

The Oregon Sentinel.

VOL. III.

JACKSONVILLE, OREGON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1858.

NO. 6.

Independent on all Subjects; and devoted to the best Interests of Southern Oregon.

Published Every Saturday,
BY
W. G. T'VAULT, Editor & Proprietor.

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Three Months, \$2 00.

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January 1st, 1858. 11f

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On the Hill, near the old Parsonage,
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Ode for the 22d of February.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

Welcome to the day returning,
Dearest still as ages flow,
While the torch of faith is burning,
Long as Freedom's altars glow!
See the hero that it gave us
Slumbering on a mother's breast:
For the arm he stretched to save us,
Be its morn forever blest!

Hear the tale of youthful glory,
While of Britain's rescued band
Friend and foe repeat the story,
Spread his fame o'er sea and land!
Where the red cross proudly streams,
Flare above the frigate's deck,
Where the golden hillics gleaming,
Star the watch-tower of Quebec.

Look! The shadow on the dial
Marks the hour of deathlier strife;
Days of terror, years of trial
Scourge a nation into life.
Lo, the youth becomes her leader!
All her baffled tyrants yield;
Through his arm the Lord hath freed her
Crown him on the tented field!

Vain is Europe's mad temptation!
Not for him an earthly crown!
He whose sword hath freed a nation,
Strikes the offered sceptre down.
See the throneless conqueror seated,
Ruler by a people's choice;
See the Patriot's task completed;
Hear the Father's dying voice!

"By the name you inherit,
By the sufferings you recall,
Cherish the fraternal spirit—
Love your country first of all!
Listen not to idle questions,
If its bands may be untied;
Doubt the patriot whose suggestions
Whisper that its props may slide!"

Father! we, whose ears have tingled
With the discord notes of shame;
We, whose aching blood has mingled
In the battle's thunder drum,
Lighten the load from us to you,
How they uttered, heed the warning,
"Feed us while we hear the drum!"

is charged. To charge by words is only a sort of certain method of charging by time, as of course, if any company suddenly find itself in a condition to transact one hundred times the amount of business in the same period and at the same cost that it at present incurs, the gain to the public would be an immediate reduction to nearly one hundredth of the rate now charged for telegraphic messages. It is this great change which Mr. Boggs' invention proposes to effect—to work the electric telegraph by steam, to get over the great obstacle which now exists against its more general use—namely, its slowness.

It may seem paradoxical to speak of the slowness of the electric telegraph as being the only bar to its more general adoption, but in truth such is the literal fact; for the time occupied, and therefore expense incurred in using the telegraph wire makes a message rather the resort of commercial or domestic emergency than a thing of daily use, almost rivalling the post as a means of daily communication. The invention, then, which is to supersede these tedious processes and work the telegraph by steam instead of by hand, is generally as follows:

A series of gutta percha bands, about six inches wide and a quarter of an inch thick, are coiled on wheels or drums arranged for the purpose. These bands are studded down both sides with a single row of holes at short intervals apart. When a message is to be sent the clerks wind off these bands, inserting in the holes small brass pins, which, according to their combinations in twos or threes (with blank holes between), represent certain words or letters. In this manner the message is, as it were, "set up" in the bands with great rapidity, and if the number of bands employed is sufficiently large—as at present is the case—the messages equal in length to five or six columns of the journal could be set up and ready for transmission in the course of a single hour.

Of course, this operation in no respect interferes with the telegraph wire itself, which continues free for use until the bands of messages are actually being despatched. The gutta percha bands, when in the instrument room, a most simple apparatus preventing any derangement or falling out of the pins while being moved about. In the instrument room the bands are connected with ordinary steam machinery, by which they are drawn in regular order with the utmost rapidity between the charged pins of an electrical machine in such a manner that, during the moment of each pin's passing, it forms electrical communication between the instrument and the telegraph, and a signal is transmitted to the other end of the wire, where the spark perforates a paper and records the message. The only limit to the rapidity of the operation is the rate at which the bands can be drawn, since the electrical contact of each pin with the 200th part of a second is more than sufficient to transmit a word or signal from London and register it in America. Of course, as the message is recorded, we will say in America, with the same rapidity as that in which it is transmitted in London, a number of reading clerks will be requisite in order to translate it, by dividing it into small portions, with almost as much facility as it has been sent.

The value and importance of this invention, not only to the public, but to telegraph companies themselves, must be evident to the least experienced in such matters; in fact, without it, long submarine lines would be all but impracticable, from the slowness of the process, and consequently from the expense attendant upon transmitting the briefest message. It is now tolerably well known that, had the attempt to submerge the Atlantic cable been successful last summer, one submarine wire would not at the most have sufficed for the transmission of more than a small number of messages per diem each way, and that, in fact, all that it could have transmitted would not have met one-twentieth of the demand from either country. So clearly was this foreseen, that even before one cable was laid it was contemplated to submerge a second cable, one for messages to England, and the other for messages to America.

By the new patent for steam telegraphing which we have mentioned worked with an efficient staff, it would be perfectly easy for one wire to transact all the business between England and America. With proper arrangements an hour would suffice to transmit intelligence equal in number of words to the contents of twelve columns of the Times. It is no exaggeration, therefore, to say that the most important news in each country, with a price that extensive enough to include every staple of trade, might be exchanged in time for the commencement of business in the capitals of the Old and New World.

Another of the great advantages which the invention possesses is the application of static electricity to telegraphic purposes. To obtain intensity of the electric fluid without quantity has always been regarded among electricians as the great desideratum for the telegraph. In this both voltaic and magnetic currents are wanting, quantity

with them being inseparable from intensity. In long—and, of course, therefore, in submarine wires—quantity in the voltaic current becomes a dangerous obstacle, always creating an induced current in an opposite direction to that in which the message is sent, charging the wire and generally exercising that dreaded retarding influence about the real cause, for which so many different opinions exist.

To overcome these impediments, many efforts have been made to apply static electricity to the telegraph, but still now the attempt has always been unsuccessful. Mr. Boggs produces his power with ordinary plate machines, which are turned of course by the same machinery as that which winds off his gutta percha message bands. The most simple and ordinary plan provides for the poles of the machine being at all times kept equally and properly charged, no matter at what speed the pin-bands may be passing between them, and the force of the discharge being sufficient to pierce the paper and register the signal at the end of the wire, no electro-magnetic coil is necessary at the end of the circuit. It is needless to point out the advantages which this plan possesses over the score of economical production of the current, or its greater certainty of passage along a wire when (especially in long submarine cables) it would encounter many slight defects and attenuations almost fatal to the progress of a magnetic or voltaic current.

The Outpost.

A TALE OF FRONTIER LIFE.

Towards the latter part of the year 1771, the French aided by large bodies of Huron and Iroquois Indians had begun to make themselves very disagreeable neighbors to the British and American colonists in northern Virginia, Ohio, and the northwest portions of New York State—the French by their encroachments on the frontier, and the Indians by their numerous forays and savage barbarity to all who were unfortunate enough to fall into their hands.

To put a stop to these encroachments, numerous bodies both of the "regulars" and the colonial militia were despatched to the several points assailed; and among the rest, a Col. Henry Innes, with a company of thirty men, among whom were a party of some dozen Virginia Rifle-men, was ordered to occupy a small post, or log fort, which at this period stood within a few miles of the north fork of the Alleghany river.

Having arrived safely at their quarters, the little company set about righting up the old post, to make it as comfortable as circumstances would permit; and this being done, and order once more restored, sentries were placed at all the advance points of the station, while the strictest vigilance was both joined and exercised by day and by night.

Among the Virginia riflemen who had volunteered into the company, was a tall, manly, fine-looking fellow, who, from his fatal and unerring skill as a marksman, had received the somewhat awe-inspiring name of "Plum" of Death. But with whatever justice this name had been applied to him for skill, his disposition certainly entitled him to no such terrible-sounding epithet. On the contrary, he was the very life of the company.

His rick fund of mother-wit, large social propensities and constant good nature, rendering him a general favorite with the men; while the never-failing stock of game which his skill enabled him to supply to the table of the officers with, not only recommended him to their good graces, but caused him a little "short-coming" of his to be winked at and passed over in silence, which, otherwise perhaps, he might not have got over so easily.

The company had not been stationed at the fort much more than a week, ere Death, in one of his excursions for game, discovered that at a small farm-house, some three miles distant from the fort there lived a certain Miss Hester Stanhope, whose equal in beauty and amiable qualities he had never seen before. And to render himself more certain of the fact he called the day following, under cover of the pretense of having left his powder-drum.

Death was invited to come again, by Farmer Stanhope, who happened to be from the same parish as the father of our hero; and we need scarcely say that the invitation was both eagerly and joyfully accepted, and, as often as circumstances would permit, complied with.

The second week after this occurrence took place, was marked by two events, which, though both affecting the little community at the fort were of widely different degrees of importance.

The first was, that Death had suddenly lost all his skill as a marksman, or, that the game had removed to a safer and more distant neighborhood, for the officers' larder had been found sadly wanting in the items of woodcock, blackcocks, partridge, &c., for the week past, and the second and most important of the two events, was, that in regular succession, four sentinels had disappeared from the extreme left line, without

leaving the slightest trace to elucidate the mystery of their disappearance.

This last circumstance struck such dread into the breasts of the rest of the company, that no man could be found willing to volunteer to take the post—well knowing that it would be only like signing their own death-warrant to do so, and Col. Innes, not wishing to willfully sacrifice the lives of his men by compelling them to go, conjoined double caution to the remainder of the sentinels, and left the fatal post unoccupied for a night or two.

Two or three reconnoitering parties had been dispatched off round the neighborhood in the hope of finding some clue to the mystery, or of obtaining some intelligence of the enemy, but they each of them returned as wise as they had started, with no reward for their trouble save weary bones.

It was on the third night of the desertion of the post that our hero, Death, was returning to the fort, after paying a visit to Stanhope's farm. The moon was up but her light was nearly all obscured by the dense masses of clouds which at every few minutes were driven by a pretty stiff breeze over her face; while the huge trees, now in full leaf, creaked and groaned, and bent their tall forms to and fro, as the heavy gusts rushed whistling in among their branches.

Our hero had advanced within a hundred yards of the termination of the forest that skirted the small open space in which the fort stood, when suddenly he paused, and crouching down on his hands and knees, crept cautiously forward a few paces. Having remained in this position a few minutes, he again stealthily retreated in the manner he had advanced; and plunging into the forest again, emerged at a point considerably lower than where he had intended to leave it before.

Col. Innes sat reading, alone, in his private apartment, when an orderly entered and informed him that one of the men wished to speak to him.

"Send him in," said the colonel; and at the next minute our friend, Death, had entered, and stood at attention before his commanding officer.

"Well, what scrape have you been getting into now?" said the colonel when he saw who his visitor was.

"None, colonel," replied Death; "but I have come to ask a favor."

"Let us hear it," said the colonel, "and we will likewise what we can do."

"Well, colonel, it is simply this—if you will put the rifles under my order to-night, and let me occupy the deserted post, I will not only clear up the mystery of the disappearance of the four sentries, but make the post safe for the future."

"But how?" said the colonel, in intense surprise.

"I guess, colonel," answered Death, "you had better let me have the men, and order us off, and I'll tell you the affair after. I promise you that not one shall receive even a scratch, that is if they will follow my directions implicitly."

"You are a strange man," said the colonel, but I think I will let you have your own way this time. When do you intend to start?"

"In about an hour's time," answered the elated Death.

"Very well, I will give the necessary orders, so that you can start when you think proper, and what is more, if you perform all that you have promised, and don't cause me to repeat having humored you, you shall have poor Campbell's place."

Hector Campbell was a brave but very headstrong young Scotchman, who occupied the post of lieutenant at the fort. In a sudden freak of daring he had volunteered to stand guard at the fatal spot from which three sentinels had already so mysteriously disappeared, and he paid for his rashness with his life.

"Now, my lads," said Death, as in about an hour after his conversation with Colonel Innes, he approached the deserted post, at the head of the dozen riflemen that had been temporarily placed under his orders, "I will tell you what we are going to do. The long and the short of the affair is simply this—it's a gang of them cussed, thievish Iroquois that have circumvented and carried off four men—shooting them with arrows and then decamping with their bodies.

The post consisted of a long narrow space, bounded on each side by a rocky, shelving bank, while its extreme end was closed by the dark and impenetrable looking forest. The bank on each side of the post was thickly covered with brush and under-wood, and among these Death now carefully concealed his men, taking care to arrange them so that their fire would cross each other, and bidding them not to fire until he had given the word; and after they had fired, not to stop to reload, but clubbing their rifles, to jump down and finish the struggle in the twinkling of an eye.

With steady ability, each man took up the post assigned him, and in another moment, the spot presented the same lone, still and solemn appearance it had worn previous to their arrival.

The little company had begun to grow very impatient, and Death himself, to fear that the Indians had either read their plan of attack, when suddenly his quick eye detected the form of one of his crafty foes in a crouching position from the deep shadow which the lofty trees threw upon the pass.

"Three, six, nine, twelve, thirteen counted Death, as one after another they emerged from the wood, and with quick and like-steadiness of movement, advanced upon the pass, their rifles in trail, and their faces and bodies rendered still more hideous and ferocious looking by the grotesque markings of their warpaint. On they came, swiftly but silently and all unconscious of the fate that was in store for them.

The foremost of the band, whose commanding stature, wolf-tooth collar, and eagle tuft, at once proclaimed him as chief, had advanced until he was directly opposite the bush in which Death was hid, when the latter with startling distinctness suddenly imitated the cry of a night owl, and discharged his rifle.

Eight of the Indians fell by the volley which the remaining riflemen now poured in upon them, but, strange to say, one of the five who did not fall, was the chief whom Death had aimed at. This unusual event was owing to the following cause: The branch of the bush on which he had studded his way in firing, had suddenly yielded at the moment he discharged his piece, thus rendering harmless his otherwise threatening aim.

Uttering an imprecation at his ill-luck, Death sprang down the bank with the rest of his companions, and with one bound reached the side of the Iroquois chief. They grappled, and both fell heavily to the ground, clasped in a fearful embrace, and darting glances of savage hatred at each other from beneath their halted and scowling brows.

"Keep off!" shouted Death, as he saw one or two of his companions in the act of stooping down to assist him, "keep off! and if he masters me, let him go."

Over and over they rolled, writhing and straining, but seemingly neither obtained advantage over the other. Finally the head of the Iroquois suddenly came in contact with the point of a rock that protruded from the bank, stifling him so that he released his vice-like grip of Death's throat; and the latter, thus released, springing to his feet, snatched his powder by bringing the heavy broadsword with sledge hammer force down upon his head.

The remaining four Indians had been likewise despatched; and the victorious riflemen (none of whom had received any wound worth mentioning) now sent up such a shout of triumph for victory, that the echoes of the old wood rung with it for minutes after.

As Col. Innes had promised, Death was promoted to the vacant post of lieutenant; and now, dear reader, we beg to inform you that our hero and the uncompromising rascal, General Morgan of Revolutionary notoriety, were one and the same individual.

About a fortnight after this eventful night, Stanhope's farm became the scene of as much mirth, good eating, and dancing, as could be possibly disposed of during the twenty-four hours; and though we think it will be superfluous to do so, we will add that the name of this "merry-making" was the marriage of the beautiful Hester Stanhope with Lieut. Henry Morgan.

HANDWRITING OF DELLY.—Delly is written on the flowers that sweeten the air—upon the breeze that rocks the flowers upon their stem—upon the rain drops that refresh the sprig of moss that lifts its head in the desert—upon its deep chambers—upon every penciled sheet that slopes in the sleep of caverns of the deep no less than upon the mighty sun that warms and cheers billions of creatures—Delly is written everywhere.

Good men are human suns—wherever they pass by they brighten and warm. Fools reckon them mad (the gentler expression is "eccentric") till death wrenches open their foolish eyes. Such men are not often sung by poets when they die; but the hearts they heal and their lives are their rich reward on earth, and their place is high in heaven.

The woodman who spared that tree, has run short of wood, and is almost splitting with vexation to think how green how green he was.