

The Oregon Argus.

—A Weekly Newspaper, devoted to the Principles of Jeffersonian Democracy, and advocating the side of Truth in every issue.—

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ADVERTISING RATES. One square (12 lines or less) one insertion, \$3.00. Two insertions, 4.00. Three insertions, 5.00. Each subsequent insertion, 1.00. Reasonable deductions to those who advertise by the year.

Job Printing.

THE PROPRIETOR OF THE ARGUS IS HAPPY to inform the public that he has just received a large stock of JOB TYPE and other new printing material, and will be in the speedy receipt of additions suited to all the requirements of this locality. HANDBILLS, POSTERS, BLANKS, CARDS, CIRCULARS, PAMPHLET-WORK and other kinds, done to order, on short notice.

The Ceiling of the New House of Representatives.

Sufficient progress has been made with the ceiling of the House of Representatives in the new south wing of the Capitol to give an idea of its surpassing gorgeousness. In the north-east angle the massive and elaborate drop pieces, of the form of huge inverted paraboloids, have been finished and set in their places; portions of them and the cornice have been painted, also, and adjoining parts of the ceiling frescoed; the whole producing an effect that can be equalled, we suppose, nowhere else on this continent, and excelled scarcely anywhere in the world. These large and most elaborate drops, with the surrounding foliage and ornaments, are made of papiermache, and, in case of receiving injury from any cause, can at any time be speedily restored.

Whilst the work of ornamentation is thus progressing in the ceiling of the hall of the House, there is no idleness in the new committee rooms. Several of them are paved with the beautiful encaustic tiles, and are ready for frescoing; others are undergoing that process, and so exquisitely beautiful in taste and finish is this work that every visitor pours forth, upon witnessing it, utterances of mingled astonishment and delight.

In the north wing, to be occupied by the Senate and its officers, several committee rooms are finished, and some are well advanced towards completion. One now in hand is for the use of the Naval Committee of the Senate, and its ceiling and walls are being most tastefully and fittingly frescoed and painted. Neptune, Amphitrite, the Tritons, and all the gods, and goddesses of the deep find spirited representations somewhere on the walls of this unique room; the panellings are taken up with wall-pictures of several of the most noted of the naval victories and exploits performed under the American flag. When finished, this room, with its match for the Military Committee, will be among the chief attractions of the magnificent apartments the country is providing for the use of her legislative agents in the Capitol.—National Intelligencer.

AGRICULTURAL PUNS.—Read what Captain Job Priest, in his "Wonderful Adventures," says of the Vegetable Kingdom:

"The term vegetable—sometimes pronounced vegetable—is probably derived from the peculiar long and pointed form of this description of esculents, hence originally called wedge-stables, then vegetables, and now refined into the present term.

Annual flowering plants resemble whales as they come up to blow.

Flowers are very warlike in their disposition, and are ever armed with pistols.

As the human family, the lower portion of all plants are radicles.

They are migratory in their habits, for wherever they may winter, they are sure to leave in the spring; most of them are very polite and full of bows.

Like dandies, the coating of many trees is their most valuable portion. Cork trees and boat trees, for instance.

Grains and seeds are not considered dangerous except when about to shoot.

Several trees, like watch-dogs, are valued mostly for their bark.

A little bark will make a rope, but it takes a large pile of wood for a cord.

Though there are no vegetable beaux, there are a number of spruce trees.

Most trees are respectable, but a variety of lozenges may be found among them.

It is considered only right and proper to ax trees before you fell them.

Fruit trees have military characteristics; when young they are trained; they have many kernels; and their shoots are straight.

Grain must be treated like infants; when the head buds it must be cradled; and thrashing is resorted to, to fit it for use.

Tares are mostly found with the smaller grains—which require sowing.

Great indulgence in fruit is dangerous—and too free a use of melons produces a melancholic effect.

Old maids are fond of pears—but can not endure any reference to dates.

Sailors are attached to bays; oyster-men to beaches; love sick maidens to pine.

SENSIBLE CUSTOM IN AN ENGLISH CHURCH.—A London correspondent of the New York Independent says:—Here we observed for the first time, what afterwards became a familiar sight—that in entering, whoever came first, whether gentleman or lady, moved to the head of the pew, and those who came in later took the remaining seats, preventing the disturbance which occurs so often in our churches at home, when a gentleman, or several of them, must step into the aisle to give a lady the fancied seat of honor.

The origin of the phrase "Mason and Dixon's Line," is as follows: In the seventeenth century, James II, of England, gave certain lands to Lord Baltimore and William Penn, and a difficulty soon sprang up as to the proper owner of these lands on the Delaware. In 1760, two surveyors, Mason and Dixon, established the line between Pennsylvania and Maryland which has ever since been called "Mason and Dixon's line."

It has been proposed to establish a printing press on board the Great Western, the mammoth ship now being built in England for the Australian trade, and to issue a daily paper during the voyage. In connection with this, there is to be a reading room, well supplied for the use of the voyagers.

NEGRO INSURRECTION IN ARKANSAS.—

We learn from the Memphis papers that there is great excitement in Union county, Arkansas, on account of the discovery of a plot among the negroes to rise in rebellion on the 15th of this month. Fortunately the plot was discovered in time to prevent one of the most bloody massacres in the whole annals of insurrection. The plot was very extensive, and the negroes were taken up and made to confess, implicating others twenty miles off. Some of the negroes say the rising was to take place the day of the Presidential election, the men all being from home that day. The plot was to murder the women and children first, and then attack the unarmed men at the polls. Several white men have been implicated, and notified to leave the county in a given time, or be hung. The letter states that on the Colorado the excitement is intense, and that several negroes have been hung. The plot seems to have been very extensive, reaching as far as Texas.

THE AMBROTYPE.—

The art by which ambrotypes are produced involves a new scientific process, by means of which pictures, far exceeding in beauty and durability anything heretofore known in the photographic art, are produced, when the method is skillfully employed. The pictures are made on a plate-glass, over which is placed a corresponding glass, the two being sealed together by an indestructible substance, which soon hardens—the two glasses becoming, in effect, one, with the picture in the centre. This is the distinguished characteristic or feature in process. Sealing the two glasses together, in the manner specified, not only renders it permanent, but the substance used in doing it also gilds the picture, giving it a fine tone and brilliancy.

THE BLISTER OF INTEREST AND DEBT.—

The following is as applicable to the merchant as the farmer:

"I forgot to ask, in the earnestness of my congratulations, whether the farm is yours? Whether it is paid for? I hope the deeds are recorded, without mortgage or lien of any kind. I hope no notes are drawing interest. No blister draws sharper than interest does. Of all industries none is comparable to that of interest. It works day and night, in fair weather and foul.—It has no sound in its footsteps, but travels fast. It gnaws at a man's substance with inviolable teeth. It blinds industry with its film, as a fly is bound upon a spider's web. Debt rolls a man over and over, binding him hand and foot, and letting him hang upon the fatal mesh until the long-legged interest devours him. There is no crop that can afford to pay interest money on a farm. There is but one thing raised on a farm like it, and that is the Canada thistle, which swarms new plants every time you break its roots, whose blossoms are prolific, and every flower father of a million seeds. Every leaf is an awl, every branch a spear, and every single plant is like a platoon of bayonets, and a field full of them is like an armed host.—The whole plant is a torment and a vegetable curse. And yet a farmer had better make his bed of Canada thistles, than attempt to lie at ease under interest."

TEMPERATURE OF THE EARTH.—

CURIOS FACT.—It has been ascertained, by accurate scientific investigators, that the increase of temperature in the earth is about ten degrees Fahrenheit for every fifteen yards of descent. In all probability, however, the increase will be found to be in geometrical progression as investigation is extended, in which case the present crust will be found to be much thinner than it has hitherto been calculated to be. Taking then, as correct, the present observed rate of increase, the temperature would be as follows:—Water will boil at the depth of 2,430 yards; lead melts at the depth of 8,400 yards; gold melts at twenty-one miles; cast-iron at seventy-four miles; soft iron at ninety-seven miles; and at the depth of one hundred miles there is a temperature equal to the greatest artificial heat yet observed—a temperature capable of fusing platinum, porcelain, and indeed every other refractory substance known.

BRITISH PULPIT ELOQUENCE.—

The London Times expresses its opinion very plainly in regard to the present character of English preaching. It says: "We would leave it to the decision of any one of ordinary candor, intelligence and education, to say whether men, in any other profession, could carry on their business with success if they took no more pains about the matter than an ordinary preacher does in the composition and delivery of an average sermon. The truth is, that in England pulpit eloquence has fallen to a very low ebb indeed. With the finest time in the world before them, with all the hopes and anxieties which agitate the human breast, during the brief interval which separates the cradle from the grave, and their subjects, our preachers miss their opportunity."

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS IN VIRGINIA.—

We learn from the Clarksburg (Va.) Register that at the recent term of the Harrison Circuit Court the Grand Jury found about seventy indictments. Of these one was against Horace Greeley for circulating in Harrison county his Tribune, which was considered by the Grand Jurors as incendiary in its character. Two citizens of the county were presented for aiding in the circulation of that print.

COLORED PERSONS NOT CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES.—

Applications having been made to the State Department for passports to a company of colored minstrels, visiting Europe professionally, the following reply has been received by Mr. Rice, Clerk of the Superior Court in New York, who made the application:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Washington, Nov. 4, 1856.

Sir: Your letters of the 29th ultimo and 3d inst., requesting passports for eleven colored persons, have been received, and I am directed by the Secretary to inform you that the papers transmitted by you do not warrant the department in complying with your request.

A passport is a certificate that the person to whom it is granted is a citizen of the United States, and it can only be issued upon proof of this fact. In the papers which accompany your communication, there is not satisfactory evidence that the persons for whom you requested passports are of this description. They are represented in your letter as "colored," and described in the affidavits as "black," from which statement it may be fairly inferred that they are negroes. If this is so, there can be no doubt that they are not citizens of the United States. The question whether free negroes are such citizens is not now presented for the first time, but has repeatedly arisen in the administration of both the National and State Governments.

In 1821 a controversy arose as to whether free persons of color were citizens of the United States, within the intent and meaning of the acts of Congress regulating foreign and coasting trade, so as to be disqualified to command vessels; and Mr. Wirt, Attorney General, decided that they were not, and moreover held that the words "citizens of the United States," were used in the acts of Congress in the same sense as in the constitution. This view is also fully sustained in a recent opinion of the present Attorney General.

The judicial decisions of the country are to the same effect. In Kent's commentaries, vol. 2, p. 277, it is stated that in 1833 Chief Justice Dargot, of Connecticut, held that free blacks are not "citizens," within the meaning of the term as used in the constitution of the United States, and the Supreme Court of Tennessee, in the case of the State against Claiborne, held the same doctrine.

Such being the construction of the constitution in regard to free persons of color, it is conceived that they cannot be regarded, when beyond the jurisdiction of this Government, as entitled to the full rights of citizens; but the Secretary directs me to say, that though the Department could not certify that such persons are citizens of the United States, yet if satisfied of the truth of the facts, it will give a certificate that they were born in the United States, and free; and that the Government thereof would regard it to be its duty to protect them if wronged by a foreign government, while within its jurisdiction for a legal and proper purpose.

I am, sir, respectfully, your obt' serv't, J. A. THOMAS, Assistant Secretary.

THE MOON.—

Dr. Scoresby, in an account that he has given of some recent observations made with Earl Ross's telescope, says:

"With respect to the moon, every object on its surface of one hundred feet was now distinctly to be seen, and he had no doubt that under favorable circumstances it would be so with objects sixty feet in height. On its surface were craters of extinct volcanoes, rocks, and masses of stones almost innumerable. He had no doubt that if such a building as he was then in were upon the surface of the moon, it would be rendered visible by these instruments. But there were no signs of inhabitants such as ours, no vestige of architectural remains to show that the moon is or ever was inhabited by a race of mortals similar to ourselves. It presented no appearance which could lead to the supposition that it contained any thing like the green fields and lovely verdure of this beautiful world of ours. There was no water visible, not a sea, or river, or even the measure of a reservoir for supplying a town or factory; all seemed desolate."

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED LEGAL VOTERS OF OREGON TERRITORY RESPECTFULLY REPRESENTS:

That the mode now prescribed by law in this Territory for obtaining license to retail ardent spirits, subjects both the applicant for license and those opposed to its being granted, to great amount of inconvenience; and whereas, we believe the same results may be attained in a more satisfactory manner; we pray your Honorable Body to so change the present license law that at each general election in this Territory the question, whether license to retail ardent spirits shall be granted by the county commissioners, shall be submitted to the qualified voters of each precinct, and that the voice of the majority of those voting thereon shall be decisive for or against the granting of license in and for each precinct, for the year next ensuing after such general election.

And we further pray your Honorable Body that it be made the duty of the county clerk of each county to make returns of the vote on this question to the secretary of the Territory, and that the aggregate vote be reported by him to the next session of the Legislature. Which vote, if found to give a majority in favor of prohibition, shall be considered sufficient instruction to said Legislature to enact a prohibitory liquor law.

As in duty bound, we will ever pray.

claim to a "good moral character,"

or whether he shall agree to keep a "respectable" establishment, or otherwise, he will leave no available means untried, but on the contrary he will offer every inducement possible, to increase the sale and consumption of the article from which he derives his gains. To expect such persons to have any care for the evils of the traffic, the vice and misery it may cause, is to entertain hopes without a shade of foundation. The only successful provision, therefore, against making drunkards, is the total abolition of the liquor traffic in every community.

But it is claimed by many that this would not be consonant with the wish of the people in some parts of the Territory, and that the law should always be a transcript of the popular will, to be successfully executed. Without questioning at all the correctness of this position, its force is admitted in the proposition to seek such a modification of the present license law as to allow the majority of voters in each precinct to decide whether they will or will not have licensed liquor dealers in their midst. Prohibition thus becomes the law where the voice of the majority in the precinct shall so declare. Besides, such a method will furnish a true test to the strength of public sentiment upon this question, without involving it with party issues.

Next to the amendment securing the partial application of the prohibitory principle, every friend of sobriety and virtue in the land will desire and favor the enactment of a prohibitory law for the entire Territory as early in our history as possible.

We are fully aware that the amendment contemplated will only remove the traffic from those precincts where the majority of voters shall so decide, while the work of inebriation will go on in adjacent precincts with increased zest and more disastrous effect; and that the unfortunate victims of intemperate habits, unable to resist the rum influence, though distant, will be lured thither, only to be sent back to their homes again maddened by the poisonous fumes of alcohol. But distance and other causes will tend to render their visits to the wine much less frequent than when its ruddy brightness fixed the gaze and enkindled thirst within sight of their own dwellings. Thus where the traffic is prohibited the evils of intemperance will not be entirely removed. The casual effects of the blighting curse, which come from those places that tolerate and smile encouragement to the liquor dealer, will mar the blessings of sobriety and virtue that may be generally enjoyed, and a necessity for the entire suppression of the traffic will still be felt to exist. It will be felt by such as have patronizingly folded their arms around the serpent of the still and suffered the augmented pains of its deadly venom, when they shall compare their condition with that of their more temperate neighbors. And it will be felt by those who suffer only incidentally the evils unjustly inflicted upon them by the "liberty" and liquor-loving propensities of others. And for this necessity we wish to provide.

No one, we think, will deny the justice and humanity of such a measure as is contemplated in the proposed amendment of the license law, for in every case the will of the majority is the law. But some may be ready to oppose because it looks ultimately to entire prohibition. Such would perhaps contend that inasmuch as this would be an infringement upon certain individual, social, and political rights of our citizens, it is therefore not to be sought. If it meant that it would infringe upon constitutional rights, we affirm that we do not, and we cannot suppose that any one desires the enactment of an unconstitutional law. To guard this point, we believe we may confide in the wisdom of our legislators upon whom this duty will devolve, and trust to them to prepare us a law which in its details will be free from all objections of this nature.

But if it is meant that natural rights will be invaded by a prohibitory liquor law,—rights which lie behind the constitution,—it is manifest that there can be no natural right more clear and inalienable than that which exists in every community to protect itself. This right is recognized in the Constitution of the United States, which declares our political compact to be formed "to establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare," &c. &c. The proper question then is, Do the people of this Territory require protection against the evils of intemperance? and are those evils of such magnitude as to make it necessary to afford this protection by law?—If so, then to refuse such protection would be a denial of natural rights.

Now what are the very questionable rights of rum-sellers, who, to make money, would lay waste the fairest heritage of social and domestic happiness, compared with the natural rights of the entire community besides! which are not mere specialties created by particular enactment, but lie behind the Constitution, and to conserve which is the legitimate province of all law. Is "justice established" when the law invests a small number of persons with a fictitious authority to produce misery, pauperism, and crime? Is "domestic tranquillity insured" by legalizing a business which gives to community brutalized husbands, widowhood, orphanage, and homeless beggary? Is "the common defense provided for" when a destroyer, more to be deplored than the invading march of a hostile army, is sweeping away, by legal authority, thousands of victims every year taking away not merely their lives, but cursing them in eternity; for intemperance "kills beyond the tomb." And, finally, can "the general welfare" be promoted by allowing to a few men the privilege of ensnaring and ruining our youth, middle aged and old men, unsettling the peace of households, corrupting legislative, executive, and judicial officers, lighting the torch of the incendiary and destroying our property, augmenting our taxes about two thirds, and filling almshouses, jails, and prisons, and preparing for the gallows victims in great numbers, invading our sanctuaries of religion and polluting with its foul touch all that is pure and sacred in human society, besides sending to a drunkard's grave from year to year one for about three hundred and thirty (330) of the population of the United States, making a grand aggregate of 40,000 annually. The proportion of this number for Oregon is about one hundred and thirty. In view of these appalling facts, we ask whose rights are to be protected? How absurd the complaint that a prohibitory law infringes upon individual rights! It is the best conservator of those rights. Shall the law say to the murderer "thou shalt not kill," and to the thief "thou shalt not steal," and at the same authorize the rum-seller to go on in his slow but sure work of destroying the life, not of one, but of many of his fellow-citizens? and shall it allow him to take with impunity from the mouths of starved and beggared children, whom his cupidity has reduced to wretchedness and want, their last morsel of bread? The common murderer and thief might with much more propriety than he complain that the law abridges their rights.—Rights of this nature are conventional. They are derived from the will of the majority, who may extend or restrict them at pleasure, as the public welfare demands.

Let us then position the Legislature from all parts of our Territory, that our desires may be understood in reference to this matter, asking them, first, to so amend the present license law as to give the whole control of the liquor traffic into the hands of the people themselves. And let the friends of temperance make every laudable exertion to secure the early enactment of a prohibitory liquor law, that will effectually drive out the scourge from our land. It has already cost the people of the Territory more to buy their liquor, bad as it has been, than to buy their bread. All this expenditure and much more would be saved by such a law. Churn the monster now, and our country is sure of prosperity, intelligence, virtue, and peace, in years to come.

D. E. BLAIN, G. HINES, G. H. ATKINSON, H. K. HINES, THOS. POPE, Executive Com.

The following is the form of the petition which the executive committee have prepared to be circulated for signatures, and to be sent to Salem, addressed to —, as early as the — day of — next:

To the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Oregon:

The petition of the undersigned legal voters of Oregon Territory respectfully represents: That the mode now prescribed by law in this Territory for obtaining license to retail ardent spirits, subjects both the applicant for license and those opposed to its being granted, to great amount of inconvenience; and whereas, we believe the same results may be attained in a more satisfactory manner; we pray your Honorable Body to so change the present license law that at each general election in this Territory the question, whether license to retail ardent spirits shall be granted by the county commissioners, shall be submitted to the qualified voters of each precinct, and that the voice of the majority of those voting thereon shall be decisive for or against the granting of license in and for each precinct, for the year next ensuing after such general election.

And we further pray your Honorable Body that it be made the duty of the county clerk of each county to make returns of the vote on this question to the secretary of the Territory, and that the aggregate vote be reported by him to the next session of the Legislature. Which vote, if found to give a majority in favor of prohibition, shall be considered sufficient instruction to said Legislature to enact a prohibitory liquor law. As in duty bound, we will ever pray.

Nonp.

DECEMBER. A spirit haunts the year's last hours, Dwelling amidst these yellowing bowers: To himself he talks; For at eventide, listening earnestly, At his work you may hear him sob and sigh, In the walks;

Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks of the moldering flowers; Heavily hangs the broad sun-flower O'er its grave, the earth so chilly; Heavily hangs the hollyhock, Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

The air is damp, and hushed, and close, As a rich man's room where he taketh repose An hour before death; My very heart faints, and my whole soul grieves At the moist, rich smell of the rotting leaves And the breath

Of the fading edges of box beneath, and the year's last rose. Heavily hangs the broad sun-flower O'er its grave, the earth so chilly; Heavily hangs the hollyhock, Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

—Alfred Tennyson.

To the Citizen Voters of Oregon Territory.

The Executive Committee of the Territorial Temperance Society ask your candid attention to the several items set forth in the following ADDRESS: Having attentively observed the various measures adopted from time to time in the several States of the Union to obviate the evils of intemperance—evils that are hostile to every social, moral, and political interest of community—we are convinced that they cannot be entirely removed without prohibition. These evils are of such magnitude as to call for the utmost stretch of constitutional power to effect their extirpation. The people of this Territory have suffered irreparable injuries under the moral and social blight visited upon them by intemperance, and they must suffer on unless they can obtain relief at the hands of their Legislature.

Believing that the existing license law of our Territory may be so amended as greatly to mitigate the evils of intemperance; and also that the absolute prohibition of the liquor traffic would result in the greatest blessings, while it would be no infringement upon any individual rights or privileges growing out of our social and political compact; we propose to ask our Legislature at its present session—

First, To so amend the license law now in force that the question, whether license to retail ardent spirits shall be granted by the county commissioners? shall be submitted to each voter at the annual election, and be decided in and for each election precinct by the expressed voice of the majority of those voting thereon.

And second, In case a majority of voters in the Territory shall be found in favor of prohibition when the returns of election are made, this fact communicated to the next ensuing Legislature, shall be considered by it as definite and sufficient instruction from the people to enact a prohibitory liquor law for the Territory or State of Oregon, as the case may be. It is proposed to ask for this amendment because it is our conviction that any change in the license law which does not aim at prohibition will not lessen the number of the victims of intemperance. All experience proves that alcoholic liquors, exposed for sale and easy to be obtained, so strongly tempt the appetite that, in the case of many, the most solemn obligations, added to all the dread consequences of inebriation, have not power to prevent the formation of intemperate habits. Even where men have no natural appetite for drink, fondness for company and relish for fun lead them to those places of public resort where are found the lovers of wit and humor. With no other aim than to pass a leisure hour they are gradually induced to indulge a social glass, and treat their friends to that exhilarating beverage which so much helps to send the sparkling joke around. In this way youth are enticed to the tavern, saloon, and groggery, and soon become intemperate in habit, ruined in character, and finally descend to a drunkard's grave. When they are once the victims of the liquor demon, parental counsel and authority are set aside, and the most sacred ties and obligations are ignored.—The religious parent, after all his pains, often has cause to tremble lest his son may seek the society of the drinking house, his happy home circle be invaded by the stealthy step of the destroyer and robbed of its most cherished ornament. The devoted wife has cause to fear and watch and pray, lest the husband of her heart may become in some unpropitious hour the victim of an evil worse than death itself, and lest, while the iron sinks deeply into her own soul, her home may be made the haunt of squalid poverty and wretchedness. No man will apply for a license to retail intoxicating liquors except with a view to make money. And no matter what may be his