

OREGON SPECTATOR.

"Westward the Star of Empire takes its way."

Vol. 3.

Oregon City, (Oregon Territory,) April 20, 1848.

No. 6.

Letters, and Speeches

Referred to, in the Report of the Superintendent of Indian Affairs and Commissioners, published in our last.

These speeches were made in reply to a letter sent to them from the Governor, and to speeches made by the Commissioners and Superintendent.

Camash-pellon, is the old war Cayuse Chief.

Joseph is an old man, and in the absence of Ellis (who with many of his warriors is in the buffalo country) is the principal Chief of the Nez Percés.

The balance of the speeches are from chiefs and principal men of the Nez Percés tribe of Indians.

TO THE GREAT CHIEFS OF THE NEZ PERCÉS, AND OTHER TRIBES.

BROTHERS:—I speak to you now on a subject of great importance to you, and one of great importance to Americans, and I ask you to listen to what I have to say. Many years ago, a few Americans came to your country; you received them gladly, and told them, you wished them to stay with you, and instruct you; they did so at your request; among these was Dr. Whitman and his Lady—many Americans have since that time passed through your country to join their brethren in the Willamette; at first they were permitted to pass without being molested, after a while some of your neighbors, without your knowledge, would steal from the Americans as they passed along—soon they began to steal large things; and last summer much was stolen very much; we did not want to be enemies to you, and our warriors were not sent up. If you will enquire into these things, you will find that they are as I tell you; we have borne a great deal, we believed that your chiefs did not know how much was stolen from the Americans, but we think your power ought to be exerted to prevent stealing all together. But all this was nothing compared with what has since been done.—On the 27th of last November, the Cayuse Indians bathed their hands in the blood of their best friend, and in the blood of many of our brothers. Dr. Whitman had at your request remained among you; he has ever since been trying to do you good by learning you many useful things, and also all we know that he was teaching you to understand the Bible, the great book that our Creator has given to us, by which we may understand the way in which he wishes all his creatures to live, that we may be happy in this world, and be happy after death. Dr. Whitman labored with you a long time; what he told you was true, and had you listened to him, and all your neighbors listened to him, Dr. Whitman and our brothers would not have been killed, because one of the great commandments of our great Creator is "Thou shalt not kill;" another one is, "Thou shalt not steal." I hear that you say Dr. Whitman was poisoning us; you know better, sickness is sent by our Creator, it is in the world, and he has said that all men must die, we cannot escape; did you not see the Americans die with the same disease? have not a great many of our people been buried this year? But if it was believed by your neighbors that Dr. Whitman poisoned them, why kill all the Americans? But I tell you Dr. Whitman did not poison any one, he was giving medicine and advice to try to save you from dying; how many times has he healed your sick, that would have died, had he not given them medicine? He was your best friend, your great friend; he was always speaking of you and trying to do you good; but he is dead, his wife is dead, our brethren are dead. How did they die? how did he die? The men that asked him to stay among them, that had partaken of his hospitality, that have been the subjects of his kindness, stole upon him and murdered him! Our hearts bleed when we hear it. We cannot pass this by. We hope you sympathize with us, that your hearts say we will not protect such men.

BROTHERS, our warriors are on the war path, what shall be done, that we may all again be friends, and not enemies? I will tell you what we want, listen to me; we want the men that murdered our Brother Doctor Whitman, and his wife, and the rest of our brothers,—Tiloquoit, Tamgubie, and all that were engaged, and those that forced our young women to become their wives; we want all these to be given up to us, that they may be punished according to our law—and further,

that restitution of the property stolen and destroyed be made, either by returning the property or giving an equivalent. If this be done, our hatchet will be buried, and the Indians and Americans will be friends and brothers.

Every tribe that unites with the murderers and protects them, we must look on as our enemies; on the other hand every tribe that does not unite with and protect them we shall look upon as our friends, and protect them if necessary.—My brothers, consider this well. The Americans are a great people; a few very few, have come to this country.—Our great Chief has always been told that the Indians in this country were all friendly; he has not sent any of his war chiefs here. We have now sent word to him, that our people have been killed, his war chiefs will come, and should you prefer war to peace, let me tell you, and listen to what I say, they will punish you until you shall be fully satisfied with war, and be glad to make peace. Consider this well, if your young men speak for war.—My advice to you as a friend is, that you deliver up the murderers, or let the Americans go and take them, without your interfering with them—in this case do not let the murderers shelter among you, lest your people should get killed through mistake, for which I would be very sorry.

I have sent this news to California, and very soon one or more ships of war will be here, but if you are determined to be friendly with the Americans, this need not alarm you; Americans never injure their friends. We know our great chief wishes the Americans and Indians to be as brothers, we wish to be so, will you let us be as brothers, or will you throw us away. I could talk a great deal, but I will say no more at this time.

The three chiefs that I have sent up to meet you and talk to you, will tell you what is wanted, whatever they say to you, you can believe.

In testimony that this is my writing, I sign my name, this second day of February, 1848.

GEO. ABERNETHY,
Governor of Oregon Territory.

FORT NEZ PERCÉS, 4th March, 1848.
To the Commissioners, Messrs. Palmer and Newell.

GENTLEMEN:—I have to acknowledge your esteemed favor of this date, which was handed me this evening. I am happy to learn that your success to effect peace, has so far rewarded your endeavors and that the Nez Percés are on your side. Previous to their visiting you, the most influential Chiefs came to me to know your real intention, which I fully explained, and addressed them at length. They left me well disposed, and I am glad to learn they have acted up to their promise.

I now forward letters to Fort Hall and Fort Boise, and have to request in behalf of the Company, that you be kind enough to get them forwarded by Mr. Meek; they are of importance—on their being delivered, depends loss or gain to the Company, and by so doing you will confer a favor on Gentlemen.

Your Most Obedt. Servant,
WILLIAM McBEAN.

P. S. Please present my best respects to General Gilliam and Major Lee.

Speech of Camash-pellon.

"My people seem to have two hearts.—I have but one. My heart is as the Nez Percés. I have had nothing to do with the murders. Tam Suckie came to me to get my consent to the murder, before it was committed. I refused. I pointed to my sick child, and told him my heart was there, and not on murder. He went back and told his friends he had obtained my consent.—It was false. I did not give my consent to the murder, neither will I protect or defend the murderers."

Speech of Joseph.

"Now I show my heart. When I left my home I showed my heart. I took the book (a testament) in my hand and brought it with me—it is my light. I heard the Americans were coming to kill me—still I held my book before me and came on. I am here. I have heard the words of your chief. I speak for all the Cayuses present, and all my people. I do not wish my children engaged in this war, although my brother is wounded.—You speak of the murderers. I shall not meddle with them. I bow my head.—This much I speak."

Speech of Jacob.

"It is the law of this country, that the murderer shall die. This law I keep in

my heart, because I believe it is the law of God—the first law. I started to see the Americans, and when on the way I heard the Americans were coming to kill all the Indians—still I came. I have heard your speech, and am thankful.—When I left home I believed the Americans were coming for the murderers, only I thank the Governor for his good talk."

Speech of James.

"I have heard your words and my heart is glad. When I first heard of this murder, our white brother Spaulding was down here. I heard the Cayuses had killed him also, and my heart was very sad. A few days after, when he returned I met him as one arose from the dead. We spoke together. He said he would go to Willamette. I told him to tell the chiefs there, my heart. We have been listening for some word from them. All these chiefs are of one heart."

Speech of Red Wolf.

"You speak of Doctor Whitman's body. When I heard of the Doctor's death, I came and called for the murderers. I wished to know if it was the work of the chiefs. I went to Tawhatoo's and found it was not of all, but of the young men.—I did not sleep. I went to Mr. Spaulding and told him the chiefs were engaged in it. Mr. Spaulding said, I go to Willamette, and will say the Nez Percés have saved my life, and I will go to Willamette and save yours. We have all been listening to hear from the white chiefs."

Speech of Timothy.

(This man repeated each sentence as spoken by the Indians; hence, probably, the language: "I am as one in the air.") "You hear these Chiefs—they speak for all. I am as one in the air. I do not meddle with these things—the chiefs speak—we are all of their mind."

Speech of Richard.

"I feel thankful for the kind words of your chief. My people will take no part in this matter. Our hearts cling to that which is good. We do not love blood.—This is the way our old chief (Cut Nose) talked. His last words were: 'My children, I leave you—love that which is good—be always on the side of right, and you will prosper.' His children remember his words. He told us, 'take no bad advice.' Why should I take bad words from your enemies, and throw your good words away? Your chief's words are good. I thank him for them. My chief in the Buffalo Country will be glad to hear I talked thus to you. They would be sorry should I talk otherwise. This much I tell you of the hearts of my people."

Speech of Kentuck.

"The chiefs have all spoken; I have listened, and now I wish to speak a little. I have been much with the Americans and French—they know my heart. Can any one tell anything bad of me? In war with the Blackfeet, I and my father fought with the Americans, and my father was killed there—he (pointing to Mr. Newell) knows it. Since then I have loved the whites. Last year I was in California, at Captain Sutter's, and helped Captain Fremont—not for pay, but from a good heart. I came home and heard the Doctor was killed. We heard that the whites were not such hearts. I and my people are from the farthest part of our country. We had heard there, that you were coming to kill off the last Indian west of the mountains. We have never shed the blood of the Americans. We are glad to hear that you want none but the murderers."

The late change in the Public Cemetery.

MR. EDITOR:—Called upon this morning to bury a young man brought in from the country for interment, I was surprised to find, that a change had been made in the location of the Cemetery. During the past winter, it became necessary to have a place for interment, and some persons, citizens of the place, and well qualified to judge, after obtaining permission of the owner, made a selection. It is on a very eligible spot of ground, about 20 minutes walk from the top of the bluff; and when the child of Mr. Whitcomb was buried last winter, entirely dry, 15 inches below the surface. It is very desirable to have burying grounds, a little out from the densely populated parts of cities, and yet sufficiently near, to be easily accessible. It did seem, that this piece of ground was judiciously selected, and eight persons were buried there.

It now seems another place has been chosen, more than twice as far from the city, and the former spot abandoned.—The question is, how has this change been brought about? and it has become a public question in which the community at large has an interest.

When a public cemetery is chosen, and a number of persons buried in it, it be-

comes a very serious, and somewhat difficult matter to change the location. It may be doubted whether any thing short of a public meeting, or public notice in some way and the consent obtained of those who have buried their friends there, would justify any such change. Have any proper measures been taken to secure the rights of the bereaved in this instance? When citizens of this place, last winter, induced by the exigencies of the case, called on the proprietor, of the first selected spot of ground, permission was granted to make a selection where they might judge best, and in good faith a spot was chosen, set apart, and actually employed, for public purposes.

From that time, I conceive it became public property, and the public will desire to know if there is a refusal to ratify the bargain.

What is to be done with the eight or more dead bodies already buried in it? and when, probably, will the location be changed again? As we were walking to the grave, I conversed with Mr. Holmes on the subject, who said he had no hand in bringing about this business, and no interest in it at all, except to give the ten acres of land when applied to, for the purpose. Doubtless all these questions, (and I hope none of them are out of place,) can be answered to the entire satisfaction of the public, by some one, acquainted with the business.

My object is to call attention to the selection and permanent occupancy of some appropriate spot to be used as a Public Cemetery; where we may bury our dead, with a fair prospect that private interest will never dig them up, nor sectarian anathemas disturb their repose.

Yours, Respectfully,
WILLIAM ROBERTS.

Oregon City, March 25th, 1848.

For the Oregon Spectator.

MR. EDITOR:—In what a strange and unnatural position is this community placed? Several thousand miles from the Capital and without the parental care of the Government to which we owe allegiance, surrounded by numerous bands of savages, whose jealousies increase with our numbers, and whose treacheries are proverbial in history, requiring the sagacity of the ablest statesmen to counteract their influence. With a provisional Government of our own construction, the imbecility of which is known to the surrounding tribes of Indians! Without pecuniary aid from any other source than that of private contribution, from citizens whose scanty means have been exhausted from losses and expenses incident to the long & tedious journey hither, and the opening of new farms in this region! With nothing but hope (that useful friend) to cheer us, we have been engaged in our own defence, and at our individual expense to wage war on several of the surrounding tribes of Indians! What wonder then is it, that our little patriotic army should be driven back and compelled to return from the field of battle, and the prosecution of an offensive war upon the enemy, on account of the absence of ammunition, and a sufficient number of men to carry out successfully the expedition—and that after living on beef and horse meat alone, for weeks at a time! No wonder, Mr. Editor, that a sullen discontent is seen and expressed by this community, on account of the negligence of our Government, in giving us that protection which our critical position requires, and which must give or detract from the character of those who conduct our Republican institutions. "I am a Roman Citizen!" gives no passport, and has no meaning in Oregon. We are attached to our Republican form of Government and all of its liberal institutions, but must always deprecate that narrow minded policy which would leave its citizens for years a prey to the attacks of savages, without its protecting care.

We are not intruders here. We came here under the patronizing care of our Government, and the strong solicitations of our ablest statesmen, to affect a National object; and as an earnest of that desire, troops were sent a short distance on the road to protect us, and Congress has been apparently for several years engaged in the passage of a law to make grants of land to those who would immigrate hither. And the President to leave no doubts upon the subject and to express his anxiety more fully, has not only recommended the immediate protecting care of our Government, but has said, that to

question that liberal grants of land would ultimately be made to the hardy pioneers of Oregon, would be to question the integrity of our National Representatives.—Under these circumstances, and with the belief that speedy protection would soon follow, the settlements in this valley commenced. No one of us dreamed of being unprotected at this period. Nor did any one at that time, question the willingness or ability of our Government to render such protection; nor could any one reasonably suppose, that dispersed as we are over the country, upon lands the possessory right of which belongs to the savages amongst whom we live, (thereby making us tenants at will to them,) that we could long remain without the collision which has unfortunately taken place. Under these circumstances who can censure us for entering our complaints loud enough, at least, to be heard by those who hold the sovereignty of our republican institutions. While the joint occupation treaty existed, it was a *quibus* to all complaints on our part; but what shall we say now in our gloomy condition, since that obstacle has long since been removed, and the prospect for assistance is apparently no nearer at hand than before? I shall say, and I know that I speak the sentiments of every rational thinking man in this community, and believe it to be that of the President and his Cabinet,—that we have been shamefully neglected by those whose parental duty it was to provide for, and render us their protection. Events may occur in less than twelve months, if they have not already occurred, which will carry a thrilling conviction of these facts, to the bosom of all those opposed to the immediate extension of the wing of the Eagle over us.

(More on this subject.) M.

GEN. A. L. LOVEJOY.

SIR:—The following was written for the express, but in the hurry and bustle of business was omitted to be forwarded.—To call the men (150) who fought in the Tucannon and Tachie rivers brave were but common praise. Officers and private fought with unequalled bravery, and skill.

Captains Hall, Owens, and Thompson, behaved with all that deliberate judgment and determined bravery, that was requisite to so hard fought, and long contested a battle.

The incomparable services of Sergeant Major Birch, Quartermaster Goodhue, Judge Advocate Rhineson, Quartermaster Sergeant Cook, and Paymaster Magone, cannot be passed unnoticed, and deserve their country's praises.

Captains English and McKay were not in the engagement. The latter being sick, the former returning from the Tachie with the wagons and stock.

H. J. G. MAXON.

Commander at Fort Wascopan.

A. L. LOVEJOY, Adj't Gen'l.

For the Oregon Spectator.

LINN CO. OREGON April 9, 1848.

MR. EDITOR:—

SIR:—Pursuant to a very hasty notice, on receiving the Governor's Proclamation, a meeting of the citizens in the vicinity of the Methodist Church, on the Santiam, was convened for the purpose of considering our situation in relation to the Indians, and ascertaining what could be done to raise men and means for the support of the troops now in the field.

The meeting was organized by calling Capt. H. J. Peterson to the chair, and electing Mr. H. Jobe, Secretary.

On motion a committee of three were appointed to draft a preamble and resolutions; Mr. Claypole, G. Cornelius, and W. C. Gallaher composed the committee, and having retired for a short time reported the following preamble and resolutions.

Whereas our situation in relation to the Indians is a critical one, and requires that all our energies should be put in requisition in order to secure our own safety.

Therefore, Resolved, 1st That we consider it necessary that every thing should be done to furnish men and means, for the support of our troops in the Cayuse nation of Indians, that can be done consistent with our home safety.

Resolved, 2d, That those men who have risked their lives and property for the good of the country, deserve the lasting gratitude of this community.

Resolved, 3d, That all present or necessary measures shall be taken to protect the claims of those who are, or may

be in the service of their country.

On motion,
Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to inform the Messrs. Taylors of the proceedings of this meeting, and request them to leave the claims of Wm. Hawk, and Wm. M. Smith.

This committee was then appointed, and ordered to report their proceedings to Capt. Peterson's Company of Rangers, on Saturday the 16th inst.

On motion,
Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be signed by the President and Secretary, and sent to the Oregon Spectator for publication.

The meeting then adjourned.
H. J. PATTERSON, Chairman.
H. JOBE, Secretary.

A call was made for volunteers and property, (or money) for the aid of the troops in the field. Six young men turned out and declared themselves ready if they could obtain the necessary equipments.

A call was then made for money and property, and a considerable amount was promised.

The volunteers agreed to rendezvous at the Church, on Saturday the 16th inst. to start for Portland, and notice was given that the money and property promised, would be expected on the ground on that day.

Yours in haste,
W. C. GALLAHER.

For the Oregon Spectator.

MR. EDITOR:—Your late extra containing the Governor's Proclamation, and letters from the seat of war, has placed before the people of Oregon, some very exciting information. That his Excellency has taken the proper course in calling upon the patriotism of the country in this great emergency, I think there can be no question. The American blood and spirit are not yet extinct. There are still patriots and brave hearts in Oregon. Our generous and brave Colonel has fallen. Peace to his ashes, and honored be his memory. The grave that contains his remains will long be remembered.

The question recurs, what must be done? Must we yield up all we have accomplished? The answer is emphatic. The crisis must be met. Danger must be met and overcome. There are yet means enough, and spirit enough in Oregon to prosecute the war to a glorious consummation.

There are but two plans to be taken. The first to retain only men enough in the field, to garrison the posts; and the second to prosecute the war offensively, until we conquer an honorable peace. Had the first plan been pursued by the government, it would have unquestionably resulted in a total abandonment of all our conquests; thus encouraging our enemies, and bringing them in scattered, but teaching hardy into our settlements, to murder our families, burn our habitations, desolate our fields, and lay waste our country. I confess Mr. Editor, that there is no my feelings, something abhorrent in the idea of retreating before any foe, more especially a band of Indians. It is incompatible with the greatness of the American name, ruinous to the patriotism of the country, and exceedingly unwise and impolitic. We are in an Indian war, and we must sustain ourselves; and energy and courage are the surest and safest means with which to conquer an enemy, and secure a lasting and permanent peace.

The causes of this war lie deeper, and have a more permanent and enduring foundation than many persons imagine. These causes are more or less common to all the tribes; but more immediately exciting to some than to others. It requires nothing but a little fickleness and cowardice on our part to unite most of the tribes against us. Their relative relation to each other, and their aggregate relation to us, naturally tend to this result. They have been at peace among themselves for years. They are strongly connected by the ties of blood and marriage and a uniformity of color, habits, manners, and customs; and these things go a great way with savages, the world over. They are all well informed of the past history and unmitigated contentions between the Indian and white races—they know that we have increased and they have decreased, and they watch with jealous and increasing suspicion the rapid and unparalleled increase of our numbers, and the extension of our settlements. These things are new to these Indians, so far as personal observation is concerned. They have never been accustomed to such scenes. They have beheld, to them, the novel and unprecedented spectacle, of an increase of white population in the short period of four years, almost equal to the Indian population of the whole Territory.

They have seen us take possession of the Willamette Valley without the shedding of a drop of blood, and they have seen us take possession of the Oregon Territory without the shedding of a drop of blood. They have seen us take possession of the Oregon Territory without the shedding of a drop of blood. They have seen us take possession of the Oregon Territory without the shedding of a drop of blood.

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