

OREGON FREE PRESS.

FOR THE

VOL. I.)

WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1848.

(NO. 33.)

"Here shall the Press the people's rights maintain, Unawed by influence, and unbribed by gain."

TERMS OF THE "FREE PRESS."

One copy, per annum, (in advance,) three dollars and fifty cents, cash—for six months, two dollars.

ADVERTISING.—Each square, (12 lines or less,) first insertion, two dollars—each subsequent insertion, one dollar. A reasonable deduction made on yearly advertisements.

Currency and produce taken at their cash value.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN EUROPE.—The friends of humanity, and of the progress of civilization and education all over the world, cannot but be extremely gratified at the railroad speed with which the freedom of the press is progressing in Europe. For centuries past it has been muffled and tied up—but it has at length burst its bounds, and now stands forth free and unshackled, in almost every country in the old world—and it is remarkably that England is now almost the only civilized country where the press is not actually free.

There is, to be sure, no direct censorship over it there—no officers appointed by government to inspect the editor's writings before they are printed, and strike out such parts as are objectionable—but freedom of the press—perfect freedom, such as now exists in the United States and France, does not exist in England. So far from it being free, it is so heavily burdened with taxes and impositions that the great wonder is, its circulation is so great as it is—and were these taxes and burdens removed, its circulation would be probably ten times greater. In the United States, it is, compared with England, an easy task to publish a paper—for there is nothing beyond the cost of the material and the printing to be taken into consideration. But the case is far different in England. In that country, a government tax of one penny sterling—equal to two cents of our currency—is charged on each sheet by the government, and this sum must be paid before the paper is printed. This sum covers the whole price of the best newspaper in the United States, and leaves, in many cases, a handsome profit to the publishers, after expending vast sums in availing themselves of the improvements that have recently been made in machinery and in the electric telegraph, by which news from all parts of our widely extended country is presented to the public, up to the latest hour.

As an example of the direct and indirect taxation which is levied by the British government on the press of that country, we may show an estimate of what the government levies on the London Times alone.

That journal consumes two million two hundred and sixty-two thousand pounds of paper annually, the tax on which is sixty-eight thousand five hun-

dred dollars—the regular stamp tax of one penny per sheet amounts to two hundred and forty-five thousand dollars, and the tax on the advertisements amounts to one hundred and fifty-six thousand dollars—the whole reaching to nearly half a million of dollars, which the government of that country receives from that paper alone. Thus, the material itself, the paper, is first taxed—the privilege of printing it is then taxed at the rate of a penny per sheet, and then the advertisements are taxed at the rate of three shillings sterling each, equal to seventy-five cents of our currency. How can it be said, in the face of these heavy items of taxation, that the press of Great Britain is free? It may be free from censorship, but it is not free in circulation—for with all these burdens resting upon it, none but the comparatively wealthy portion of the people can afford to read the newspapers, and the remainder must, consequently, be in ignorance of what is transpiring in the world around them. It is, therefore, a direct tax on the dissemination of knowledge and intelligence among the people—and yet, in spite of this, the people of England will decry the liberty which we enjoy in the United States, and throw up their caps in exultation whenever British freedom, and what not, are alluded to. (N. Y. Herald.)

SELFISHNESS.—Within his house in a great arm chair before the fire sat an old gray headed man ripe for the grave. 'Twas winter, and the cold wind whistled among the leafless branches of the trees, and the snow and sleet rattled against the windows. The old man chuckled, for he was warm and comfortable, and the biting blast touched him not. He said, 'I have enough—I am rich—so blow ye winds and drift ye snows, I am safe.' A servant entered and said, 'Sir a woman is at the door trembling in the cold—has no where to sleep—no home to go to. She begs for a corner of your kitchen to pass the night in.' 'Away, I've no room for thieving beggars—there is a tavern close by—tell her to go there.' She says she has no money, and begs you to give her enough to buy a meal and lodging.' Begone! drive her off. What I've got's my own, and I'll keep it too. I've got none to squander on worthless mendicants.

The next morning the old man stepped out into the porch, and there upon one of the benches sat the poor beggar woman. His rage was kindled.

'Did I not tell you I had nothing for you, impudence! Come, come, tramp! Leave my house I say, d'ye hear?' She heard him not! She was dead! The old man smote his breast and entered his house. He never left it again for he also died miserable, though rich.