

A. G. R. Shaw

Oregon Spectator.

"Westward the Star of Empire takes its way."

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For the Oregon Spectator.
Mr. Editor—In the first number of your paper, vol. 2, I see a piece signed 'M.' giving 'Fifty-four Forty,' a most desperate drubbing, and that too, by figures, which he has called to his assistance, as unerring as the problems of Euclid. Also some great gone-by men has he quoted, not being satisfied with his own argumentative powers to prove the near-sighted and silly statements of 'Fifty-four Forty.' Now supposing 'Fifty-four Forty' just what Mr. 'M.' makes him out to be, and Mr. 'M.' just what his arguments prove him to be, the following four lines, also, might have been inserted as a quotation in Mr. M's piece applicable to both.

"True patriots we,
For be it understood,
We left our country,
For our country's good."

But to convince Mr. 'M.' that we understand his drift, I will make a few remarks on his mutilated argument—could not think though of losing the string by which he is bound; for thereby he may be actuated to take the course that 'Fifty-four Forty' shows in Spectator No. 20, where he says, "I notice the man who grows wheat in Oregon, is provided with every thing to make him comfortable. He has plenty of clothes—a barn well stored with grain, and a good creed," &c. No sir, be it far from me to put any man in so humiliating a condition where by he may have to work—for by personal experience, well do I know how hard it goes, consequently the string must be kept tort, and the collar too, to keep him prepared with a scheme. As he says nothing about the delegate to Congress that 'Fifty-four Forty' mentions, which probably troubled him more at that time, than any thing that was said about the merchants—(but he didn't want.)

So let us probe again,
We have the tools,
And make the gifted cry,
"O, quit, you fools."

And so far as it relates to its author, he says, "we shall leave that subject to the more candid reflection of our readers," to show how near-sighted must be his efforts. Our efforts went no farther than to state matters of fact: in 'Fifty-four Forty' there is nothing to startle any one who attends to his own business, and lets politics alone, nor whether we got too little or too much for our wheat. Now let us see what 'M.' says. To effect a change in this, "the wool must be drawn off our eyes, and their silly statements, such as 'Fifty-four Forty,' exposed by mathematical calculations." What folly to make use of such balderdash in argument against "Fifty-four Forty." Mr. 'M.' says, the clear profits, however, arising from the sales of grain purchased this year by one of these companies, when placed in markets, will, we expect to show, amount to more than all the indebtedness of the farmers in Oregon. This also appears to me a visionary calculation, rather than a mathematical one. "When placed in market," he says: it appears to me he had better wait to see if there can be a market found for it, and when it is sold, tell us what they got for it. Suppose for a moment that that Mr. 'M.' is correct in what he says about the prices of flour at the Islands; in that case our merchants have been very lame; for they have been, it appears, taking out lumber and freighting, rather than give 80 cents for wheat, and pay it in goods at a profit of six-fold, as he will hereafter show. There is a mistake some place; for I am certain that I heard of Oregon flour selling at the Islands for less than \$6 per barrel—at other times \$8—seldom \$16. What I am sorry to learn is, that one ship load of flour, say five hundred tons, will glut the market and bring flour down to nothing, so you see, I think one of Mr. 'M.'s problems solved. But it appears to me that something else is in Mr. 'M.'s head besides mathematical calculations, and what can it be? There is only one thing that I can think of; we learn that some people are trying to turn the farmers into merchants, over in the Tualatin Plains, to be called a scrip company, or [see Oregon Spectator, 25, over 'M.'] mother's invention, if that is the case, (it being a wheat concern) the gentleman in question may want the office of acting agent; if so, I would recommend him, as he calculates well, which is the main thing. Send him to the States with your bonds—if any one can pass them, he can. Such fawning eloquence, without even a 'prompter,' he

fain would make you a few thousand. 'Fifty-four Forty' says the merchants have done much for Oregon. That is what sticks in Mr. 'M.'s craw. If I thought the Oregon Spectator had enough capital to set up a piece for Mr. 'M.' I would invite him to tell us what he has done for the people of Oregon, provided he would leave out the capital spent in city speculations, and confine himself to institutions, agricultural pursuits, knowledge, science, &c. That number I suppose it has not got. Therefore, I will only ask him to look in Spectator, vol. 2, No. 1, at a piece under the head of "Hard Times;" there I think he will find something useful, if not interesting.

He has been informed by one whose veracity cannot be doubted, that the H. B. Company has received from the farmers and farms 40,000 bushels of wheat: granted—although contrary to their rules to let it be known. Bah! To what length will men go for office, and how notional will they get. It does appear that some men must dispute, and with their best friends, rather than live in peace and quietness with their neighbors. Therefore, in conclusion, 'Fifty-four Forty' hopes that Mr. 'M.' will let one paper come out during the present year, without his mark 'M.' It will look then as though it was not merely used by a monopolist. As for his argument about the price of wheat, his object is so clear, that it is not worth while making any answer to the particulars; so if 'Fifty-four Forty' had been as wise as the clever man of Oregon, he would not have noticed any of his publications, but passed them by as imagination.

F. F. F.

For the Oregon Spectator.
OREGON AS IT IS.

Oregon is the land of my adoption, to which others, perhaps more favored, may claim to be the land of their birth. I look upon her as weak, yet untrammelled—by nature a delightful land. As my eye ranges over the extended plains which wind their way through the valleys of Oregon, I view them beautifully interspersed with fertile prairies, skirted and adorned with the lofty cedar and the towering fir, as if nature, in an idle, playful hour, had dressed them with uncommon and peculiar care. I view her table lands in general, dressed in living green throughout the year; over this delightful scene, we behold the sturdy spreading oak, as it waves to the wind and defies the storm—and from her banks are seen to burst forth delightful springs of water, clear as the crystal—healthful as the pure breeze of the morning—drink most safe for man's free use. Scattered here and there, promiscuously at present, over hills and valleys, our eye falls upon the cottage of the husbandman, somewhat rudely constructed, yet often neat in appearance, indicating to the passer by, that contentment reigns within the humble dwelling—that its inmates, though they may chance to be poor, are yet happy and prosperous. Would that we might here stop; but our eye falls upon the evil, as well as the good: this is not the character of every house, or its inmates—some on which our eye may reluctantly fall, are the sinks of vice—haunts where a demon dwells—from whence issue forth deadly streams, that poison wherever they flow. Would you know the name of this demon, who has invaded our peaceful land? His name is *Alcohol*—an emissary from the pit of darkness. It is but a few years since he tried to treat with Oregonians, in their infant state, that he might grow with their growth, strengthen with their strength, and in the end, triumph over their prosperity; but they in their wisdom, who come to no peaceful terms with him, who was their most deceitful and dangerous foe. At last he was not allowed to roam; he was taken, tried before their council, condemned as a public nuisance, as a destroyer of the peace of community, and bound over to keep

the peace, by their laws, which, as freemen, they were bound to sustain. I have once said, Oregon was untrammelled. Once, she was thus! Once, heaven smiled upon her as such a land; but now, alas! her best interest—her glory has in a great measure departed. The Legislators of our land—freemen! I blush to name them all, as such, though my countrymen—deep was the stain stamped upon their names, as Oregonians, when they relinquished those bonds which might have been made to bind our common foe, and for a paltry sum, let him forth at large, to do his destroying work. Already we see its dire effects; our eye rests upon the cheek where, but a few weeks since, sat the rosy bloom of health, now inflamed by the marks of the fiery, fell destroyer. The quivering lip, the trembling hand betray the unhappy victims to every passer by—thus laying the foundation for a work, the like of which, hath already cost our fathers in our native land, years of labor to destroy. May a kind and overruling Providence defend us from this threatened woe.

C. O.

For the Oregon Spectator.
ROAD TO OREGON.—No. 3.

The three streams forming the Willamette river, unite about the 44th degree of north latitude, to which point the settlements now extend. It will probably be found less expensive to make the Willamette river the channel of trade as high up as the forks, than to build a railroad; the navigation of the river will have the further advantage of being convenient to both sides of the valley. The fine water power on the river, the natural beauty of the site, and broad and fertile valleys which follow up the three rivers which here unite, seem to mark this place as the center of trade for the upper Willamette: and should a branch of the expected railroad from the U. States to the Pacific be extended to this country, it will most likely here find its northern terminus.

Capt. Fremont (on the 27th Dec. 1843.) crossed the Sierra Nevada directly on the 42d parallel; as the wagon road over the Calapooia mountain bears about the same relative position to the forks of the Willamette, that the wagon pass over the Sierra Nevada does to the pass of Capt. Fremont, the distance in both cases (according to Mitchell's late Map) on a right line, is about 225 miles. But as the road makes but very little easting until it crosses Rogue river, and is forced from a direct line in crossing the mountains and meandering the lakes, it is according to the way bills, about 335 miles to the top of the Sierra Nevada. About 280 miles of this distance lies in the valleys of the Umpqua, Rogue river, Clamet and Sacramento; the remainder in the Calapooia, Umpqua, and Siskiyou or Cascade mountains.

Of the road in the valleys, it is only necessary to state that the grass is every where plenty, and water at convenient distances—the road crosses a few hills in the different valleys, and some rocky country in the valley of the Sacramento; with these exceptions, it is over firm, level plains—the streams are crossed at good rocky fords, and at the proper season are, from their size, of little impediment. The mountains require a more particular description.

The ridge dividing the waters of the Willamette and Umpqua rivers, is called the Calapooia mountains: it is narrow and of no great height, and may be crossed in many places; the wagon road crosses it by a ridge way about 10 miles in length from prairie to prairie, and is not complained of by the immigrants; but chasms similar to the pass of the Umpqua mountain, may be found through the Calapooia, by which a railroad will meet with but slight ascents or descents.

The Umpqua mountain divides the waters of Rogue river and Umpqua, and is much more formidable than the Calapooia, being a

much higher, rockier ridge, and over it, it is impracticable to make a wagon road.

The road passes through a chasm which cuts the mountain from side to side to its very base. As this pass has been a place of much disaster to some of the immigrants, and is of itself a natural curiosity, it requires a minute description. A pool of water about 15 feet in diameter, occupies the dividing ground between the waters of the Rogue river and Umpqua; there is from east to west about 30 yards of level land between the mountains which rises abruptly to the height of about 1500 feet—the descent each way from this point is very gentle—that to the south is about three miles—conducts by a good way to the open country: that to the north is about 12 miles in length—for three or four miles there is sufficient space of level ground, and but little work required to make a good road; but below this, the stream increasing in size by the entrance of affluents, and the mountains closing in upon it, the road must descend in its rocky bed, made more difficult by some large stones and short falls, or be graded along the side of the mountain, which being loose soil, or decomposed basalt, can be done with the greatest facility these last two or three miles, when the hills recede and leave, by frequently crossing the creek, a bottom wide enough for a road the remainder of the distance. The party employed in opening the road, being in want of the necessary tools, and scarce of provisions, were unable to make this road properly, and attempted only to make it passable with as little labor as possible. On the level ground it is made crooked in going round logs and trees, and the banks at the crossings of the creek are left too steep, and at that part of the pass properly called the kanyon, the road is taken along the side of the hill, about a mile, when it descends into the creek by a hill so steep as to require the greatest care to prevent wagons from upsetting. The difficulties of the road were much increased by the rains commencing about the time the first wagons were crossing the mountain. The failure of some of the weaker teams so discouraged others, that several wagons were left on the south side of the mountain, their owners thinking it impossible to take them through the pass. But nearly a month after the commencement of the rains, and at a time when they were falling, one of the largest wagons on the road, with 800 or 1000 lbs. in it was drawn through the pass, and could easily have reached the prairie on this side on the second day, had not the heavy rains which fell during its passage so swollen the little creek that runs down from the pass, as to endanger the wetting the goods at one of the last crossings. As it was, the wagon was brought over all the bad road, and within a mile and a half of the prairie where Mr. P. arrived with his team before night. From which it is evident that with a little additional labor, heavily laden wagons may pass either way through this formidable mountain in dry weather in a day: and through it a railroad may be constructed as cheap, and with as little labor as the same distance over a level plain.

By a gradual ascent of several miles through open country, the road reaches the summit of a high plain, or rather broad mountain, the western run here being a ridge rising considerably above the general level. This plain is timbered with a variety of pine, (by far the finest tree I have seen of that family,) with occasional small prairies, well stocked with grass and water; the road runs upon this plain about 27 miles and descends to the Clamet, at a prairie about 5 miles below the lake. The road is generally good, there being but two short steep to ascend, and two to descend to the little streams which afford the camps.

This mountain usually called the Siskiyou, but it is in my opinion the Cascade range, as this broad plain runs directly south to the foot of a mighty pile glittering in eternal snow, and surmounted by a peak by far the highest in the range called Mount Shaste. Though the Clamet river cuts its way through this plain, it makes no opening, and is generally in kanyons of great depth.

The Sierra Nevada is a continuation of the Blue mountains, and here is a high, narrow ridge, capped with snow. The road runs through a good, open pass, and the only hill to cross is on the east side of the range; fine grass runs up to the top of the mountain, and fine springs break out on both sides, which, though the ascent of the hill is long