

Indian Affairs.

The number of Indians in the Territories of Oregon and Washington, immediately under the supervision of the Superintendent and Agents, is upwards of 30,000, or nearly equal to half the white population of the two Territories. Of these only 10,000 are in Oregon, the remaining 20,000 being in Washington.

With the Indians in Oregon Territory, with the exception of a single tribe, treaties have been made, and all those west of the Cascade mountains have been placed upon reservations selected for the purpose. There are three of these reservations—the Grand Ronde, upon which there are 1,200 Indians, under the charge of Agent John F. Miller; the Siletz reservation, where are about 2,000 Indians, under the charge of Agent R. B. Metcalf; and the Umpqua reservation, where the Coast Indians, to the number of about 1,000, are collected under the charge of sub-Agent E. P. Drew. To keep these Indians in check, and prevent them from leaving the reservations, garrisons of U. S. troops are posted in their neighborhood, and the strictest surveillance is necessary upon the part of the Agents. And as they are, to a great extent, deprived of their usual mode of subsistence, the cost of feeding them in part devolves upon the general government. A few of these Indians have shown a disposition to cultivate the soil; and according to the reports of the Agents, some of them have small farms, of from one to four acres, assigned to them, upon which they raise potatoes and other vegetables sufficient for their own consumption. Many of them, however, particularly those removed from the South, are restless and discontented, and depend almost entirely upon the government for their subsistence.

On the east side of the Cascade mountains, and immediately upon the frontier of the white settlements, are the Walls, Wallas, Wascon, and other small tribes, numbering in all about 1,200. On the 25th of June, 1855, a treaty was made with these tribes, by Superintendent Palmer, by which the Indians ceded to the United States the lands lying within the limits of the county of Wasco, in return for which they were to receive a stipulated annuity, together with agricultural seeds and implements, schools, school teachers, and competent instructors in agriculture and the mechanical arts. Although more than three years have elapsed since this treaty was made, and the country is now almost wholly occupied by the whites, it has not yet been ratified by the government; and the Indians, who have always been friendly to the whites, and who are anxious, on their part, to fulfill the stipulations, are becoming dissatisfied with the long delay, and begin to lose faith in our government. In view of the facts the Superintendent has caused them to be placed upon a temporary reservation, and has provided them with partial subsistence.

On the 9th of June, 1855, Gen. Palmer formed a treaty with the Cayuses and Umatillas, who number about 1,000, by which these tribes relinquished the title to a large extent of valuable lands, the consideration for which was to be similar to that promised to the Wascos and their allies. This treaty has not been ratified, but the Indians still retain possession of their lands.

Besides these, there is in the southern portion of the Territory, inhabiting a fine country in the neighborhood of Klamath Lake, a large tribe of Indians known as the Klamath, or Lalakes. They are in frequent communication with the people of Rogue River Valley, from which they are distant about two days' journey. They are brave and warlike, and are very jealous of intrusion upon their soil. Parties visiting their country have been received with such evident marks of displeasure as to cause them to beat a hasty retreat. No agent has ever visited these Indians, nor has any attempt been made to negotiate a treaty with them, although the government surveys have been extended into their country during the past summer.

In Washington Territory, west of the Cascades, are the following tribes of Indians:

Nisqually and their allies, numbering about 1,200; parties to treaty of Medicine Creek, Dec. 26th, 1854. This treaty, we understand, has recently been ratified.

Duwamish, Squamish, Skagets, numbering 4,992; parties to treaty of Point Elliott, Jan. 22nd, 1855—not ratified.

Challams, &c., numbering 1316, parties to treaty of Point-à-Point, Jan. 25th, 1855—not ratified.

Makahs, numbering 576; parties to treaty of Neah Bay, Jan. 31st, 1850—not ratified.

Quinault and Quillayute, numbering 493; parties to treaty of Olympia—not ratified. Chehalis, Cowlitz, Chinooks, &c., numbering 1,115; no treaty made.

East of the Cascades are the following tribes:

Paiquesons, 600; Yakimas, 700; Pawanwappans, 500; Klickitats, 500; Palouses, 500; various bands on Columbia river, 1,000; parties to treaty with Yakima Nation, negotiated by Gov. Stevens, June, 1858—not ratified.

Nez Percés, 3,300; parties to treaty negotiated by Gov. Stevens, June, 1858—not ratified.

Flat heads, 500; Upper Pend d'Oreilles, 700; Kootenays, 600; parties to treaty with Flathead Nation, negotiated by Gov. Stevens, June, 1858—not ratified.

Coer d'Alenes, 454; Lower Pend d'Oreilles, 450; Colvilles, 500; Okinikasas, 600; Spokanes, 1,100; no treaty negotiated.

The total number of Indians in Washington Territory, according to the latest census, is as follows: West of Cascades, 9,712; east of Cascades (estimated) 12,000; whole number in the Territory, 21,712.—This does not include any tribe east of the

Blue range of mountains. The whole number in this Superintendency, according to the estimates of the Superintendent, in 1857, was 33,512. Making allowance for depopulation by disease, wars, &c., during the last year and a-half, the number cannot be far from 30,000.

Since the first permanent settlement of this country by citizens of the United States frequent and serious collisions have occurred between the whites and the Indians, resulting in much bloodshed on both sides, and great pecuniary losses to the settlers. In attempting to account for these disturbances, it has been customary for newspaper scribblers to refer them entirely to local causes, such as mal-treatment of the Indians by the whites, mutual injuries and reprisals, &c.; and very few have taken the trouble to look any farther, for the causes which led to the various wars which from time to time have depleted the national treasury, and spilt the best blood of our citizens.

In our opinion, however,—and we think the facts will fully sustain us,—these difficulties may be directly traced, in a majority of cases, to the policy which has been pursued towards these Indians by our general government. The history of the intercourse between the government and the Indians of these Territories exhibits a catalogue of breaches of faith and violated promises on the part of the former, which would put even an Indian to the blush. Treaties which have been negotiated by accredited agents of the government have either remained unratified, or, if ratified, the stipulations have remained to a great extent unfulfilled, until, to use the language of an Indian agent, "the Indians have entirely lost confidence in, and even doubt the existence of the government." The Indians are said to be treacherous and unfaithful, while our government has been for many years setting them an example of bad faith which it is but natural that they, savages as they are, should imitate. The proofs of these facts accumulate upon our hands. For the present, however, we will content ourselves with brief reference to a recent case—that of the attack upon Col. Steptoe. Most of the Indians engaged in that attack were parties to treaties negotiated by agents of the government, which treaties had never been ratified. The Washington correspondent of the New York Tribune says, in reference to this subject:

"It is ascertained from a reliable source that about two years ago treaties were made with certain Indians of Oregon and Washington territories, including those who recently fought Col. Steptoe, and which the Senate failed to ratify.—The omission has had the effect of producing an impression on the minds of those Indians of absence of good faith on the part of Government." Col. Steptoe also, in his official report of the engagement, says:

"This war has been maturing for some time.—The savages appear to have been excited by rumors that the government intended to take possession of their lands, and the act of last Congress to lay out a military road from this place to the waters of the upper Missouri fully satisfied them of the truth of the rumor. The party to survey the road was just assembling here, and the fight with me has no doubt saved it from massacre."

Much more testimony might be adduced to the same effect; but space will not permit, nor is it necessary. We will, however, add the following extract from the report of special agent S. S. Ford, of Washington Territory, dated June 30th, 1857. His remarks will apply to the Indians generally in that Territory:

"I cannot too strongly represent to you the necessity for making settlements, and looking to in my district. Living, as the greater majority of them do, among the settlements, with no locality which they can confidently call their own, no Indian, in a village which they have any security that they will not be compelled to abandon the very next season, and no grazing spot near which they can graze their stock, they are very next week by the fence of the settler, it cannot be a matter of surprise that they should be dissatisfied and complain. The Indians, in common with the whites, are very jealous of intrusion upon their soil. Parties visiting their country have been received with such evident marks of displeasure as to cause them to beat a hasty retreat. No agent has ever visited these Indians, nor has any attempt been made to negotiate a treaty with them, although the government surveys have been extended into their country during the past summer.

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This is a question which every reader of the Oregonian must ask, respecting the editor of that sheet. Take the last number as a sample, and it is a fair one, for they are all alike. Its editorial columns do not contain a thought, or a candid sentence. There is not a word upon any subject useful or interesting to any Oregonian. They are filled with wholesale libels upon democrats, with a small portion devoted to low abuse of the Jews. He is an irresponsible libeler, and utters them without the slightest reference to plausibility, or decency. He is sui generis, even for a madman; and that the man is crazy, is the most charitable conclusion one can form. He will publish the basest falsehood and slander of a political opponent; perchance charge him with crimes which would swing him from the gallows, or consign him to prison; and, contemporaneous with its issue, obtrude himself into his society, force himself upon him, attempt to be familiar, &c. If asked why he publishes what he knows to be a cowardly lie, will reply "why, G—d—d—n it, I don't mean anything;" "nobody believes me;" "it will help you with the democrats;" "I'm engaged in a dirty business, and have to tell dirty lies, and perform dirty acts," &c. In short he will prove himself as utterly without shame or self-respect, as he is without integrity or honor.

The last number is filled with such elegant phrases as "thick-skulled Ethiopian who came out to this coast in charge of Lane's baggage," or "cross between the monkey and nigger, fool and idiot," while the following are a few of the wholesale libels of one number:

"The magnitude of the vast amount of fraud, swindling, and corruption practiced by the Indian department in these territories. Your master's (Lane's) tools, pimps, blowers and strikers are engaged in swindling the people out of their land claims, town property, &c. &c. Whenever they and you get through swindling, the patents may find their way to Oregon. More than five hundred thousand dollars for the Indian department, and two hundred thousand dollars stolen from the people by the Salem clique, growing out of the sale of the public property. There has been practiced for the last eight years, a most infamous and stupendous system of public swindling by every man connected with the democratic party who could get an office or a contract upon public works in Oregon."

Upon what are these wholesale and shameful libels based? Not even a suspicion of wrong. Is there a man who has had a contract in the Indian Department, or who has been connected with, or known anything about it, during the last year, who can say that he has seen any "fraud, swindling, or corruption," in that department? Not one! Does any man say that the Superintendent of that department has suffered any "stealing"? Not one.

Is there any evidence of a "system of swindling, by every man connected with the democratic party," &c.? Not a particle. On the contrary, it is a matter of record that Oregon has been the most cheaply and best managed of all the Territorial governments. The only officer who has proved a defaulter is a "national" black, and an enemy of the democratic party. The same of the only "contractor upon public works" whom we have heard charged with "swindling," or improper conduct. Has any man been "swindled out of his land claim" by an officer in Oregon? We have heard that charge of but one such person, and he did not vote the democratic ticket at the last election!

Dryer knows all this, and yet, with no sense of responsibility, with an utter abandonment of truth, he week after week sends abroad foul libels; knowing that our criminal statistics are deficient in provisions indicting a just punishment upon his conduct, and being peculiarly irresponsible, he is vile, reckless and shameless. And so notorious has become his inconsistency, and his want of integrity, and truth, that his journal has lost all character and influence with the public, and with his own party. Nobody respects it, and nobody regards its insane rantings, except as the ravings of a half crazed and wholly unskilled editorial bawd. He vauntingly boasts that he "has three thousand votes in the Oregonian office," (meaning that three thousand opponents of the democracy are controlled by the Oregonian) while every thinking man of his party is disgusted with the fecklessness of his politics, his melancholy lack of thinking and reasoning powers, and the excess and wantonness of his coarse abuse, and vulgar libels.

The Oregonian, (Oregon Statesman) says that J. Ross Brown, special agent of the Treasury department, visited these two territories in 1857, and that the late Indian war of Oregon and Washington proves to be a canker upon the public treasury. The Secretary reports that upwards of six thousand dollars were paid to J. Ross Brown alone, for salary and travel, during the year 1857, while examining into these "war districts." This is only one item.

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The Session of the Legislature.—As we anticipated, the members elected to the State Legislature, with a very few exceptions, did not come to the seat of government to hold the September session. Nine members of the House, and two members of the Senate, only were here, for the purpose of meeting, and but few of those were in favor of general "legislation." Those of the lower body had two meetings, and those of the upper one, when, on the second day, it was given up.

We think we are not mistaken in the opinion that the country is most emphatically against incurring any more expense, or taking any other action, until the question of our admission is determined. And it is no less emphatically opposed to any attempt to set the wheels of a State government in motion, until the functions the Territorial government cease in the regular and legal manner. And, we have no doubt it is this sentiment, concurring with that of members, which induced the great body of them to remain at home, and suffer the September session to go by default.

Dryer, true to the instincts of an unscrupulous pot-house demagogue, conceived that a little party capital might be made from the matter, by fanning seat-of-government prejudices, and he came here and twice delivered his corduroy speech, in which the usual terms of "swindlers," "knaves," "Oregon Statesman," "Democratic Bible," "party lash," &c. were repeated the usual number of times. While a liberal sprinkling of "prentisheit," (repeated a dozen times), "sovereignity," "Auricular," "bragadoshaly," "annected," &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. indicated the "three months schooling," Dryer asserts that the State will not be admitted, that we are certain to be rejected, and to remain a Territory for ten years, at least. Holding that opinion, his crazy denunciation of men because they did not come here, and uselessly involve the Territory in an additional debt of fifteen thousand dollars, presents a beautiful picture of honesty and consistency! We think we never saw a hack so utterly without integrity, consistency, sense of shame, and everything else that is redeeming, as J. Dryer. And, as might be expected of such a man, he is without a particle of influence, and receives the respect of no man. His braying in the halls of legislation is received in the same manner the similar noise made in the stable by his cousin, the ass, is—laughed at by those who listen for the first time, and regarded as a nuisance afterwards.

These members whose honest judgment, or conscientious sense of duty brought them here, and were there such, we have no disposition to censure, or complain of. We were governed in our own views by our honest judgment, and concede to them the same right of difference of opinion that we claim.

CALIFORNIA.—We rejoice in being able to chronicle a Democratic victory in California, over the coalition of blacks and bolters, precisely like that in Oregon, between the "Blacks" and self-dubbed "Nationals." The hard Democracy carry their supreme judge in the State by about 6,000 majority, and more than two-thirds of both branches of the Legislature. The coalition elect two members of Congress, the Democrats running no candidate against them, maintaining that the election was illegal. Whether or not they get the seats will probably depend upon the complexion of the next House. The San Francisco "National" (not of the Oregon, bastard sort,) speaks of this result as follows. It will be seen that parties divided there as they did here:

The Republicans, waiving all considerations of political principle, made an undisguised fusion with the Democrats. Every vagrant, person, and every demagogue, and every scoundrel was impressed into the service of the allies; and the time allowed for the canvass was so short as to render it almost impossible to rally the Democratic and Republican supporters, and to repel the allies and their treacherous influences. Yet, notwithstanding all this, we met the enemy and triumphed over them. The disorganizers have been completely frustrated, their schemes exposed, their treachery unmasked, and their designs against the integrity of our principles completely set at naught. Not only has the general popular voice pronounced its verdict against the demagogues and sectionalists, but the counties of the State individually have gone large to the aid of the Democracy. It is certain that if it could have been achieved by this unholy conspiracy, must have been but temporary, for the regular organization of the Democracy, defeat the Administration, it is certain that the mass of the so-called Mudfill party have no affinity for Black Republicanism, and would and will recoil whenever it is attempted to merge them into that factious and sectional party. But the leaders of that faction, which without apology or excuse, without even a decent pretext broke off from the regular organization of the Democracy, and party with the pre-determined design to destroy that party and transfer the political power of the State to the hands of a few demagogues, prepared for a different fate. They claim to be Democrats no longer. Rule or ruin was their motto. They cannot rule the Democracy, they have succeeded in ruining themselves, and their cause in good time. It shows us their design and their disposition, and saves us from their power in the future, when, but for their treachery, their purposes they might have done us wrong. We are now, if somewhat reduced in numbers, a more compact and harmonious party—more united in principle—fully tried and tested—with complete unity of feeling and principle. We are now one in sentiment and aim. There are no distractions, no traitors, no secret influences at work, no professions of friendship coupled with covert hostilities. We now know our men, and the great democratic party, purged of its impurities and free from all dissensions, will go on to accomplish the objects for which it has been commissioned. It is a matter of profound congratulation to our friends that this storm has passed by so harmlessly, having no other effect than to purify the political atmosphere. We shall stand stronger than ever in another fight.

BURNING OF THE STEAMER SEABIRD.—From the Victoria (V. I.) Gazette, we learn that the steamer Sea-Bird, which left that port on the morning of the 7th of September, for Fort Langley, took fire when about 18 miles out, and burnt to the water's edge.—As soon as she was found to be on fire she was run ashore on the rocks, and the passengers and crew were landed in safety, with the exception of a man named Urlick, who fell and injured himself severely. The vessel and her cargo are a total loss, and the passengers did not succeed in saving any of their baggage.

A HARD CASE.—At a camping meeting in Lane county, the other day, while two recent converts were staying at the altar, some sinful outsider stole their hats, and drank all their whiskey. So says one who was present.

THE OLYMPIA PIONEER AND DEMOCRAT copy the following account of the arrival at the mines of David McLaughlin's company, originally raised in this county. That paper obtained it from Robert Connally, a member of the company, and late of Oregon city. Next week we shall publish the narration of their trip, in full.

Arriving at Thompson's river which struck as a whole company, one hundred and sixty in number, prospected for half a day on a bar, but found no gold, nor did they find any particles of gold in the trail of Thompson river, which ceeded along the trail to Frazer river, where they all arrived on the 12th of August. They next prospected at the forks of Frazer and Thompson rivers, but without any very flattering return for the labor expended. Here the company divided. A portion of them went up to Frazer river, others to a bar opposite the mouth of Thompson river, others went below, and the California company undertook the cutting of a trail from the mouth of Thompson river to Fort Yale, which is now completed to Fort Hope, while McLaughlin and others, having sold out their provisions at the forks, at one dollar per pound, had went to Fort Hope for the purpose of packing out a fresh supply. Several of the company had returned to Thompson river, and prospected without success. They were about fourteen days in making the distance between Okanagan and Thompson rivers. Most of them are hugely disappointed at the gold-eld prospect which they found on Thompson and Frazer rivers, and the company were on the 12th of August, or thirty-seven days, inclusive of delays, in making the distance between the Dalles and Thompson rivers, and the trail of Thompson river, which ceeded along the trail to Frazer river, where they all arrived on the 12th of August. They next prospected at the forks of Frazer and Thompson rivers, but without any very flattering return for the labor expended. Here the company divided. 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