

The Oregon Argus.

W. L. ADAMS, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.
ORIGON CITY:
SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1856.

Agents for the Argus.
J. R. McBRIDE, Lafayette.
C. A. REED, Salem.
MORGAN RUDOLPH, Sublimity.
W. H. BARLOW, Molalla.
H. C. RAYMOND, Forest Grove.
DR. DAVIS, Blomington.
AMOS HARVEY, Plum Valley.
SOLOMON ALLEN, Amity.
J. E. LYLE, Dallas.
JOHN MCKINNEY, Catawpa.
REV. WILSON BLAIN, Union Point.
L. A. RICE, Jacksonville.
H. HARRIS, Cincinnati.
DR. GREEN, Sterlingville, O. T.
JUDGE SNELLING, Yreka, Cal.
JNO. B. PRESTON, Will Co. Ill.
R. A. N. PHELPS, Galesburg, Ill.
WILLIS WARRINER, Camden, Mo.

WAR.

In the progress of human events, and the fulfillment of prophecy, the time seems to have fully come when "wars and rumors of wars" are heard on every hand. Three of the great powers of Europe have for years been engaged in a conflict which bids fair to enlist the hitherto neutral powers, and ere long involve the whole continent in one general conflagration. The white flag of peace which has been unfurled by Austria and Prussia has been spurned again and again by Russia, England, and France, and according to the opinions of European journalists, has, by the pride of the former and the cupidity of the latter, been scornfully trampled in the dust, in such a summary manner that the most sanguine expectant of a compromise of hostilities has abandoned every hope of any thing but a peace conquered at the expense of millions of treasure and oceans of blood. How it would be possible to effect a peace upon any basis which has been proposed by neutral powers, is hard to understand; and how a peace can be conquered, so long as all Europe stands aloof from the conflict and permits Russia to fight it out with her adversaries, is still harder to understand.

The man who lives ten years longer will witness a greater turning and overturning of thrones, principalities, and powers, than the world has seen for the last two thousand years. The real philosopher finds abundant reasons for such a conclusion, apart from the dark and lurid war clouds that now hang over both hemispheres. The "signs of the times" are so plainly written in the great events that are now transpiring, that the veriest fool pad that strides along the great highway thronged by teeming millions is enabled to read something like an omen of coming "woe," as he "progresses" at a gait which is a certain book would entitle him to the position of one who "ruas."

But we set out with a view of stating that we have fallen upon warlike times, instead of moralizing upon the present aspect of things. Even in our own country the most red-mouthed warriors are likely to have their appetites for blood fully satiated. We now have on hands an imbrolio with England, growing out of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and an alleged violation of our laws by England in raising recruits among us for the Crimean service, as also a serious misunderstanding with the filibustero government of Walker in Nicaragua; besides being positively engaged in three Indian wars, with the Seminoles, Sioux, and Oregon Indians. Right on the heels of all this comes the news by the last mail of a fresh outbreak in Kansas, which has stationed the ground with the blood of a number of our citizens, struck down by hands nerved to brandish the fatal steel by internal causes that threaten to wrap the Union in a blaze of civil war.

The rabid fire-eaters of the South and the miserable, skulking dough-faces of the North, bound together by the ties of government patronage and a desire for the universal extension of negro slavery, who have trampled the Missouri Compromise in the dust, and declared slavery a "national" institution which might be planted in all the Territories, are about to realize in the present struggle just what Houston, of Texas, and Bell, of Tennessee, predicted would be the bitter fruits of disturbing these solemn compacts between the North and the South, which, by excluding the institution from all territory north of a given line, was considered as a solemn recognition of the right of its existence in all territory south of the same line. The policy of that Douglas measure has now been fully tested, and the result of disturbing the old compact of 1820 is exactly what some of the most sagacious Southern statesmen predicted it would be. Douglas and Pierce, the god-father and mother of the scheme, have ruined their prospects for the future, and the Southern States will yet find themselves much in the position of the dog who snatched at the shadow.

At the time the Nebraska bill was under

discussion, all of our readers will recollect how it advocates from the South, as well as from the North, most solemnly declared that they had no expectations that slavery would ever go into Kansas, as its soil and climate were entirely unadapted to making slave labor profitable. Their only object was, as they declared with uplifted hands, to "enunciate a great democratic principle," namely, the "right of the people to regulate their own domestic institutions." No sooner was the Territory of Kansas thrown open for settlement than there was a strife between the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States to see who should settle the greater proportion of representatives there. By the assistance of the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society, hundreds of poor hard-working men, who had the Western fever, were enabled to make an outfit for themselves and families, and remove to Kansas in order to locate land, fell the forests, and make themselves comfortable homes.— These men being laborers themselves of course had no desire to live in a slave State, where their own labor should be brought in competition with slave labor, and where they would themselves be degraded to a position in society little above that which is assigned to the negroes in slaveholding States. The vote of these men would of course be cast on the side of freedom in the great contest of "regulating the domestic institutions" of Kansas. Missouri and other Southern States entered the arena of competition with Massachusetts and other Northern States in settling Kansas, but were sadly distanced in this as in all other enterprises. Now if the slave States had gone no farther in this matter than the free States, and had confined themselves to assisting pro-slavery men to settle permanently in Kansas, no matter what the object of their patrons might have been in sending them there, the North would have had no just ground of jealousy if the South had distanced them in the race, as badly as the Yankees have now headed the slave-driver. Whatever might have been the views of the Northern States as to the justice or policy of breaking down the barrier that had for more than thirty years precluded slavery from entering into a competition with freedom for supremacy upon the soil of territory north of the Compromise line, the barriers once broken down by the rash indiscretion of ambitious demagogues, the North would have undoubtedly submitted to the introduction of slavery into Kansas, had its introduction been effected by a fair and honorable competition with them in endeavoring to colonize Kansas with permanent settlers, representing and lawfully defending the peculiar institutions of the States from which they emigrated, whether of slavery or freedom. Whether the North would have yielded to the admission of Kansas as a slave State into the Union, is another matter.

Missouri, it seems, has endeavored to make up for her own inactivity in colonizing and that of her sister slaveholding States, by sending swarms of border ruffians, armed with deadly weapons, from her frontier into the Territory of Kansas, who have gone there, not for the purpose of becoming permanent settlers, and thereby lawfully securing the prerogative of voting upon her institutions, but as an army of pibald crusaders and nigger-whippers, with the avowed object of driving free State men from the polls, controlling the elections by outnumbering their votes, or in case of a failure to do this, to destroy the poll-books and ballot-boxes. The villainies that have been perpetrated in Kansas at the instigation of Atchison and Stringfellow, which make up the history of the wrongs that white men have suffered in that Territory, in the way of having their property burned, or otherwise destroyed, of being driven from the polls with bludgeons and bowie knives, and hunted even beyond the limits of the Territory like wild beasts, besides being compelled to mourn the loss of kindred, whose blood, like that of a murdered Abel, now cries to Heaven for vengeance; the sum of these villainies will never be fully revealed till the great day of retribution, and the crimes of these hardened wretches will never be expiated till Atchison and Stringfellow pull hemp, and their ruffian tools drink blood to their heart's content. The man who can excuse such diabolical conduct upon the part of these miscreants on the ground that Massachusetts assisted a few poor emigrants to dump their duds on Kansas soil, where they might make themselves permanent farmers, and who sneeringly denounces every man like Lane, Reeder, and Robinson, who are opposed to seeing the soil of Kansas cursed by American slavery, as "abolitionists," deserves to have a pair of leather spectacles placed upon his nose, and a cooling poultice tied to the back of his head.

Slave drivers are rapidly making up the issue between those who contend that freedom is "national," and the gentlemen who see nothing worth such a denomination but the peculiar institution, and are determined to plant it in every inch of our territory. The times look rather warlike just now.

Arrival of the Mail.

The P. M. S. S. Republic arrived at Vancouver on Saturday morning last, having left San Francisco on the evening of the 23d of Feb., when off Port Orford fire broke out on board, placing the vessel in imminent danger. The flames were extinguished after considerable damage had been sustained.

The news from the Atlantic States and from Europe will be found in our columns this week.

More Complaint at the "Points."

"Our subscribers north of Oregon City constantly complain of the detention of the Statesman (and we presume all mail matter) at that place. We are informed that the Statesman, which should reach Oregon City Tuesday night, hardly ever is forwarded to Portland, until Saturday morning, whereas boats run every day, and a regular mail is carried on Wednesday morning.— Can the person in charge of the Oregon City office explain the reason of this habitual detention at that point? * * *

If (the Statesman) ought to be received at Astoria, if the mails were carried per contract, on Thursday night of the week of publication."—Statesman.

That's right, young man; pitch into our post master and "give him fits." He deserves it for not recognizing the Statesman as a democratic paper, nor allowing his house to be one of the "points" to which you send it. You say that the mail is due here Tuesday night, and ought to leave for Portland on Wednesday morning. All the difference between your statement and the truth is, that the mail is not due here till Wednesday noon, and, "carried per contract," would not leave here till Saturday morning following. But when it fails, as it did last week, to reach here till Saturday morning after the Portland mail has left, your paper must lie in this office till the next Wednesday. Your statement in reference to this matter, although false by some eighteen hours, is so much nearer the truth than any statement you have made for the last five years, that we are disposed to hope you are "under conviction." We cannot for the life of us tell why our miserable post master don't send your sheet along down to the "Points" three or four days before it gets here, unless it be that he is a Know Nothing. Just tell your patrons that he is one, and load up your "favorite rifle" with a box of Brandreth's pills, and "draw a bead" on him.

After this is done, just refer your readers at the "Points," for further information on "male derangements," to Dr. Czapyk's advertisements in the Statesman.

From Washington Territory.

We have the Puget Sound Courier of Feb. 29th. The U. S. Troops at Ft Steilacoom were making active preparations to take the field against the Indians. Four companies have already marched for the Puyallup and White River country. Kanaskut, a chief of one of the hostile tribes, had been taken by the U. S. troops and hung.

Attention, Juveniles!

Prof. NEWELL'S Flora's Festival class of young singers are requested to meet at the Musical Hall over Dr. Steele's Drug Store this (Saturday) morning, at 10 o'clock. All others not members of the class are invited to attend.

We are under obligations to Wells, Fargo & Co. and Pacific Express for late papers.

ERRATUM.—In the article "License vs. Prohibition," on our first page, 5th paragraph and 3d line, read "uprooting," instead of "reprobating."

We are pleased to notice the return of Hon. O. C. PRATT and family to Oregon by the last steamer.

J. N. Banker, Esq., has laid us under obligations for favors.

California Items.

EARTHQUAKE.—A very severe shock of an earthquake was felt in San Francisco on the morning of Feb. 15, a few minutes after 5 o'clock. The outer wall of one building was thrown down, and several brick buildings damaged, besides crockery being smashed, and furniture generally deranged. The tenants of the house were dreadfully frightened, of course, many of them rushing into the streets in their night clothes.

It was suggested that the earthquake was only an unsuccessful effort of Nature to settle land titles in the city.

SHIPMENT OF TREASURE.—The total amount of gold carried out to the Atlantic States by the steamers on the last trip was \$1,763,430. For the month of February the total amount was \$3,390,978.

MARKETS.—Flour was selling at \$8 50 to \$10 50 per bbl.; Wheat \$2 50 to \$3.00 per hund. lbs.; Oats \$2 50 to \$2 75 per hund. lbs.; Butter, \$3 to 3 7 1/2 cts.; Lard, 15 to 16 cts.; Coffee, Rio, 11 1/2 to 11 3/4; Sugar, crushed, 12c; China, 7 1/2 cts; Potatoes 5 to 6 cts per lbs.

O. J. and C. H. M. next week.

For the Argus.

Friend Adams—Enclosed I send you a copy of a letter, which was sent as addressed, and request its publication in THE ARGUS, as I know your paper has a large circulation in Washington county, and it is but right for the people of Washington to know with what care and solicitude they are watched over by the author, and the gentleman is so retired and unassuming that his talents are not observed by many. I think such untiring watchfulness and extreme anxiety which the old gentleman manifests in his letter should not pass unrewarded by the democracy. He is especially worthy with "Paddy whack" alias Malone.

I presume the letter was not intended for publication, but as it was sent to the Legislature, and contains nothing but matter for that "omnipotent" (Delazon) "body" to act upon, and as it contains the embodied sentiments of the democratic party in Washington county, and as that party detest all secret means of electioneering, and all operations in secret, I am at once led to the conclusion that nothing but modesty prevented the old man from publishing it himself. The letter is addressed to "Messrs A Shuck and Burbank Corvallis Oregon Territory," and the following is a copy "verbatim et literatim et punctuatum et spellitatim." H. V. V. JOHNSON.

"To the Honorable Representatives of yamhill co. Dear sirs we are compelled to call on you for help in the coming Legislature

of Oregon as a large portion of the citizens of Washington County are not represented but under the tyrannical rule of know nothing intolerance. And as your interest is closely connected with that of our own we can more freely call on you for help

our half representation will no doubt do all we can for our good but he lives at a remote part of the county nevertheless we will instruct him so our wish may be somewhat carried out. the know nothing Doctor promised some of his deluded supporters that he will do great things such as a large appropriation for a know nothing Road from his claim to portland and alter other roads and also to have the Tualand River pass the Sucker Lake to the Willamette & Co we ask you gentlemen Not to let the Know Doctor after any roads in Black Creek precinct and no appropriation to his know nothing Road if he can make the River pass through the sucker Lake let him do it We desire you would agitate and carry out the Township system at least in Washington Co as it will take away some of the power of County Courts which is oppressive and unrighteous Enny whiff of the know nothing order can go and have all the precinct offices filled with some of their own clan, whither they are qualified or not We think it much more Democratic & Republic to have as many of the officers Elective as possible as it will curtail the corruption of favoritism we also desire you would cut down the fees of officers in the county & precincts Three dollars a day for Judges & clerk of election is an oppressive tax on the county These views are the embodied sentiments of the Democratic party in Washington County we hope that you will treat our know nothing Doctor with contempt of neglect which he deserves &c

Please receive our best wishes for your health & a prosperous session
John Hall & others
Black Creek Washington Co Nov 11th 1855"

P. S.—There were no names signed but John Hall. H. V. V. J.

For the Argus.

State Government.

Mr. Adams—DEAR SIR: I notice in your paper of Feb. 16th that A. G. H. has written a long article in favor of State organization at an early date. Many reasons are given. Now in the first place long communications are apt to confuse and blind the eyes of many; for by the time they have got through reading, one-half at least is likely to be forgotten, and they form their opinions upon what they recollect, being generally speaking the winding up of the argument, which is calculated to blind the reader. Now it must be acknowledged that A. G. H. has adduced some tolerably good points to sustain his position. But, notwithstanding, I must become acquainted with the gentleman before I can believe he is no politician, and I feel assured that it is men of that class who are agitating the matter in favor of a State at this time. Now, sir, to some of the arguments.

First, the right of self-government purchased by our forefathers; second, capitalists never refuse to invest capital where they think there is a prospect of a dividend in three or four years; third, to invest thirty thousand dollars to pay off State officers will bring in four hundred thousand dollars from the General Government, three hundred thousand more than the Territory receives; fourthly, the enormous amount of 500,000 acres of land, worth from \$3 to \$5 per acre. Now the gentleman fears that the land will all be taken up by settlers before we become a State, if we do not vote for a Convention this coming April.— According to my idea of the matter, well would it be for this Territory if the gentleman's fears could be verified, and all of that good land be taken up by tax-paying inhabitants; for all will admit that it takes population and money to conduct the affairs of a State. As regards these large amounts of appropriations that we shall receive annually, when once a State, is a case of elones; as the man said when

asked which way he was going, up the river or down, while his craft was whirling in an eddy, "may be so, and may be no so." It must be acknowledged that capitalists do frequently enter into business blindfolded, with what they deem flattering prospects before them, and come out bankrupt in the end; so I fear it may be in this matter of a State, if gone into prematurely. As regards our forefathers, we can do them more honor when better prepared. Now as to the Indian war: he fears non-payment unless we become a State, in order to get help from the California Senators. In relation to that matter, I believe we are as sure of appropriations being made through the influence of our delegate as through that of California Senators, notwithstanding they have as much right to use their influence now in our favor as when we become a State; and one thing is sure, a father is more certain to hear the prayers of his children than those of his brother or sister. Now this thirty thousand dollar investment spoken of, (which will probably be three times that amount), will be very apt to make the tax-payers squirm, and I am induced to believe that the great advocates for a State organization are but small tax payers, and are looking anxiously forward to suck the blood from the bone and sinew of the country. How strange it is that the people are so frequently deceived and gulled by these aspiring demagogues! It is time, and high time, that we awake from our slumbers, and be on the alert; for be assured that April next will tell for or against our future prospects, and I do honestly believe, if the aspirants gain their point and we be organized into a State, that Oregon is set back for many years.— With a few exceptions, our counties are indebted, and it takes counties to make a State. Let us first get out of debt, and when we become able to sustain ourselves as a State then I will say amen.

I have not so much undertaken to refute the arguments of A. G. H. as to give my own views upon the subject; and as I am no writer for public journals, this may not be worth publishing, but if you deem it worth noticing, you can give it a place in your paper.

A CLACKAMAS TILICUM.

J. W. Sullivan, of San Francisco, has sent us a fine lot of papers, magazines, &c., for which he will please receive our thanks.

Col. Cornelius was at Port Henrieta about the 20th of February. He has boats in readiness to cross Snake River so soon as the Volunteers shall have all arrived in camp at Walla Walla valley.— Standard.

Horrible Indian Massacre.

Seventeen persons killed by Indians near the mouth of Rogue River, among whom were Ben. Wright and Capt. Poland.

From Judge Pratt, who came up on the Republic, we have obtained the following details of the massacre of Whites near the mouth of Rogue River. Judge Pratt was furnished with these particulars by Maj. Reynolds, the officer in command of the few troops stationed at Port Orford, and who came on board the steamer while lying at that port.

The narrative will be better understood by first stating that Ben. Wright had been sent by Gen. Palmer down the coast with authority to collect the friendly Indians about the mouth of Rogue River and cause them to be removed up the coast to Coos, so as to be separated from the consumption of the hostile tribes dwelling higher up the river. At the mouth of Rogue River is a settlement of Whites embracing about 30 persons. About 4 miles up the river and on the South side, was a house, the residence of a white by the name of McGuire, who had been acting as an Indian agent. Opposite on the North side is an Indian village of the Toutoutoes.

This tribe, together with the Shasta, coast, Maccanutes, and a few other small tribes living in the vicinity, were regarded as friendly Indians; while the Galeesse Creek, Applegate and Cow Creek tribes living farther from the coast, were known to be hostile, and to have made endeavors to induce these coast Indians to join them against the Whites. One Eness, a half breed, is the leader of the hostile bands in that section. The mouth of Rogue River is about 20 miles below Port Orford.

On the 22d Feb., Ben. Wright and Capt. Poland with about 40 troops, had been collecting these Indians at Toutoutoe village preparatory to proceeding with them up the coast. On that night about 25 of the troops left their arms with their comrades and went down to the mouth of the river to attend a ball. Wright and Poland went over to McGuire's house to remain during the night. The remainder of the force, 15 in number, lodged in camp on the North side of the river near the Indian village.

About 2 o'clock on the morning of the 23d, the soldiers in camp were awakened by the noise of a scuffle over the river at McGuire's house. They heard no shots fired, and the darkness prevented their being able to see the nature of the trouble.— They remained awake, proceeded to prepare their breakfast, and were ready to partake of it just at the first dawn of day. A Mr. Foster, who escaped and reached Port Orford on the 24th, says that as he was about drinking his coffee a volley of musketry was fired into camp, one ball knocking his cup from his hand. He immediately rose up, and by the light of the camp fire observed that the Indians were in their midst in great numbers. He immediately took to the brush, and succeeded in secreting himself under a log about 300 yards distant from camp. The Indians fired several shots after he left camp, and when daylight had fully appeared, they yelled and whooped and danced like demons. They came several times close upon him as he lay concealed. He recognized among them Eness the half breed,

whom he knew, and understanding their language, he heard them say that they had killed and had found the bodies of 13 of those in camp. The other one besides himself who had escaped he knew not nor where he could be found. He was enabled to move his position undiscovered, so as to see that McGuire's house had been burned, and this led him to suppose that the scuffle which was heard there in the night was the act of butchering the inmates by the Indians, and that they had done this without firing a gun to avoid alarming the soldiers in camp. Ben. Wright, Capt. Poland and three others, were the occupants of the house that night.

Foster remained in his hiding place till the of the 23d, when supposing that the Indians had proceeded directly to the settlement at the mouth of the river, he left his retreat and made all haste for Port Orford, where he arrived on the 24th.

The other person who escaped the massacre, also lay concealed till the night of the 23d, and then proceeded immediately to the mouth of the river and gave the alarm. The citizens sent a small schooner which was lying in port, immediately to Port Orford for assistance. This craft arrived there before Foster and apprised Maj. Reynolds of the massacre. The Major having only about 30 men at his command, was unable to render the aid asked for.— But Capt. Tichenor and a few of the settlers at Port Orford returned immediately with the schooner. The fate of the settlement was not known on the 27th when the Republic left Port Orford.

The crippled condition of the Republic in consequence of a fire on board, and the excited state of her passengers, rendered it impossible for her captain to aid Maj Reynolds, and hence the Major sent up a requisition to Ft. Vancouver for a company of troops.

The Indians engaged in this massacre are said by Foster to have been the Galeesse creek, Applegate, Cow creek, hostile bands combined with the coast Indians who have been hitherto friendly.

When the steamer left Port Orford, Maj. Reynolds was fortifying that post.

News from the States.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24.—The House opened with prayer. Mr. Fuller said it had been his desire for weeks to withdraw as a candidate for Speaker, and had so expressed himself to his friends; but as they had considered his name under their control, and not his own he had permitted it to go without public objection. He wished now to withdraw, and have it distinctly understood he tendered his acknowledgments for the support he had received, and for the uniform kindness and courtesy with which he had been treated. He expressed the hope that the House would now adopt some plan by which existing difficulties might be settled, by adopting some mode of adjustment agreeable to themselves, satisfactory to their constituents, and honorable to the whole country.

ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD BALLOT.—Banks, 96 | Orr, 68
Fuller, 12 | J. B. Ricard, Ma. 18
L. D. Campbell, 3

Messrs. Eddy, Pennington, Miller of Louisiana, Kennet, and Williams, each one.— Necessary for a choice 102.

WITHDRAWAL OF MR. BUCHANAN FROM THE COURT OF LONDON.

The following is from the Washington correspondence of the N. Y. Herald:

"The news brought by yesterday's Herald of the probable withdrawal of Mr. Buchanan from the Court of England, has produced in this city unusual excitement. The President has had calls from almost every quarter in relation to the subject. I have just learned that he will submit for advice the matter to the Senate in secret session.— It is probable that his communication has gone in to-day, [17th].

"The important information communicated to the Herald in my last three dispatches from this city, has to-day been confirmed by the President in conversation with members of Congress. The President has determined on sending to the Senate his reasons for the withdrawal of our Minister, Mr. Buchanan, from the Court of St. James; but unfortunately that body has adjourned over until Monday. In these two days Gen. Pierce may think he has discovered a necessity for withholding what he has now decided upon."

OUR RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

The difficulties growing out of the Cramp-ton affair and the Central American Treaty, are still unsettled. The Washington Union thinks there is a probability of a rupture, and calls lustily on Congress to organize.

PENNSYLVANIA U. S. SENATOR.—The Democrats of Pennsylvania have elected Ex Gov. W. H. Bigler to the U. S. Senate.

JEFF. DAVIS ELECTED TO THE SENATE.—Jefferson Davis has been elected to the U. S. Senate from Mississippi, his term commencing 4th of March, 1857. A writer from Washington to the N. Y. Herald learns that he contemplates resigning his seat in the cabinet. If he does, it is thought Mr. Falkner, of Virginia, will succeed him.

TERRIFIC STORM.—A terrific gale of wind visited the Atlantic seaboard about the 5th Jan., and lasted three days, several vessels were wrecked, and a large number dismasted. Some went down carrying all on board. It is impossible yet to estimate the number of lives lost in this storm, but it must be very great.

BATTLE IN KANSAS—FATAL RESULT.—The latest telegraphic despatch to the N. Y. Tribune announces a battle between the pro-slavery men and the abolitionists in Kansas. The following account of it is from a Kansas paper:—

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 10, 1857.
The Kickapo (Kansas) Pioneer of the 18th, says: "A battle took place last night at Easton, between a party of abolitionists and some pro-slavery men, the former making the attack. One pro-slavery man was