

THE SPECTATOR.

OREGON CITY.

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1851.

W. J. SCHEIDT, EDITOR.

For Delegate to Congress,
GENERAL JOSEPH LANE.

By the Steamer Sea Gull we received California papers up to the 14th of May, for which we are indebted to Gregory's Express.

The officers of the Lat. Whitney will accept our thanks for California papers.

The Willamette whist on her way down to Astoria on Saturday last, run hard around, where she was compelled to remain for several days.

We expected to be able to give the latest news from the States in this week's paper; but the mail has failed to reach here at the expected time. We are enabled to give the news, however, from California up to the 14th inst.

The U. S. Troops crossed the river at Portland on Sunday, the 25th inst., on their way to California, whether they have been ordered, some two months since.—Mr. Daniel O'Neil has charge of the train.

Dr. E. H. Giffin has reappeared to attend to those who may wish his services in dental surgery. His room is at the Main Street House. The necessity of attending to the "tooth with a season," needs no urging with persons of experience.

It will be seen by an advertisement in today's paper, that Dr. Cohen, late of San Francisco, has located permanently in Oregon City, and taken up quarters at the Main Street House, for the purpose of practicing Dentistry in the full sense of the term. It seems to be an established fact that good dentists, as a general thing, have sound teeth. We leave it to the reader to imagine why it is so. *Nieuw Amsterdam.*

The captain of the Black Hawk and the proprietors of the Columbian, chalked their hat—the captain chalked it going down and returning, the Columbian proprietors for our entertainment whilst there. We attributed it to our good looks. Ahem! Discriminating men, truly.

About the 8th inst. a large fire occurred at Nevada City. It was the work of an incendiary. The fire originated in a ball alley. The greatest excitement prevailed. The citizens were determined to execute certain and sudden vengeance upon those concerned, if discovered. The total loss is estimated at one million of dollars.

The Oregon Institute.—The summer term of this institute (F. S. Hoy, principal) commences in June next, as will be seen by reference to our advertising columns.

The "Hoosier," in her trip up the river, broke her shaft when within a few miles of Salem. She had stoned the current thus far successfully; the rapids there requiring an increase of power, which, when applied proved too much for its size, was twisted into. The shaft was taken out and welded and replaced in the boat. She did not reach Salem until Saturday last. She advertised to have left for Oregon City on Monday last.

The weather, we have been informed, during this month, has been unusually wet and cold. With the exception of the cold the spring has been exceedingly favorable to all kinds of vegetation; the gardens look well, and peas, fit for table use, have made their appearance. We learn from persons residing in the country that the wheat everywhere promises to yield abundantly.

The temporizing course of the Statesman is not a little amusing, for the past two or three weeks. The editor wishing to be the organ of the Democracy, has been as neutral as any person could well be. We like to hear and see people boast of their independence. Our neighbor is playing such a bold game at it that it is difficult to tell where he stands. How different! The Western Star comes out unmanfully and battles in the old fashioned way, whilst our neighbor is lying low to hoodwink the people of Marion, Linn and Polk counties. Such a milk-and-water course is highly befitting the times; if it wins we are no part of a philosopher, that's all.

Gen. Tom Thumb has signed the Temperance Pledge at the instance of Father Mathew. Well done for his size.

THE COLUMBIAN.—We quitted the Columbian Hotel, Portland, during our stay a few days since. Things are done up brown there. For once, since we have been in the Territory, were we forcibly reminded of the mode of hotel keeping such as is to be met with in Baltimore, New York and St. Louis. The table was laid with the best the country can afford, and as much attention given to their table as could be desired by any person. There is an air of neatness and comfort as well as system about the whole establishment, that is highly praiseworthy. It may truly be said that there is one place in Oregon where the comforts of civilized life may be enjoyed. This house deserves an extensive patronage, and we were pleased to see it so fully appreciated by the public. The house is large, and the accommodating landlord, Mr. McKnight, can now comfortably accommodate a great many persons. It is a luxury to sleep a night on one of the beds.

Through the politeness of Captain Charles Clark, of the Black Hawk, we were enabled to visit our brothers of the press on Saturday last. Our bro. of the Oregonian having "cannoned the ranch," we had to content ourself with talking over the affairs of the nation with Bro. Waterman. The Black Hawk will certainly be of great convenience to the people of this city and Portland, as also to all the intermediate points. It is the intention of the proprietors to run her regularly, if the business will justify it. The commencement warrants the belief that "it will pay." The Black Hawk is easily managed in the most difficult places and can be run ashore almost any place where it may be necessary to do so to accommodate persons, and that with but little hindrance. She has a great deal of power—she can stem the rapids in their present condition with all safety, though the headway is not so great, yet she accomplishes it by keeping up a steady jog. A trip to Portland and back, can be made in a day with ease.—We witnessed something of a test of this boat's power on our way down, she taking in tow a large schooner laden with lumber, at Milwaukie, which was taken to Portland against a head wind and rough water. Capt. Clark is just the man for the business, and a clever fellow to boot.

A matter of some interest is now undergoing investigation that must necessarily elicit some facts that the public may wish to know. We do not know that there is a law limiting the amount of mail matter that a person may receive, when legally franked, whether done by one's self or others. This is a matter of some interest, too, to the government, inasmuch as it costs 30 cents a pound to convey the mail across the Isthmus. The two mails before the last brought 24 three bushel sacks of books marked and franked "public documents," to one person. Now we shall not stop to inquire what any one man could want with so many public documents; but we shall notice the disregard of the post office laws in franking books weighing over 3 pounds. The law expressly forbids the sending of bound books of any kind. There are now in the Linn City post office 72 bushels of books, many of which are neatly bound, and some, too, with gilt edges. These 72 bushels do not include a large number that had been previously sent through the mail. Some of the books marked "pub. doc.," weigh as many as eleven pounds. The reader's attention is referred to the law regulating post office matters, quoted by the Post Master of Linn City in another column.

It is computed that five thousand persons have perished, the past season, on the overland route to California.—*Chicago Democrat.*

We don't believe it. One half of that number, would tell the whole story. And if the number of persons who died by starvation, was left out, the probable number of deaths (say there were 60,000 persons on the plains last year) would not exceed that of St. Louis for the like period of time. The amount of sickness and number of deaths look large from the fact that all that occur are constantly in view to all passers by, whilst the deaths that occur in a large city are subjected to a more limited notice.

The first daily paper printed in North Carolina, was printed during the sitting of the last Legislature, at the office of the Raleigh Register.

The Hon. Abbott Lawrence, American Minister in England, has printed at his own expense, an elegant pamphlet edition of Mr. Webster's letter to the Austrian Minister, with which he is showering Europe.

The steambot Hoosier started on her second trip up the river on Wednesday. She is to run regularly hereafter.

Terrible Conflagration! STOCKTON DESTROYED BY FIRE!

Yesterday morning, 6 O'clock. We are indebted to Capt. Whitney of the steamer C. M. Weber, for a Journal extra, giving an account of a most destructive fire at Stockton on Wednesday night. The lateness of the hour prevents us from furnishing the full particulars.—The following extract gives an idea of the extent of this sad calamity.—*Alta Cal.*

The fire originated in a new and beautiful house just opened under the name of the Merchants' Hotel, formerly known as the Branch, and beyond a doubt was the work of an incendiary. It is supposed that some miscreant intended by this diabolical means, to succeed in releasing the prisoners now confined in the county goal; but the purpose failed in its accomplishment, as the winds proved unpropitious, and turned the course of the devastating element upon more precious and costly fuel to satisfy its long slumbering rage. From the point at which it originated the fire swept up Levee street, prostrating Montgomery's stately auction establishment, the large and magnificent 1st Power building, the El Dorado, Hotel de la Union House, and all the buildings on those two central squares. From them it spread across to the Central House, and in three quarters of an hour from the first alarm, our large three story building was enveloped in flames. By the most strenuous exertions, we succeeded in saving our press and printing material, though in a very damaged condition. The occupants of the Stockton Club Room succeeded in saving their buildings, though they were in imminent danger.

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Annexed we publish the estimated losses by the great fire of Tuesday night in Stockton. The estimates are from an extra Journal, for which we are indebted to Capt. Whitney. *Alta Cal.*

W. H. Robinson 30,000, Denis & Allen 20,000, McPherson 20,000, Adams 3,000, J. M. Stedfield 3,000, Laven 10,000, St. Charles 30,000, Dickinson 10,000, Exchange 25,000, Davis and Smith 30,000, Biven & Baranco 10,000, Way Brothers 15,000, Weber & Hammond 30,000, Clements & Reins 15,000, Merchants' Hotel 12,000, O'Neil & Waley 25,000, J. S. Owen 50,000, Montgomery & Co. 25,000, Capt. Warner 8,000, Todd & Co. 5,000, J. Zaenrich 30,000, Wormser 6,000, Morrison, painter, 6,000, Republican office 3,000, Lichenstein & Co. 6,000, A. Franklin 2,000, Central Exchange 10,000, John Chonaman 5,000, Bissel & Hancock 25,000, M. J. Barnard 12,000, Dent, Vanine & Co. 6,000, Siaschmer & Co. 8,000, Washburne 3,000, Smedlander & Co. 3,000, Green & Holden 4,000, Charadeh & Co. 1,000, H. Hartman 17,000, Kadisch & Co. 10,000, Jones 8,000, Hugg & Co. 10,000, Pinto, Jordan & Co. 10,000, H. J. Allen 15,000, Mrs. Rhodes 6,000, Baker & Hickman 50,000, C. J. Brown 30,000, McSpedden 8,000, Jernegan & Atwood 7,500, J. S. Robb 15,000, Amsa & Co. 30,000, Reed, Taylor & Co. 15,000, Griswold & Co. 15,000, Amys 3,000, Webster & Co. 10,000, H. Green & Co. 10,000, Underhill & Co. 20,000, Kirchhoff, De S. la & Co. 8,000, Hatch, Flower & Co. 9,000, Babury & Eastman 6,000, Heath & Emory 30,000, J. M. Smith 7,000, Jos. Kendall 3,000, Mrs. Mitchell 500, Charter Oak 1,500, Baldwin & Gardner 12,000, S. Green 12,000, Dr. Lassignies, 1,000, Pourselle & Daval 35,000, C. Capen & Co. 12,000, Calvin Paige & Co. 30,000, Paige & Webster, 30,000, Hagar & Hatch 3,000, Owen & Co. 3,000, C. A. Gillingham & Co. 60,000, A. D. Wallace 2,500, Mr. Master 3,000, J. C. Edwards 1,000, J. D. Taber 4,000, Lathan & Co. 15,000, J. A. Walker & Co. 15,000, E. S. Holden, Druggist, 7,000, Trembly & Fairbanks 2,000, G. W. Trembly 1,000, Lippincott & Co. 2,000, Dudley & Sanderson 2,000, Jackson McKenty 2,000, Lincoln & Co. 2,000, Meckley & Calder 2,000, Waldon & Co. 4,000, Landin & Compton 6,000, Middleton & Co. 3,000, Gorham 2,000, H. C. Parker 9,000, John A. Ferris 2,000.

For the Spectator.
HILLSBOROUGH, May 25, 1851.
ED. SPECTATOR:

Dear Sir—Will you be so good as to inform the public why the Spectator never reaches here till more than one week after the paper purports to be struck off? Your paper purports to be printed on Thursday, and the Statesman the Friday following; the Statesman comes in the Saturday mail, while the Spectator not till the next Saturday after.

We are not able to account for this reticence. We put the papers into the post office here regularly, and why they do not travel as fast as those of our neighbor, is a mystery to us. It might be attributable to the fact that falsehood is more swift-footed than truth. That there is neglect somewhere we verily believe; if we make the discovery of its whereabouts we shall speak out—we care not at whose door it may be chargeable. It not only does us injustice, but it wrongs our subscribers. The fault lies somewhere and no mistake.—Ed.

A house in St. Louis, belonging to a man of bad character named Moore, who is now in California, was lately searched by the police. Two hundred thousand dollars worth of counterfeit money was found secreted.

To the Public.

Understanding that some unscrupulous person has been circulating reports that I, as Postmaster at Linn City, have been in the habit of, without authority, detaining and breaking the seals and opening mail matter legally franked to my office. I feel it to be a duty to my family, to my friends, and to myself, to give the facts in the case together with some of the law on the subject, that the public can judge whether I have acted by authority or not. By the "Laws and regulations for the government of the Post Office Department," Postmasters are required to use all diligence to prevent frauds being perpetrated upon the Department. From this volume I extract the following, found on page 8 of instructions to Postmasters:

The diminution of the revenue of the Department under the cheap postage system—and the great and increasing demand for additional mail facilities throughout our country, whose territory now extends to the Pacific, renders it absolutely necessary, not only that every cent of lawful revenue be collected and accounted for, but that the utmost vigilance should be exercised for the prevention of fraud, and the sure and speedy infliction of the proper penalty upon the offender. This can only be accomplished by the strictest attention of Postmasters who are the sworn agents of the Department, and are bound to see the law faithfully administered."

As to what matter is available, I will quote from the same, page 13, chapter 8, section 10:

"Packets of every description, weighing more than three pounds, are to be examined, except public documents printed by order of either House of Congress, or such publications of books as may be published, procured, or purchased by order of either House of Congress or a joint resolution of the two Houses, legally franked."

And again from section 11: "Bound books of any size are not included in the term 'public documents,' and such public documents are to be examined."

Delegates from Territories are by law permitted to frank only such letters as do not exceed two ounces in weight, and public documents not exceeding 3 pounds; from 20 days previous to the meeting of Congress, until the next Congress.

There is at present in the office some 1300 pounds of franked matter, which, as near as I can judge is not legally franked. There is also ready as much more that I think is legally franked, which they have been at all times at liberty to remove, but have refused so to do unless they could have the whole. They have at all times been at liberty to remove the wrappers in my presence, and if they were legally franked to have taken them. On a previous occasion I objected to some books marked "Pub. Doc.," leaving the office, as I had good reason to believe that it was a fraud attempted on the Department. They were therefore opened in my presence and found to be as I anticipated. The books were taken however, upon the express understanding that all should be made right, according to such instructions as I should receive touching the case from the Postmaster General. On another occasion, during my absence, some 17 bound books were taken from the office, which books were not "available matter," and were not capable of being legally franked by any officer of the Government. I went afterwards and weighed them and left them in possession of those to whom they were sent, upon the condition that if the Department required payment, it should immediately be forthcoming. I mention these instances particularly, not for the purpose of injuring the character, or feelings of any one; but because the indiscretion, laxity, and unjustifiable conduct of some interested, compel me in self defence, now for the first time, to make these facts public, and also that any man can judge for himself, whether I have had reasons sufficient to cause me to suspect that a violation of the Post office laws was attempted. At no time, under any circumstances, has anything sealed of any kind or description ever been opened in the office, by my knowledge or direction, belonging to others. I on one occasion took some wrappers from some books that were marked "Pub. Doc.," but found them not to be as marked; they were not sealed, but merely wrapped in paper and tied with twine.

With regard to the original discovery of any infringement of the Post office laws, it may be well to state that some time in February last, the Deputy Postmaster in the office, accidentally discovered books franked, other than public documents, and called my attention to it.

The above is a brief and correct statement of the facts. I have only done my duty in this matter to the best of my understanding. If I have violated any law regulating the subject, it has arisen from a misconception of its meaning, which I took great pains to avoid by obtaining all such counsel as I was permitted to seek.

JAMES M. MOORE, P. M.
Linn City, May 27, 1851.

INTERESTING EXPERIMENT.—An amusing and also interesting experiment may be performed as follows:—Take four glass tumblers, invert them upon the floor; lay a board on them, let a person stand on the board, and another, standing on the floor, beat him over the back, a short time, with a fur cap, muff, or any thing made of fur or silk plush; then apply your finger to his nose, and a spark of fire will be seen to flash from the nose to the finger. The room should be dark, when the experiment is made, so as to be able to see the flash.

"There are two things," says Mrs. Partington, "that should be home every evening at dark—cows and women."

For the Spectator.

TRAILING RIVER, O. T., May 29, 1851.
MR. SPECTATOR:

Dear Sir—As there appears to be considerable interest manifested at this time in regard to steamboat navigation, and as steamboats appear to be crowding in upon us thicker and faster, so that their arrivals and departures at Oregon City is an every day occurrence, and as the navigation of the Trailin river is among the things talked of, I thought a short sketch of a trip up the river about three weeks ago, would not be entirely devoid of interest to some of your readers, and would show that the navigation of the Trailin river is not merely a visionary, but a practicable scheme.

Myself, together with four others, started from Messrs. Moore & Rice's Mill, which is about two and a half miles above the mouth of the river, (and now nearly ready for operation,) to go up the river for the purpose of making an examination in regard to timber and land along its banks, and the feasibility of its being navigable, and I was highly pleased with the result. We started from the mill in the morning, in a skiff, and got to Brown's ferry, which is about four miles, in about one hour and a half. We had to cut one tree out of the way, which took half an hour's time. The water to Brown's is very sluggish, hardly a perceptible current, and very deep, and the river not very crooked.

There are two short rapids here at Brown's about 80 rods apart; each rapid about 10 rods in length, with 1 1/2 inches to 2 feet fall each. Mr. Brown told us that these rapids at the lowest stage; and when Moore & Rice's dam which is now in the progress of erection, and which we are calculating to build six feet above low water mark, is completed, it will entirely slack, and make the water at least four feet deep on the upper rapids at low stage; that any difficulty here will be entirely obviated.

We proceeded on up the river about ten miles further, and found it about the same as below Brown's, deep and sluggish, very little drift wood in it, and from 150 to 200 feet in width, and such timber and farming land as border its waters, I think cannot be beaten in this territory. We went on shore a number of times, and was as much delighted with the prospects ashore, as on the water.

After we got above Brown's we found a belt of fir timber bordering on the river from 40 to 60 rods in width, then a strip of prairie and oak openings from one fourth to a half a mile in width, of a rich alluvial soil, and then comes the pine timber, which as far as appearance goes, is hard to beat in any country. We are told that this diversity of prairie and wood-land continues to the open plains, which comes to the river about 15 miles above Brown's. It seems to me that this section of country has been almost entirely overlooked, especially as its natural advantages are so great, and with the addition of a plank road from the mill to the falls of the Willamette, it will make the best outlet for the produce of this Trailin plains, and Chehalis valley, that can be made.

We had not made any preparations for staying out over night, and it getting rather late, and fearing we would not be able to reach a place above, that night, we concluded to return, which we accomplished in about three hours. I have been told that the river is equally free from obstruction some distance above Hillsboro.

Those desirous of taking claims would do well to examine this section of the country.

M. R. BARNUM.

LATE FROM THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.—Arrival of the U. S. Revenue Brig Lawrence. By the above arrival last night we have received dates to the 9th of April, and a large package of letters from our correspondents. We have little news to report except the subduing of the French excitement. We have it however on very good authority, that the Hawaiian Government has decided to apply to the Government of the United States for annexation, and that an officer of our National Government is now in our city, on his way to Washington entrusted with the mission. We not only hope this is true, but also that the cloak of Uncle Sam may be folded around this beautiful set of the Pacific and she be domesticated in the great family.—*Alta California, May 7.*

LOSS OF THE STEAMER COMMODORE PREBLE.—The steamer Sea Gull, which sailed hence for Trinidad and Humboldt Bays and Oregon on Saturday last, returned to port yesterday evening, having prosecuted only a part of her voyage, owing to unfortunate circumstances. The Sea Gull arrived at Trinidad Bay on Tuesday morning, the 6th inst., discharged passengers and cargo, and returned to Humboldt Bay the same afternoon. There Capt. Tichenor found the steamer Commodore Preble a total wreck on the North reef, having struck there at 8 A. M. of that day. The passengers were all landed and the cargo saved, though the vessel was a perfect loss. Capt. Tichenor, with the true characteristic spirit of a sailor, immediately offered the unfortunate captain, (Ballard,) his passengers and crew a passage to this port, which was thankfully accepted. The Commodore Preble arrived at Trinidad Bay from this port on Sunday morning; left again on Monday evening with about one hundred returning passengers, intending only to land a small portion of freight at Humboldt. At the time she struck the wind was blowing fresh from the N. W., and a very heavy sea running.—*Alta California, May 10.*

Gales & Scaton, of the Washington Intelligence, sent a communication to the Senate on the 10th instant, declining hereafter the publishing of the Senate debates at the price allowed, 68 per column.

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Following beautiful thoughts are from the pen of George D. Prentice:—
"There is but a breath of air and a beat of the heart, betwixt this world and the next. And in the brief interval of painful and awful suspense, while we feel that death is present with us, that we are powerless and he all powerful, and the last pulsation here is but the prelude of endless life hereafter; we feel, in the midst of the stunning calamity about to befall us, that earth had no compensating good to mitigate the severity of our loss. But there is no grief without some beneficent provision to soften its intensity. When the good and the lovely die, the memory of their deeds, like the moon-beams on the stormy sea, light up our darkened hearts and lends to the surrounding gloom, a beauty so sad and sweet, that we would not, if we could, dispel the darkness that environs it."

NOTE OF THANKS TO MR. WEBSTER.—The Pennsylvania House of Representatives has passed the following resolution:—
Resolved, That the thanks of this Legislature are eminently due to Daniel Webster, and that they be, and are hereby tendered to him, for the very able and patriotic manner in which he has vindicated the well-established principles of the United States, in regard to its intercourse with foreign nations, in his letter to Chevalier Hulsmann, charge d'affaires from the government of Austria to the U. States, dated December 1st, 1850.