

sidered. The contract term will expire with the voyage ending on or about the 30th day of June, 1850.—*N. Y. Spectator, Oct. 1845.*



THE SPECTATOR.

Oregon City, February 4, 1847.

GEO. L. CURRY, EDITOR—H. W. COLWELL, PRINTER.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We have received a communication from a youth of thirteen years of age, over the signature "O. N. P." upon the currency and commercial matters, which is really clever, taking the circumstances of the case into consideration. We would encourage our young friend to go on—to take pains to improve himself, and he will be an ornament to society.

A. A. M. is inadmissible. We cannot, and will not open our columns to the bitterness of religious controversy.

CHAMPOEG COUNTY TAX.—There has been no tax for the year 1846, received by the Treasurer, from Champoeg county. How is this? Who is to blame, and where is the honorable County Court of Champoeg county?

REDUCED PRICE OF FLOUR.—We understand that the price of flour has been reduced to three dollars per hundred pounds, currency, or two and a half dollars cash, by the Hudson's Bay Company, and may be purchased at that rate, at the establishments of this concern.

RIVER.—The Willamette river is rising rapidly, and there are strong indications of a freshet, and should the water continue to rise, it will consequently be less damage re-

glad to state that all the emigrants who have arrived safely in the Territory, and their families, who have concluded to remain in their property until Spring, in the northern side of the Umpqua mountains, are informed by some of the immigrants who have reached here, that accounts of their condition have been exaggerated; and they ascribe much of their detention to their own mismanagement and delay. Of ninety wagons, which were all that were upon the southern route, fifty are this side of the Umpqua mountains, including twelve that had reached the first settlement at the head of the valley.

On our fourth page will be found a calendar of the days, weeks and months of the present year, which no doubt many of our subscribers will find extremely useful and worth the preservation. It is the handiwork of our publisher and redounds to his credit.

"HARD TIMES."—There is much talk about the hardness of the times, and possibly with some foundation in fact; yet we incline to the opinion that many who are croaking against the times, are a good deal harder than the times themselves. They talk themselves and others into the belief of the existence of imaginary evils, rather than endeavor to improve the condition of things by honest action and zealous labor. They are followers of that school of philosophy, whose principle of faith it was to "talk if it is only for the sake of talking;" hence they are deserving of the appellation, "all talk and no cider," the highest award of their philosophy, whose mystic meaning we will not undertake to explain. Mountains can be magnified into mountains—the difficult amounts to the impossible—all through the potency of talk.

These croakers, and they are to be found in any and every place, are continually on the croak, prophesying utter ruin, yet doing nought to prevent it—fanning the flames of things and achieving nothing. Labor is the great wealth; and particularly in this country, the exercise of the spirit of industry and the consistent economy is certain surety against poverty, and afford great encouragement to the accumulation of wealth. Though circumstances seem propitious, they shall be modified by industry and untiring perseverance; "in the midst of perpetual despair." The darkness which precedes the dawn of a new life—the darkest, most cheerless, and the precursor of a most brilliant future—do not croak, but believe we are in the midst of a new era, and in obeying the great law of God, heart or hand, we shall only true no-

A NEWSPAPER FOR OREGON.

Since the origin of newspapers, in the sixteenth century, there have been few, or none who have questioned their utility, or for a moment doubted the important influence they exercise upon the destinies of human life. They have wielded a power that has proved unshakable in behalf of the rights of man, that arbitrary laws could not suppress, nor the mightiness of kings destroy. They are of the people, and with the people, and constitute the voice of the people. The law of libel has been satisfied with its victims; impoverishment, imprisonment, and death have been the lot of too many who have stood up for this freedom of thought and expression. Yet has the power of the periodical press gradually increased and moved steadily onward—opening greater, better and more comprehensive views—to a more extensive sphere of operation and utility.

With the enfranchisement of the United States, our glorious and beloved country, the press received a powerful impulse—new life and vigor; for the strength of a great people was enlisted in its aid. And now we find it exerting its all-controlling influence in every city of the Union; even in isolated and wilderness-bounded Oregon, it hath a power and a voice, feeble it may be, yet, full of rich and gratifying promise. In the king-ridden and nobility-supporting old world, the press is doing much towards ameliorating the condition of man. Under the very noses of imperious potentates, and amid the gilded pomp and perfumed vanities of courts and aristocracies, it is issuing its daily bulletins of the world's progress, and giving forth dim shadows of the grand ultimate.

In view then of the power of the press, and its importance as a guardian of popular rights, is it not worth while to have a newspaper in Oregon? One would suppose not, from the meager support which the "Spectator" has received during its existence. Let us see. The great majority of the citizens of this country are Americans, who, we presume, love the country that gave them birth, and would desire to perpetuate its institutions. In the present condition of things, and the peculiar situation of Oregon, a newspaper can do great good by the dissemination of information upon various topics, affording a kind of general education for the people, and as ignorance is the only foe that need be feared by the lovers of free institutions, whatever may have a tendency to impart knowledge to the popular mind, should be gladly received and heartily encouraged. The "Spectator" has endeavored to supply a want that has been felt in this respect, and what has been the result? We must candidly answer, not satisfactory. It was supposed that Americans in Oregon would take a pride in supporting a paper devoted to their interests, and we still hope that their apparent indifference is occasioned only by their not having bestowed sufficient consideration upon the subject, and that they will yet come up as one man to the maintenance of a free press in Oregon. Indeed, we think that every friend of republican institutions, and particularly Americans, in this Territory, ought to be subscribers to the "Oregon Spectator." If proper encouragement were given it, it could then be enlarged and published more frequently, and consequently be of more efficient service in the diffusion of useful knowledge. An excellent opportunity is now afforded for subscriptions, as this is the first number of the second volume, therefore we urge all who are favorable to the advancement of intelligence, morality, science and civil liberty, to send in their names as subscribers to the "Spectator."

For the Oregon Spectator.

MR. EDITOR.—The snow has at last made its disappearance from the prairies, and once more our animals have the privilege of grazing, although many have died, and more will in all probability not live to feed upon the new year's grass. This extraordinary winter has changed the minds of many with regard to Oregon; but let us consider how careless we have been with our stock—not a single farmer that I know of has any hay, oats, or even straw in store for his animals when the winter sets in, and consequently we have lost some cattle. In Champoeg county, I learn that some have lost upwards of 20 head of cattle, and others something under that number; and throughout the Territory, more or less have lost cattle, horses and hogs. From the best information I have, it is the old cows and horses that in all probability would have died soon, with the best of weather and food. The hogs have been obliged to seek shelter in the woods, and the six or seven days of cold weather which we have had, took away many of them. But for the future, let us save our straw to throw out to our stock, in case another winter like this should happen, and then there will be no danger of our stock perishing. Let us not magnify Oregon too much, and we have nothing to fear.

For the Oregon Spectator. SONG OF THE FREE.

BY G. L. C.

The Free! the Free! a song for the Free,
For the ones of these shores who crossed the dark sea,
Who started the spirit of freedom abroad,
And raised mid the wilderness altars to God.

The Free! the Free! a song for the Free!
Our hearts give an answer in wild jubilee;
The murmur is breaking—after it is heard,
Re-choed by mountains, and Oregon's stirred,
In greeting the star-spangled banner unfurled,
Whose splendor is dazzling the eye of the world.
That heart-worshipped banner waved high in the fight,
As those who were under it battled for right;
'Tis victory's banner—its foemen went down—
And see on its spearhead, the laurel-wreathed crown!

The Free! the Free! a song for the Free!
Our hearts are exulting in peans to thee,
Thou brave bird of Freedom! fit emblem thou art,
Our own mountain eagle! to speak the free heart.
With a tireless wing, and an unquailing eye,
Thou seekest thy sun-throne aloft in the sky;
Our foes have been awed by thy terrible glance,
As thy talons have borne them the olive and lance.

The Free! the Free! a song for the Free!
For the land we love best—Columbia for thee!
Where the heart, soul and mind are as free as the air,
And man stands erect with the power to dare;
Of the nations of earth, the most beautiful thou!
Thy goodness and greatness the world shall allow,
And the wrangled of all nations thy power will bow,
For the fate of humanity's in thy success.

Then the Free! the Free! a song for the Free!
For those who have strong hearts fair freedom, for thee!
From the shores of the East, to Pacific's calm wave,
Let the pean go up for the Free and the brave.

SPELLING BOOK.—The Printing Association's edition of the "Elementary Spelling Book," was published according to announcement, on the first instant, and may be obtained at any of the stores in this city. Stitched copies, twenty-five cents, bound copies, thirty-seven and a half cents—payment in cash.

This little volume reflects great credit upon its printer, Mr. W. P. Hudson. Indeed, it is got up in good style and strongly bound, and will be found really accessible in the cause for which it is intended.

For the Oregon Spectator.

ROAD TO OREGON—No. 2.

From the Dalles, horse trails cross the Cascade mountains on both sides of Mount Hood—the northern route is the most direct, but the southern is less difficult, and better supplied with grass. Though these paths run over very steep and rugged mountains, and were still more difficult from the great quantity of fallen timber, and the thickness of the undergrowth, yet emigrants arriving before the snow was too deep on the mountains, usually drove their animals by one of these trails in preference to twice crossing the Columbia river.

To avoid the danger and heavy expense of descending the Columbia by water, a party of the emigrants of 1845, under the direction of Samuel K. Barlow, undertook to open a road for their wagons along the southern trail.

They succeeded in penetrating the mountains to within a few miles of the main ridge, but the increasing snow, and the scarcity of pasturage and provisions forced them to leave their wagons and hasten with their animals to the valley. To encourage Mr. Barlow to complete his road, as it would be of great benefit to future emigrants, a considerable sum was raised by subscription for his benefit, and the privilege granted him by the Legislature to collect a toll of \$5 on each wagon, and 10 cents a head for horses and cattle that passed his road; and to its completion it is evident the van of the emigrants of 1846, owe their early and less expensive arrival in the Willamette valley.

Some little improvements to Mr. Barlow's road over the Cascade mountains will complete the northern route to Oregon, and no material improvements upon the ground can hereafter be effected.

Some distance along the wagon road from the Malheur river to Oregon City, is by the best judges allowed to be about 600 miles. As my limits do not permit a full description of this part of the road, I shall merely point out on the authority of Capt. Fremont, some of the many natural and unavoidable obstructions and objections to this route. Premising that Capt. Fremont, on this part of the road traveled in advance of his heavy baggage, with pack animals, which enabled him to travel over the rougher parts of the road, in one day, a distance which wagons were several in accomplishing; and as Capt. Fremont is a known advocate for the settlement of this country by overland emigrants, if capable of departing from the impartial truth, (a charge which has never in the most distant manner been alleged

against him) would rather favor than disparage the road. On the 12th October, he left the Malheur river and traveled in part a rough road 23 miles to the first water. Oct. 13th, he says—

"We ascended a long and somewhat steep hill; and crossing the dividing ridge, came down into the valley of Burnt river, which here looks like a hole among the hills. We traveled through a very mountainous country; the stream running rather in a ravine than a valley, and the road is decidedly bad and dangerous for single wagons, frequently crossing the stream where the water is sometimes deep; and all the day the animals were fatigued in climbing up and descending a succession of steep ascents to avoid the precipitous hill sides; and the common trail, which leads along the mountain side, at places where the river strikes the base, is sometimes bad even for a horseman."

Oct. 14th. "I have never seen a wagon road equally bad in the same space, as this of yesterday and to-day. I noticed where one wagon had been overturned twice, in a very short distance; and it was surprising to me that those wagons which were in the rear, and could not have had much assistance, got through at all."

By a reference to his table of distance, it will be seen that these remarks apply to 42 miles of the road; and he further remarks on the 15th October, that

"The trail did not much improve until we had crossed the dividing ground between the Brule (Burnt) and Powder rivers."

Oct. 17th, he says—"Probably with the view of avoiding a circuit, the wagons had directly descended into the Road by the face of a hill, so very rocky and continuously steep as to be apparently impracticable."

Oct. 18th. "At this place the emigrants appeared to have held some consultation as to their further route, and finally turned directly off to the left; reaching the foot of the mountain in about three miles, which they ascended by a hill as steep and difficult as that by which we had yesterday descended to the Road. Quitting then this road, which, after a very rough crossing, issues from the mountains by the heads of the Umatillah river, we continued, &c."

It is to be regretted that Capt. Fremont did not continue on the wagon road through the Blue mountains, as his faithful and graphic descriptions would give to future emigrants a correct idea of "the very rough crossing" to the Umatillah river, together with the number of days they are ascending and descending hills of the worst description in a heavily timbered region, without an adequate supply of grass for their cattle.

After visiting Dr. Whitman's station and Fort Wallawalla, Capt. Fremont again comes upon the wagon road (which reaches the Columbia near the mouth of the Umatillah river,) he describes the traveling along the Columbia river, as being bad, "through deep loose sand and fragments of volcanic rock;" his first encampment below the mouth of the Umatillah river, (Oct. 29th) he describes as being "similar to that of yesterday, there was very little grass and wood."

Oct. 31st, he says, "Our road was a bad one, of very loose deep sand." "We made a late encampment for the river, and used to-night *purshia tridentata* for firewood."

Nov. 2. "At noon, we crossed John Day's river, a clear and beautiful stream with a swift current and a bed of rolled stones. It is sunk in a deep valley, which is characteristic of all the streams in this region; and the hill we descended to reach it, well deserves the name of mountain; some of the emigrants had encamped on the river, and others at the summit of the farther hill, the ascent of which had probably cost their wagons a day's labor; and others again had halted for the night a few miles beyond, where they had slept without water. We also encamped in a grassy hollow without water."

Of the dangerous ford of the DeChutes, he says, "during the crossing, the howitzer was occasionally several feet under water, and a number of men appeared to be more often below than above."

(Page 111.) "Our land journey found here (the Dalles) its western termination. The delay involved in getting our camp to the right (north) bank of the Columbia, and in opening a road through the continuous forest to Vancouver, rendered a journey along the river impracticable; and on this side, the usual road across the mountain required strong and fresh animals, there being