

Howver all duties in the transit of goods from one department to another, vvhich duties being prejudicial to revenue, and restrictive of the exchange of imports for exports, vvere abolished on the 31st of March last.

OREGON FREE PRESS.

GEO. L. CURRY, Editor and Proprietor.

OREGON CITY, SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 1848.

Gold! gold! gold! gold!
Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
Molten, graven, hammered, rolled;
Heavy to get, and light to hold;
Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold;
Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled;
Spurned by the young, but hugged by the old;
To the very verge of the church-yard mould;
Price of many a crime untold;
Gold! gold! gold! gold!
Good or bad, a thousand fold.

Truly it is gold, gold, gold—and for the last ten days this same yellow substance has been crazing our whole community. The desire to get rich suddenly, without undergoing the accustomed routine of labor or business, is now being manifested throughout the country—by leaving employment of every kind—the plow literally in the furrow—forsaking 'kith and kin' and rushing to California to dig in 'the bowels of the harmless earth' for gold. The chances are deemed too magnificent to be hazarded by the least delay.

What the deuce are to become of such poor fellows as curself, who, unfortunately, belong to the 'Can't get away Club,' it is impossible to determine. That we want as much of the 'filthy lucre' as we can conveniently scrape together, we are free to confess, and if we could but get even a little of it, nowadays, it would astonish us marvelously. Here we are up to our eyes in type—PI and MATTER promiscuously jumbled together, about us—all because the worthy young gentleman who has been printing our paper (Mr. Crawford) has, and very properly too, gone to try his luck with the rest of the gold seekers.

That good may come of all this we most heartily wish, yet we have misgivings as to the end,—for our friends who have gone and are going, and for our country. It will take Oregon a long time, we fear, to recover from the baneful effects of this gold mania. Some of the good fellows who are leaving us, may never live to return—disease, and vvant, have fatal povver in such places, as the mines of California are likely to become. Howver let us hope for the best.

MARINE.—The brig Henry, Capt. Kilborn, leaves Portland during the coming week, for California, loaded with flour, salmon and passengers.

There is a flying rumor of the arrival of a vessel in the river—we give it as report.

"FREE PRESS."—Notwithstanding the many inconveniencies vve labor under, in consequence of having no printer, we shall endeavor to continue to publish, as usual—and vwith a little indulgence at first, vve shall be as regular in appearing, as heretofore.

THE IMMIGRATION.—From our information we judge that the 1st company of immigrants have crossed the Cascades and are now at Foster's, on the Clackamas—perhaps this side of there.

CATHOLIC PRIESTS—ARMS AND AMMUNITION.

MR. EDITOR: It is a matter of surprise, how the professional Editor of the "Oregon Spectator" for the 7th inst. should have overlooked the explanation, given in your paper of the 26th ult., regarding the purposes for which a certain quantity of arms and ammunition have been sent, by the priests, to the Cascades. This, unaccountable, oversight of the Editor of the "Oregon Spectator" obliges me here to repeat these reasons, which, if attentively considered, will prove satisfactory and silence all complaint.

The Missions of the Catholic Priests are established among six different tribes—the Flatheads, the Kalispels, the Cœurs d' Aleines, the Okanagans, those of Colville and those of New Caledonia. All of whom live so far remote from the country inhabited by the hostile Indians, that arms, provisions, etc., in order to be conveyed to the country of the former, does not pass through, nor even touch upon, the country of the latter: and thus all danger of arms or provisions, falling into the hands of the hostile Indians, was completely precluded. It has always been the custom of the Missionaries, to bring up an annual supply of arms and ammunition to their Indians, since their first establishment among them in 1841, to the present; nor did the supply of this year exceed that of former years: and when too you take into consideration the number of persons, whites, half-breeds and indians, among whom this ammunition was to be distributed, (WHENEVER PERMISSION SHOULD BE GRANTED) the quantity shall appear very trifling and quite inconsiderable.

The purposes of supplying these six tribes of Indians with ammunition are—that by shooting down game they may supply the Missions and themselves with the means of subsistence, and that they also may defend themselves against other hostile tribes. Much also of this ammunition was to be distributed among the Whites as part payment of their wages; and a large portion of it was destined for New Caledonia, situated in the British possessions, and containing, in this one Mission alone, a population of upwards of 5000 natives, who depend chiefly on the labors of the chase for their subsistence. Subtracting then the quantity of ammunition to be forwarded to New Caledonia, with that destined for the service of the whites and half-breeds—and dividing the remainder among the five other Missions at the Rocky Mountains, you may perceive that the portion allotted to each Mission is very inconsiderable, and should not excite unjust suspicions against the Priests. These six tribes of Indians have always been, and still are, most friendly to the whites—they disapproved of the massacre at Vvailatpu, and are ready to exert their endeavors to avenge the murder, if properly invited to do so. To continue, therefore, to supply the ammunition, as usual, will maintain them in a friendly disposition, whilst to withdraw, or to postpone, this heretofore regular provision of ammunition may raise suspicions against the whites, and will certainly deprive many of those miserable beings of their only means of subsistence.