

W. R. Chace
Richmond

For the Oregon Spectator.
FARMER'S MEETING.

Pursuant to notice in the Spectator some weeks since, calling a meeting in Tualatin plains, to devise measures to prevent our ruin, by the refusal of the shipping merchants to do for us a freighting business, and the exorbitant prices upon the necessities of life—some 20 men assembled on the 16th ultimo, notwithstanding the notice had failed to get into circulation before the meeting, and the severity of the weather at the time, and having organized and appointed a committee to notify through the Spectator, another meeting, adjourned to meet on the 13th ultimo. Although such notice failed to reach the Spectator, and the traveling was still bad, some 40 or more producers, of the bone and sinew of our country assembled, and with J. L. Meek in the chair, J. S. Griffin, secretary, proceeded to the following business.

Voted, that Gen. McCarver be invited to give us an opening address touching the objects of the meeting. He was listened to with painful interest as he presented the facts so obvious to all, touching our distressing wants occasioned by the success of combinations for cutting us off from the neighboring markets, and compelling the producers to accept the miserable pittance offered in exchange for our valuable productions.

Several gentlemen took part in presenting the obvious necessity of combination among the producers, for obtaining that relief which could not be obtained by individuals. It was seen and felt that we had already waited too long for relief by hoped-for competition. Col. Hall in particular showed, that late exhibitions were more that suspicious that the leading monopolies are already uniting so as to act as one. Let this union be permanently established, said the speaker, and what are we but slaves? Indeed said he, what are we better than slaves? It was clearly perceived in case of such combination among leading monopolies, we could hope for no competition that could give us relief. The conviction was strong that our remedy was combination among the producers of all classes so as to abandon the monopolies to their honor, and do our own business. In taking part, showing the necessity of combination on the part of producers, Mr. Griffin dwelt upon this as the only remedy to save the country from adopting the doctrine of repudiation in the payment of debts. He showed that our families must be maintained some how and at some rate before any thing could be applied on debts; and at the present system of exchange, we cannot clothe our children, to say nothing of their education. The speaker showed that he had been in the country from the beginning of the settlement by American families, and although our debts were small considering the circumstances, owing to the temperance and economy of the people, still these debts press the people to the earth, and they must have the means to save more of their own profits, or they will go into repudiation, if not mobocracy.

Voted, that a committee of three be appointed to prepare some plan of operation. Col. Hall, Gen. McCarver and Mr. Griffin reported the following, viz:

Resolved, That we the undersigned agree to bind ourselves to deliver at the landing for this county, the number of bushels of merchantable wheat, set opposite our names, for exportation, by the 10th day of Nov. '47 and '48, upon such percentage of commission as shall be agreed upon by our committee, with a suitable man for doing our freighting and commission business, and to furnish, at favorable shipping points, such other freight as set opposite our names, towards furnishing constant business for a vessel obtained for that purpose by said commission and freighting merchant.

Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to obtain a suitable man's proposals for doing our grinding, freighting and commission business, and report the same to an adjourned meeting at this place.

Upon the adoption of this report, Messrs. Hall, Lenox, McCarver, Caffenburg, Hill and others took part in the discussion. Mr. Lenox proposed the formation of a joint stock company, and build or buy a vessel. He said if it was thought not best to attempt building, we could execute bonds and buy. He was willing that all he had should be appraised and stand as stock in such company. If he lost, he lost his all, but he had

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rather risk his all than attempt to stem the present state of things any longer.

Mr. Hall was afraid of debts, and thought a company might well fear a debt—made pithy remarks touching the efforts of some western States attempting to do business by executing bonds while in debt. Mr. Lenox said, let us build then—and brought forward with much effect, the facts of one man in the south seas, with the help of a few natives, having built a vessel without even a forge or bellows to begin with. Said the speaker, give him but six farmers, and he would go to the banks of the Willamette, as old as he was, and build a vessel. Shame on us, said he, if, after the exhibition of those three or four young men in 1841, without means, having built a vessel and sailed her to California, we at this time and in such numbers, should bow down under the efforts made from certain sources, so prove that we are not able to build a vessel.

It was clearly shown in the meeting, notwithstanding all that has been said of Oregon debts, to deter capitalists coming to us with goods, and that our surplus produce does not warrant it—that the wheat taken last year by the Hudson's Bay Company, alone yielded a profit clear of all expenses and in markets not 15 days' sail from us, which if saved to the producers, would have cleared Oregon of what is supposed to be her entire indebtedness. The discussions were animated and moving, but all governed by the disposition to embody for united effort, and resulted in the adoption (without a dissenting voice) of the committee's plan for present operations, and the adoption of the following resolution offered by Esq. Lenox.

Resolved, That it is the wish of this meeting, that a vessel be constructed by the farmers and mechanics of Oregon for their use as soon as practicable, for the purpose of carrying the productions of our country to the Sandwich Islands and other markets.

Voted, that Gen. McCarver, Col. Hall, Mr. Griffin be a committee to obtain proposals.

Voted, that Messrs. Hill and Meek be a committee to obtain pledges for freight within this county, and report the same within three weeks to the committee to obtain proposals.

Voted, that a condensed statement of our proceedings be published in the Spectator.

Voted, that the meeting adjourn to meet at the same place on the first Saturday in April, at 10 o'clock A. M. to hear the committee's report and take action thereon, and for otherwise perfecting the enterprise.

A general meeting of all classes of producers within our country is solicited. May we not hope to see producers from the farmers and mechanics of other counties also, with whom we may advise, touching similar efforts in their counties, hoping to get into one harmonious whole for the purpose of taking care of ourselves, rather than remain a burden upon those who sell goods only for accommodation.

In behalf of the committee,
J. S. GRIFFIN, Secretary.

For the Oregon Spectator.
THE IMMIGRATION.
SOUTHERN ROUTE.

MR. EDITOR—I have read an editorial article in the Spectator of the 4th instant, in which I could not fail to observe that you had been so far led astray by the rash, not to say willful misrepresentations of thoughtless or designing and interested persons, as to make no less than seven incorrect statements in the first eleven lines of an article of thirteen. I am thus particular for the purpose of showing how many inaccuracies may be crowded into so small a compass. The article in question, when analyzed, will be found to contain nine averments, viz:

1st. That "all the immigrants" "excepting four families," have arrived in the settle-

ments. This is incorrect. Mr. Duskins was, it is believed, among the last persons who returned with direct intelligence from the families "in the Umpqua valley." When he left, there were five or six families—one consisting of Messrs. Geddes and Nye, the Rev. J. A. Cornwall's, Mr. Kennedy's, Mr. Croizen's, and Mr. Hall's. There was also the family of one whose name is not now remembered—believed, however, to be Davis or Wood; making in all about thirty souls.

2d. That the "four families" "excepted," had "concluded to remain with their property until Spring, in the Umpqua valley." This also is incorrect. They had not "concluded" to remain. They remained because the hard hand of necessity was upon them. As well might it be said of the unhappy man who is being led to execution, that he has "concluded" to be hung.

3d. That those who have arrived in the settlements, have "ARRIVED SAFELY." This also is incorrect, if any thing is meant by the expression, "arrived safely" beyond the simple announcement of the fact, that many of the immigrants, after traversing a country dangerous in consequence of the hostility of the savages, have at length arrived in a very enfeebled condition to which they had been reduced by hunger, cold and nakedness. In addition to this, it may be affirmed, that almost every man, (perhaps indeed, every one) who came into Oregon by the southern route, is, in a pecuniary point of view, ruined by doing so. Do men arrive "safely" who lose their wagons, teams, tents and clothing; and who freeze their feet, and come in looking like famished wolves?

4th. That accounts of the condition of the immigrants "have been exaggerated." To exaggerate this account, it is feared, would be a difficult task. It is probably one which could be accomplished by those only who are the sources of your information. It is a fact well known among the immigrants, that as early as the 14th of November last, an ox that had become too lean and too much exhausted to be able to go any further, and which had finally died in the canyon of the Umpqua mountains, (supposed, I believe, for sometime, to have belonged to Rice Dunbar) was found with its hind quarters skinned and carried away. By whom, and for what purpose, was this done, if it was not done by some unhappy father who saw his children famishing for want of food? It was to this circumstance I referred in my communication of Nov. 30th, in which I observed that the immigrants previous to my leaving the disastrous canyon, had commenced eating the cattle that had died in it. I did not, indeed, see the ox skinned or eaten, as before mentioned, but the fact was not questioned while I remained at the canyon, nor was it ever denied until improper and unworthy motives suggested the idea of keeping the people of the valley in ignorance of the extent of the sufferings of the immigrants. I did not, in stating the fact in my appeal to the people, in behalf of the sufferers whom I had left behind me, intend to censure any one of the gentlemen who had been instrumental in leading us upon that most unfortunate road. Much less was it my purpose to express any opinion at that time, whether it would be proper to advise future immigrants to travel that road. This question I did not believe ought to be discussed while any of the immigrants remained in circumstances of so-much-suffering. And I must be permitted to say, that had I been instrumental in placing a multitude of men, women and children in such a situation, I would have eaten my bread in bitterness until I had rescued them, instead of attempting to amuse the public mind either by speculations with regard to the practicability of some other route, or by wickedly attempting to produce the impression that accounts of the condition of the immigrants "HAVE BEEN

EXAGGERATED." I say wickedly, because I believe that, had not some persons, influenced by improper motives, succeeded to some extent, in producing this impression, all the immigrants would by this time have been in the valley. As circumstances now are, there is much reason to fear that the coming Spring will reveal a tale of the sufferings of those in the Umpqua valley, that will make sick the heart of every man who has one.

The sufferings then, of the immigrants have not "been exaggerated." Indeed, I doubt whether the half has been told. By the very last intelligence we have of those "who have concluded to remain," we learn that an estimable old man and his wife and grandchild, had subsisted three days upon three mice.

5th. That much of the detention of the immigrants is to be ascribed to "their own mismanagement." How did it come to pass, that all the good managers traveled the old road, many of them arriving in Oregon City as early as Sept 13th, with their property; while all the mismanagers took the route indicated by Messrs. Applegate and Goff, losing all their property and arriving in the settlements in December, looking more like the shadows of ghosts than the substantial forms of living men? Mr. Applegate met the company in which I traveled, August 8th, a few miles on this side of Fort Hall. Although among the first of my company to get in, I did not arrive until Nov. 29th; while others who had entered upon the old road only about forty eight hours before Mr. Applegate arrived at the point where the old road to Oregon turns off to the right from the California road, arrived Sept. 13th—two and a half months earlier.

6th. That much of the detention of the immigrants is to be ascribed to their WILLFUL delay—for in no other sense can the word "delay" be understood when read in the connection in which it appears. If those to whom you refer as being the source from which you derive your information, and whom you describe as being "some of the immigrants who have reached here," mean to speak of themselves only, nothing will be objected to their making themselves as odious as they desire. But if they intend to be understood as speaking of other immigrants than themselves, then a regard to truth and justice constrains me to pronounce their statement to be untrue in all its length, and depth, and breadth.

7th. That the averments made under the last three heads, rest upon the authority of "some of the immigrants who have reached here." I am not careful to know what motive prompted "some of the immigrants who have reached here," thus to slander their fellow travelers. I hope, however, that it does not spring from that base and mean spirit which characterizes a class of individuals known by the expressive, though not very elegant epithet of "boodlicks."

8th. That ninety wagons were "all that were upon the southern route." While I can affirm that ninety wagons were not "all that were upon the southern route," I will not take upon myself to say certainly what was the precise number. Relying upon memory, an attempt will, however, be made to approximate to it. Seventy-five wagons had been turned into the new road previous to the company, in which I traveled, coming up. In this company, if I am not mistaken, there was eighteen wagons. Mr. Lard and his son-in-law had two wagons. James Savage had one. I have been informed that the company of Messrs. Brown and Allen contained eighteen wagons. This would make one hundred and fourteen. I may have made some mistakes as to precise numbers, but I do not doubt that many wagons have entirely escaped my memory.

9th. That of the ninety wagons affirmed to be all that were upon the southern route, "fifty are on this side of the Umpqua mountains, including twelve that had reached the first settlement at the head of the" Willamette valley. But where are the forty wagons making the difference between fifty and ninety? It is answered that they lie in scattered fragments upon the sides of the hills, upon the tops of the mountains, and along the rocky glens and the most impassable canyons which mark the disastrous "out-off," leading us, as an opinion it did, as far south as latitude, north latitude. And where, too, are the twenty-four wagons which make the difference between one hundred and fourteen? It is answered that for