenty per cent. of the whole.

Of course if silver should drop to forty cents an ounce the government of the world would be required to complete the work of demonetization. That would entail a total and immediate loss of \$1,500,000,000, and upon the United States of \$300,000,000; five dollars for every man, woman and child in the country. This loss would result in an immediate gain of like proportions to the gold holders and creditor classes of the world. But this immediate gain would be small, contrasted with that which the moneyed and creditor classes of the world would reap from the sole use of gold as money. Every note, every mortgage, every bond, would show a sharp enhancement in value. Upon its face the figures would be the same, but the producing classes would be required to carry to market more of the fruits of their toil before the creditor could be required legally to relinquish the bond.

In the end, however, the consequences would be disastrous to all classes. So sharp a contraction of the currency would certainly precipitate a tremendous financial and industrial panic, and invite insurrection and rebellion from the producing classes of the world. This, however, is the question viewed in its worst aspects. At present the situation is encouraging. We carry our silver with ease; one dollar is as good as another and the per capita of money was never greater. The possibilities we have painted are nothing more than a little cloud upon the financial horizon. An international resolution to restore silver to its rightful place in the mints of the world would eliminate this cloud and create universal confidence.

Several Spokane business houses have recently been victimized by men passing bogus \$10 pieces upon them. It is said that a more successful work of imitating the \$10 gold coin of the United States has never been got out in this country. The weight and size is perfect to any man only ordinarily used to the handling of money. The metal is an alloy which, when thrown on a counter, will spin and ring like the genuine article. The engraving cannot be detected with the eye in the smallest lines from the government work, and above the eagle the motto, "In God we trust," is exactly after the style of coin of that date. To avoid possible suspicion the makers have taken the newness off and they have an exact appearance of a coin that has been in use for 38 years. They are thinly washed and a knife will soon bring to the surface the black metal that composes the body of the piece.

The cost of good roads is discussed considerably of late. The graveled streets of East Portland are the worst in the world, both for the animal and the tax payer. Good country roads, dry the year round, may be made at \$7,000 to 2,000 per mile, and even less according to location, and the expenditure pays. To pull a ton on macadam costs just half as much as on hard dirt, and one-fourth as much as on sand. It is estimated in England that improved roads have made it possible for three horses to do the work formerly done by four, thus saving \$100,000,000 annually. It is also stated that with improved roads, the farm produce could be hauled for \$15,000,000 per annum less than now, and that \$160,000,000 would be added to the value of the farms.

Unless work is resumed on the Panama canal by February 3d, the concession of the government of Colombia to the old company will lapse. An attempt is being made by some French capitalists to form a new company with \$36,000,000 capital to take the assets of the old company and continue to work, but the Panama bubble has already cost the people too much money with too little returns for this to be likely to succeed. The Panama route has buried enough men and money already. Let it be abandoned and the Nicaragua canal constructed.

Oregon almonds will be on the market some of these days from Southern Oregon. Ten distinct varieties were grown this season in Ashland, and G. W. Pennebaker has made a collection of them which show that they are as fine nuts as are grown anywhere, with shells as thin almost as tissue paper or gossamer web. Almonds ought to be a profitable crop. E. D. Briggs intends to plant 400 more almond trees in his orchard tract south of Ashland next spring.

**THE FARMERS OF THE FUTURE.**

An article in a recent issue of the Century upon the homesteads in blue grass land, Kentucky, with very few modifications could be cut to fit almost any other portion of the United States. This writer says, in answer to a question as to the future of that region: "One seems to see in certain tendencies of American life the probable answer to this question. The small farmer will be bought out and will disappear. Estates will be fewer and larger. The land will pass into the hands of the rich, being too precious for the poor to own." Important changes in the conditions of land tenure and the farming industry have been creeping upon us almost unawares for years in various and widely separated portions of the country. What is said to be true of Kentucky is a truth that has been frequently recognized and discussed in these columns in connection with the farming interests of certain portions of Oregon.

The old-fashioned farmer, with his thrift, his generous shrewdness, his intimate acquaintance with the responsive secrets of nature, his wholesome content and his sturdy family of helpful sons and daughters, expecting to maintain his stake in the soil when he should leave it, has very few successors today. It looks as though, here too, the small farmer would be bought out and disappear, and as if estates would grow fewer and larger. The movement in this direction has not merely begun, but has attained considerable proportions already. It is better to recognize this transition and prepare for it, than to waste our time in unavailing regrets for a past that cannot come again, because the conditions under which it flourished do not now exist.

Hardly any single cause is sufficient to account for the altered status of the small farmer. It cannot be charged to the deficiency of the tillers of the soil, because men's minds are more acute than ever; education is more widely diffused; there is more impatience of the old conservatism, and more eagerness to keep in touch with advanced ideas. But it is quite probable that these very facts have worked against the prosperity of the old system of farming. What is called liberal education is more general, and by it tastes are developed and aspirations stimulated which cannot be satisfied within the narrow limits of the farm. Society has become more gregarious within the last quarter of a century. It longs for closer contact with the great movements of the world than can be had upon the farm. It seeks for richer and more exciting associations than rural seclusion affords. Luxury is more necessary to it than formerly, and in thickly settled communities it can at least see it if it cannot more intimately enjoy it.

But a more potent reason than that mentioned is the fact that modern agricultural methods put the American farmer at a very serious competitive disadvantage. The great farming operations of the country are largely conducted by machinery, and machinery costs money and presupposes business on a large scale. The hundred-acre farm does not give it opportunity to pay for first cost and maintenance, while the man who tries to do without it, is working against as great odds as the shoemaker at his bench who tries to compete with a modern factory. Many men, even now, make independent livelihoods upon limited acres with perhaps a little over, but the business ability and push that will accomplish that in a farm will achieve larger results in other pursuits.

The logic of events, therefore, seem to point to larger farms and the investment of more capital in their cultivation. The small farmers will be the agents and stewards of the new dispensation, and their experience and labor will receive larger rewards in those capacities than they are now receiving in their struggles as proprietors, while the land will increase in value and productiveness. This may not be an ideal solution of the problem of land distribution, but it is a solution that would much improve the present condition of the agricultural communities, and seems the only practical one under the present circumstances. It would certainly make the hills and valleys of our Inland Empire more beautiful and productive than before. Then, with a tariff system that would allow to some of us the leading manufacturing, this section would attain a degree of prosperity that would stand the closest inspection and be proof against the most adverse criticism.

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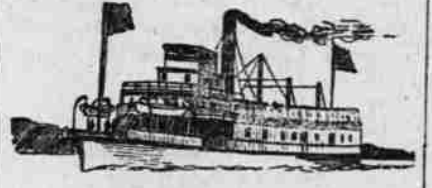
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