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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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Commerce, &c., of the Ohio and other Western Rivers.

The Secretary of War, on the 22d of January last, replied to a call of the House of Representatives in regard to the following inquiries:

1st. The amount and value of the commerce of the Ohio and all other Western rivers; also, the navigable length of said rivers;

2d. The amount and value of the tonnage of said rivers, distinguishing, as far as practicable, between steamboats and other craft.

3d. The amount and value of the commerce and tonnage of all canals connected with said rivers.

4th. The extent and cost of the railroads connecting with said rivers, and the cost of the equipments thereof; and also the number of tons of freight moved by said railroads, and the cost of transportation per mile; and

5th. The relative value for military defensive purposes of the Western rivers, canals, and railroads, as now severally provided with means of transportation.

The department was not prepared to answer in regard to all the points suggested, but remarked that "generally it may be safely stated that our Western rivers, canals, and railroads have largely increased the military power of the United States for defensive purposes, by the facilities they present means of transportation afford for the rapid and certain movement and concentration of troops and supplies at most of the available points of the country."

General Jesup, the Quartermaster General, remarks:

I can safely say that the rivers, canals, and railroads, with their present means of transportation, taken together, have more than quadrupled the military power of the Western States for defensive purposes, by the facilities they afford for the rapid and certain movement of troops and military supplies; for the relative military power of the States depends not so much on numbers and means as the ability to concentrate both where they are required to be used either for defence or offence.

Gen. Totten, chief engineer, answers more elaborately, and shows the relative value of railroads and canals, each useful in their way—the one where speed is demanded, the other where time is not important, in point of economy. Dividing the country into four sections, he presents the mode of defending each by fortifications and batteries and the use of the improvements referred to. He concludes by saying:

Should a case occur where the whole strength of the nation would be required to repel an attack, even greater than that on Sebastopol, the rivers, canals, and railroads of the West, as means of transportation, would afford important aid in the defence.

How Drought Benefits the Soil.

That a season of extreme drought—so often occurring, and so injurious to our summer crops—should still prove beneficial to the soil, seems strange, but chemical science shows us that droughts are one of the material causes to restore the constituents of crops, and renovate cultivated soils. Professor Higgins remarks upon this subject to some extent in the "Maryland State Transactions"; we condense therefrom the main portions of this article.

Mineral matter is taken from the soil by the crops grown upon it, and also carried away by the surface water flowing into streams, and thence carried to the sea.—These two causes, always in operation, unless counteracted by other influences, would in time render the earth a barren waste.—The diminution which arises from the first cause is in part restored by manures, but not in all cases, and Providence has provided a way of its own to supply lost mineral constituents needed in the growth of plants. At intervals droughts occur to bring up from the deep parts of the earth food for the use of plants when the rains shall again fall.

The manner in which droughts exercise their beneficial influences is as follows:—During dry weather, a continual evaporation of water takes place from the surface of the earth which is not supplied by any from the clouds. The evaporation from the surface creates a vacuum, (as far as the water is concerned,) which is at once filled by the water rising up from the subsoil—the water from the subsoil is replaced from the next below—and in this manner the circulation of water in the earth is the reverse of that which takes place in wet weather. This progress to the surface of the water in the earth manifests itself strikingly in the drying up of springs and wells, and streams which are supported by springs.

It is not, however, only the water which is brought to the surface of the earth, but also all which the water holds in solution. These substances are salts of lime and magnesia, of potash and soda, and indeed whatever the subsoil or top strata of the earth may contain. The water, on reaching the surface, is evaporated, and leaves behind in the soil its mineral salts,—the chief of which are lime, magnesia, phosphate of lime, sulphate of lime, carbonate of potash and soda—and also

common salt—all indispensable to the growth of the vegetable products of the farm. Pure rain water, as it falls, will dissolve but a very small portion of some of these substances, but when it sinks into the earth it then becomes strongly imbued with carbonic acid from the decomposition of vegetable matter in the soil, and thus acquires the property of readily dissolving minerals, on which it before could have very little influence.

Several experiments tried by Prof. H. go to show this action of drought in bringing matters to the surface of the soil. In one case he placed a solution of chloride of barium in the bottom of a glass cylinder, and then filled it with dry soil. After long exposure to the rays of the sun, the surface of the soil was tested with sulphuric acid, and gave a copious precipitate of sulphate of baryta. Chloride of lime, of soda, and carbonate of potash were experimented upon in like manner, and upon the application of proper tests, the surface of the soil showed their presence in large quantities, drawn up by the rising of water from underneath, as in the case of drought.

The parched earth—every green thing dwarfed in growth or withered by long-continued heat—seems suffering under an afflictive dispensation of Providence; yet we should not murmur: it is a blessing in disguise. The early and the latter rain may produce at once abundant crops, but dry weather is needed to bring to the surface food for future harvests from the depths of the earth, where else it would be forever unemployed. It is a needed means of keeping up the fertility of the cultivated soil.

For the Argus. Democracy of the Anti kind. In the Statesman of 19th of May, Mr. Bush labors to sustain the party against what he calls "wilful perversion" on the part of the Oregonian and Standard. He quoted from the Standard:

"The only true and just interpretation which can be given to Dr. Drew's resolutions is that he and his adherents repudiate the doctrine that a sworn representative of the people can be a democrat and obey the wishes of those whom he represents in the legislative councils, where an informal vote of a caucus of the members of his party has indicated opposition to those wishes."

This, with a quotation from the Oregonian, is misrepresentation, Mr. Bush thinks, because "the idea sought to be disseminated" is "that all subjects of legislation are proper for the consideration of a party caucus, and that the decision thereof upon them binds the representatives of the party." He then reads the famous resolution, and adds: "Not a word is here said about legislation proper of any kind, not even that of a party character. The nominations for office only are referred to."

If Mr. Bush is not able to answer an argument, it must be admitted he has heard the old cry of "stop thief," that he knows the value of diverting attention from the subject at issue. I have read the remarks of the Standard and Oregonian referred to, and I am unable to see any indication of injustice. The resolution should be read often. Let us have it here:

"Resolved, That we repudiate the doctrine that a representative or delegate can, in pursuance of the wishes or fancied interests of the district he represents, go into or remain out of a caucus or convention of his party, and refuse to support the nomination thereof, and still maintain his standing as a democrat."

Now does not this assert for the party caucus a supremacy over the people? We examine. In our idea of democracy we see in the legislator the people who elect him. His duties embrace making laws, and the election of certain legislative, territorial, State, or national officers. In voting for any officer, is he not as much the people who elect him, or their servant, as when engaged in making a law? If so, what then is Mr. Bush's excuse that the party would control the legislator, and consequently the people he represents, only in a part of his duties, viz: matters pertaining to election of officers? It substantially amounts to this: Our grandfathers were guilty of "wilful perversion" because they complained of a little duty on us, without the right of representation in Parliament. Had friend Bush lived in Boston in those days, he probably would have saved all that tea thrown to the fishes. "Why, look here," he would have said, "the British government has not taxed tobacco or whisky, and there is no use of so 'much small fry indignation and twattle.'" But it happened Mr. Bush was not there, and our brave old fathers had no more sense than to reason after this wise: "If we suffer England to tax our tea without resistance, the way is open to general taxation. If we lose our right here, all our rights are lost. We have the principle to gain or lose in the first experiment." Thank you, good men, for that reasoning. Thank you, that you preferred to fight for the liberties of your children rather than dwell upon the question, "Will it pay?" to have case

and office under the mother government. Friend Bush may call you fools, but I would recommend similar reasoning to the people of Oregon.

If the outside caucus can rule the action of a representative in the legislative hall, in one thing or upon one occasion, may it not do so upon another? If a caucus of any part of the members of the democratic party can compel a representative of the people of any district to vote against their "wishes or fancied interests," may not a caucus of the Methodist church compel a representative to serve its interests in the same way? What kind of a mouth would friend Bush make, if the church should instruct one of its members, a legislator, to vote for a Sunday law, the Maine law, or even to vote for a certain Methodist for Senator in Congress, under penalty of not maintaining his standing as a Methodist? No doubt that would alter the case in his mind. But I defy abler minds than his to show that any party, combination, or man have any more right to interfere with the duties of a legislator, one than another.

"The nominations for office only are referred to." Yes, sir, I have observed that the "offices" attract more attention than sound legislation. I agree with you, Mr. Bush, that very little attention is paid to the principles a man holds, or his character either, in considering his qualifications for a party democrat. A man may advocate slavery for Oregon or not; he may shout glory to Preston Brooks, or go so far on the other hand as to say "the Senate was not the proper place to give the correction"; he may love the Union in the North, or if dissatisfied with an election in the South, he may recommend a march to Washington and a seizure of the Government funds; he may be a duelist, a drunkard, or a Methodist, and yet be a good democrat, provided he is right on the resolutions pertaining to "offices." But the reason for this peculiarity is not hid under a bushel. The loaves and fishes, the shining dollars, answer here to the question, "Will it pay?"

I know one strong democratic hold to elect a notorious abolitionist master of roads, and two freesoil school directors. Why elect such men when there are so many "competent democrats"? Ah! there is no "heavy patronage," as friend Bush calls it. Give these offices each \$1,000 a year, would freesoilers, "midnight assassins," or abolitionists be any longer competent to act? Not at all, as any sensible and honest man will admit. Let the interests of the party require that certain county lines be so changed that where there is but one county democratic, and two of the opposition, three substantial democratic counties may be made, and there will be no lack of resolutions to meet the end. It must be admitted that an attempt to gag the people in one case, is equivalent in principle to taking away their rights in many. Nor is the resolution an abstraction, as some of our democratic friends say of the Declaration of Independence, but it is a law, a practical discipline, like unto that of the "Roman Army" or Brigham Young of Utah. It carries with it the penalty of taking off the democratic head so that the subject cannot go to Congress. The punishment is greater than the mere party politician can bear, hence the effect of the law.

Now can I be a democrat and support the leading men, who not only deny the right of the people to govern in a given case, but appeal to the pocket, the love of office, to enforce such denial? Not so.—*Demo*, the people, *ocracy*, a government by; *democracy* means a government by the people. Therefore what is called democracy is really anti-democracy. Bush, Shiel, Grover, Lane, Williams, Smith, are prominent anti-democrats. No common-sense logic can work any other conclusion from the premises they furnish in their party acts and resolutions. If they can be honest and yet be anti-democratic, I have nothing more to say than this: Gentlemen, as you are anti-democratic in principle, please assume the name. I am a democrat, and when I tell people so I do not wish to be mistaken for one of you. Much trouble arises from different apples having the same name. Then there is a great propriety in each assuming the name which signifies the principles held.

"Sink or swim, survive or perish," I advise you to advocate without circumlocution that you are opposed to government by the people. Give the hand as well as the heart to anti-democracy.

Sound Democrat. Libertyville, June 15, 1857.

P.S.—Perhaps semi-democracy, or quarantined democracy, would answer as an appeal for our friends, for a few years, until the party progresses some further.—But should the progress be as rapid the next few years as in the last ten, it would hardly be worth while to bother with this last suggestion.

S. D. Aristippus said he liked no pleasure but that which concerned a man's true happiness.

To Land-Owners. OFFICE OF THE IMMIGRANT AID ASSOCIATION, San Francisco, 106 Montgomery St., 1857.

Sir:—We take the liberty to address you, supposing that you have lands for sale; if you have not, please oblige us by transferring this to some one who has.

One important object of this Association is,—To arrange and provide for persons and families as they may arrive, lands upon which, without unnecessary inconvenience or loss of time, they may settle, and which they may cultivate and own at the lowest price. To effect this, it is proposed to have, at the Office of the Association, a large Skeleton Map of the State, showing at a glance the location, and outline shape or survey, of the various ranches that may be registered with the Association and offered for sale on reasonable terms and conditions.

To facilitate and expedite the immigrant buyer that we aim to protect and assist, and that we may confidently recommend to and advise him, this Association proposes to receive, in advance, information from the ranch owners as to what lands they offer, with all needed particulars.

In following the successful example of similar Associations in the Eastern and Western States, in Australia and elsewhere by aiding the best class of farming laborers to settle, colonize, and own lands, if we are successful in populating the abundant vacant lands around us, we certainly do serve not only them, but also the transportation interest, the trading interest, the consumers, and the State at large.

After the requisite short time for perfecting the Map and Register, if properly responded to and encouraged, it will be the object of the Committee of Emigration in New York, and of the Association in this City, to direct immigrants to those localities, other things being equal, where the land owners offer the most liberal terms to the settler.

You will readily perceive that the tendency of our effort cannot work any injury, but must be very favorable to you, and that they justly claim your prompt and hearty co-operation.

If, sir, you find it to your interest, or feel disposed to have your lands, or any portion of them, indicated upon our said Map and Register as for sale, you will please furnish us at the earliest possible moment your address, the quantity, location, quality, and adaptation of your land, the title, the lowest price per acre for the entire tract or any portion thereof, the easiest terms for the buyer, and such a plat or sketch of the tract, with its bearings or direction and distance from known places, as will enable us to locate it upon the general map.

Any proposals by you to sell, may of course be withdrawn at your pleasure at any time before a sale. If you have an Agent in this city or vicinity, who can act, or convey for you in case of need, please state his address.

If you have a large tract to dispose, we would simply suggest, whether it would not be to your interest to propose such terms through us as will encourage a desirable colony within your lands—whether it will not be profitable to you to donate every alternate or an occasional quarter-section, one hundred acres, or fifty acres, or to offer them so low as to induce and secure to you a population, and thus largely increase the value of the remainder.

Will you be kind enough to communicate this request to other land-owners of your acquaintance, that they also may have the benefit of our plan, and that the execution of it, so valuable to you and them, may not be delayed.

Waiting your early reply,

We are your obedient servants,
E. F. NORTMAN,
J. H. SAUNDERS,
JACOB R. SNYDER,
J. H. PURSITT,
Committee in behalf of the Immigrant Aid Association.

P. S.—Please direct to J. H. Parkitt, Corresponding Secretary.

THE BETTER LAND.—Our relatives in eternity outnumber our relatives in time. The catalogue of the living we love becomes less, and in anticipation we see the perpetual lightning-train of the departed; and by their flight our affections grow gradually less glued to earth and more allied to heaven. It is not in vain that the image of our departed children, and near and dear ones, are laid up in memory, as in a picture gallery, from which the ceaseless surge of this world's cares cannot obliterate them. They wait there for the light of the resurrection day, to stand forth holy, beautiful, and happy—our fellow-worshippers forever.

Most of the tin used in this country is imported from England, whose tin mines supplied the ancient Phoenicians. During the year ending 30th of June, 1856, the value of the tin imported into this country was \$5,953,528.

Slave Labor or Free Labor. No. II. PRO-SLAVERY ASSUMPTIONS.

We find, in a pamphlet of sixteen pages, printed at the Congressional Globe office in Washington a speech on the bill to admit Kansas as a State under the Topeka Constitution, purporting to have been delivered in the House of Representatives, June 28th, 1856, by Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia, who must therefore bear the responsibility for it, whether or not it were actually delivered as printed, and whether or not he be considered its author.

This speech refers to Kansas, and attempts, by an ingenious mixture of assumption and argument, to show that slavery may properly be established there. But since some persons have thought it so far adapted to the existing state of things in Oregon as to distribute large quantities of it in different sections of this Territory, it may be well briefly to examine both its assumptions and its arguments, so far as they attempt the justification of slavery.

The portion of this speech which attempts to prove the rightfulness of slaveholding is very brief, consisting merely of a couple of pages at its close; but an elaborate attempt is made, through its whole previous part, to prepare the way for this argument, by the simple process of taking for granted most of the matters in debate. Thus Mr. Alexander H. Stephens assumes, with an air implying that every well-informed person must at once agree with him, with a quiet assurance that could not be exceeded even if the things were true, the following points.

1. He assumes that this nation is enjoying a highly satisfactory state of internal concord, quietness and prosperity.

"The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. Campbell] said the other day, and again says, that the passage of the Nebraska bill was the origin of all the troubles in the country. Sir, what troubles does he allude to? What troubles have we upon us? Standing in my place in the Hall of the Representatives of the United States, I ask to-day, what troubles is the country laboring under? Were any people of the world ever more prosperous than the people of the United States now are?" p. 5.

As if the stump speakers and political presses of his own party had not been and were not at that moment shrieking against (what they declared) the imminent peril of Disunion, and the anarchy and absolute ruin which (they said) would follow in its train, as loudly as the Republicans 'shrieked' against slavery in Kansas! As if, whether in peril or not, the whole country had not been in tumult, about the extension of slavery! As if, only a month before, one of his brother Representatives had not found their common cause and interest, slavery, so far beyond help from argument that he trusted its defence to club-law and attempted assassination, within the very walls of the Capitol! As if, while one-half the nation were stamping this deed with its appropriate terms of reprobation, and finding in it a nearer approach than they had yet recognized to the need of a dissolution of the Union, the other half, Mr. Stephens' friends and colleagues, had not been triumphant in the act, and showering gifts and congratulations upon the perpetrator!

2. He assumes that a large number of people who were born and always lived, in this country, and whose parents were born, and have always lived in this country, and of whose blood one half, or three quarters, or seven-eighths, comes from the 'first families' in Virginia and Georgia, are "Africans"! Factious Mr. Stephens!—He will have his little joke. But it proves to be something more or less than a joke to the persons thus commented on, for

3. He assumes that the persons in this country thus conclusively settled to be Africans, as well as those who are ranked as such merely on the old-fashioned evidence of parentage, birth and education in Africa, have no rights at all; not only no such liberty as the Declaration of Independence declares to be the inalienable right of every man, but no liberty at all; no liberty to seek and pursue an honest occupation; no liberty to change their residence when they find it unhealthy or undesirable; no liberty to marry; no liberty to live with a temporary husband or wife without permission from some friend of Mr. Stephens; no right to keep the temporary wife, if Mr. Stephens' friend takes a fancy to her himself; no right to bring up decently and honestly any children which the temporary wife may have borne, if Mr. Stephens' friend wants them for himself; in short, no right to be, or to do, anything whatever, without permission from his exalted personage, whose right to monopolize the rights of both parties, Mr. Stephens thus pithily sets forth:

"Where, then, is the wrong of this bill? It consists in nothing but permitting the freedom of our own race to settle this question of the status of the African amongst themselves, as they in their wisdom and patriotism may think best for the happiness of both races." p. 7.

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"Our own race!" What a certificate of merit, what a patent of nobility is contained in those words! And what a pity that might does not accompany right in this world! Then the worthy people of Malacca and Sumatra, who used formerly to abate upon Mr. Stephens' rule, sometimes by stabbing and drowning, sometimes by broiling and eating, such straggling parties of foreign races (Africans to them) as Providence had sent in their way, would not have been so unmercifully peppered for it by retaliatory ships of war. Had they not a right to determine the status of aliens foreigners, people of a different race and color, who, with or without compulsion, came amongst them?

If they, in their wisdom and patriotism, thought it best for the happiness of both races that they should eat the foreigners, and if the foreigners, when eaten, did not disagree with them, where was the harm!

To look at "our own race" from another point of view—what purity, what unmixed aboriginal excellence, are implied in that expression. "Our own race," in the case of Mr. Stephens and his friends, shows a pure, unmixed stream of Anglo-Saxon, Norman, Celtic, Scandinavian, Teutonic, Milesian, Cambrian, Caledonian, Swiss, Jewish, Hessian, Bavarian, Hungarian, and everythingarian blood, the true red blood, (scarlet in the arteries and purple in the veins, in both cases unmistakably royal in color,) which marks the high caste, the superior race, the eminently noble and manly character. Prick one of these men, and the red blood appears at once to convince you.

Now although, if you should descend to the level of considering those vulgar things called facts, we should undoubtedly find it true that the noble Georgian blood and the noble Alabamian blood are each accustomed to mix oftener with the despised African blood (that is, with the white female natives of those States who are theoretically designated Africans) than with each other, this danger to our theory of pure blood may be avoided in either of two ways. First by ignoring the facts and saying nothing about them whatever, and next by saying that which is not; denying the mixture, and accounting for the white Africans by the influence of climate; just as you may call the cow's tail a leg, and say she has five legs, if you choose to take the natural consequences of that way of speaking.

After all, this fine theory of Mr. Stephens, of the right of "our own race" to ignore all rights on the part of a minority resident among us alleged to be foreign—and so alleged none the less pertinaciously in the teeth of opposing facts—is subject to this slight inconvenience, that, while each nation continues to think better of itself than of its neighbors, the theory authorizes each to decide the status of any unfortunate minority of either of the others which may fall within its power, and use up such minority, by working, hanging, or eating, in such way as the stronger, in its wisdom and patriotism, might think best for the happiness of both. We submit, with deference to Mr. Stephens' better judgment, that the universal adoption of his rule would unpleasantly interfere with commerce and foreign travel, not to speak of the progress of civilization and Christianity.

4. He assumes that the slave being a slave, it is, first, no injury, and next, a positive benefit, to the slave himself, to work him on new lands instead of old. (We beg that people who are not conscious of the possession of great intellectual keenness will attend very carefully to the following quotation, lest they should fail to answer Mr. Stephens in the manner he desires.)

"Whom, I say did the bill wrong!—To whom did it deal any injustice! Was it the slave, the African, whom his southern master might take there? How could it be unjust even to him? Is not his condition as much bettered by new lands and virgin soils as that of his master?" p. 7.

Now this is such a sort of statement as superficial and narrow-minded people, like the abolitionists, are wont to call impudent and preposterous. But when you look carefully, closely, deeply into it, (assisting the intellectual process by inclining the head slightly to one side, compressing the mouth, and half closing one eye,) you see the practical difference which must exist, and which the slaves, therefore must appreciate between having no rights on new land and having no rights on old land;—between being flogged on a wide fertile Territory, and being flogged on a pine-barren; between having his wife sold to the highest bidder on a broad prairie, and sold to the highest bidder in a narrow auction room; between having his daughter ravished on a virgin soil, and ravished on an old plantation so exhausted by slave labor as to be no longer worth cultivating; between having no right to learn to read in an expanding, increasing population, and having no right to learn to read in an old,

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