Oregon Spectator.

OREGON CITY

Tuesday, February 3, 1852.

C. P. Culver, Associate Editor.

Our Course.

Since the first establishment of the *Spectator* in this territory, we hear it conceded by nearly all persons of whatever party, that its conductors have uniformly sought to promote, by every means in their power, the best interests of the territory. Latterly, among other things advocated through its columns, with the desire to advance the true interests of all classes, has been an adherence to the former course among us, of not allowing mere considerations of party creed to influence the selection of our candidates for office, or their election by the people. We had hoped that the voice of all parties would have concurred with us in this desire, and unconnected with other exciting considerations, no reasonable doubt exists of their having done so. We are still of the same opinion, that the interests of the territory would have been better served, by abstaining so long as we remained under a territorial form of government, from all discussion of questions, simply of a party character, and from all creation of party struggles, divisions, excitements, and angry contests. This opinion has been long entertained by us and was not arrived at by the consideration of the strength in point of numbers, of either party.

We have not, however, during the past year, been unmindful of the efforts of the Democratic party, or rather of its leaders, to influence its members to adopt a different course, nor have we been ignorant of the fact that they were by a reckless use of improper means, rapidly accomplishing their object. A close observation of the tendencies of the excitement connected with the location of the seat of government, from the first moment of its existence, convinced us that if any considerable number of either party seized upon the occasion thus afforded, an organization of the parties would be inevitable. We regret to see that the leaders of the Democratic party have taken advantage of the moment, and the excitement of the people to organize their party, and attempt the manufacture of political capital. How far such a sequence was called for, by the circumstances of the case, let the public judge; and if the dearest hopes and fondest anticipations of the continued unanimity of exertion by our citizens in one common cause, heretofore indulged, shall be disappointed, let the parties thus interrupting our harmony of action be held to a strict account for their premature creation of a state of things tending to discord and confusion. We regret that we are at this early hour in the history of the territory, compelled to witness the organization of the two great parties that divide public opinion throughout the Union. But such seems to be the determination of the leaders of the Democratic party.

We shall, therefore, in the future conduct of the *Spectator*, firmly and zealously maintain those principles of public policy which are held by the great Whig party of the United States. Convinced as we have ever been of the soundness of those principles, and of their superior adaptation to the wants of a free and enlightened nation, and of their tendency to promote the greatest amount of good to the largest number, we shall, with that moderation, most becoming to candid and honest convictions, steadily maintain and be guided by them. With our aim to always serve the true interests of the country, we cannot, consistent with our sense of duty, longer remain an idle observer of political events in the territory. We have delayed this declaration of our sentiments, and change in the conduct of our paper to this, the latest moment, hoping that something might transpire connected with the public affairs of the territory, that would render such a step, for the present at least, unnecessary. But notwithstanding our constant efforts, and those of the Whig party generally, by all manner of concessions and persuasions, we now find this course forced upon us in self defence.

It is we are aware quite an easy matter to edit a party newspaper, supporting candidates from our party, under all circumstances, without reference to qualifications, and opposing with equal zeal all men and measures on the other side. This requires neither judgment nor reflection. To be able to tell the tendency of public sentiment is a very ordinary attainment, but to determine what measure *should* receive our support, is far more difficult. We shall be influenced by no factions, nor seek to promote the welfare of any particular locality, at the expense of another, but as heretofore our object shall be to promote the good of the whole. We shall strive to allay, rather than excite agitation; and be governed by reason, instead of impulse, in the discussion of all public affairs.

Our columns will be open within the necessary limits heretofore made public, to communications upon all sujects of general interest and public importance. We shall pursue a uniform course in the conduct of our journal, in no case sacrificing our own principles, to accommodate ourselves to the peculiar views of any faction or clique, of any kind.

The length of time our journal has been established here, and its constant efforts upon all occasions to promote the general welfare, are well known to our readers, and therefore renders it quite unnecessary for us at this time to enter into a lengthy account of the course to be pursued by us in the future. We shall not seek to gain patronage by the free use of unmeaning promises, or honeyed phrases; but, as our acts shall entitle us to confidence, in the same ratio are we willing that support should be awarded to us.

Democratic Party Organizing!!

The so called Democratic party, seem determined to continue their exertions to bring about the thorough organization of their party, without farther delay. The leaders of their party are laboring with a zeal worthy of a better cause, to accomplish their own agrandizement. After convincing *themselves* that their party are in the ascendancy here, they no longer hesitate to sacrifice the peace and quiet of the whole territory, to their own advantage and profit. Whether they have a majority in point of numbers, is a matter quite immaterial to us, and about which we do not trouble ourselves. No test has ever been made of the strength of parties here, and until such a result be proven, we by no means admit the truth of their suppositions. We are not afraid of the trial; and when an election does take place which shall fairly try the actual numbers of each party, we shall be much disappointed if these leaders of the organization do not find to their sorrow, that they have "reckoned without their host."

The good sense of this territory cannot be forced into the support of measures not approved by their own judgment and observation; and of this fact, the leaders of this measure will in due time become convinced. Let the whigs, therefore, in this crisis, take such steps as shall prevent all liability of their being affected in the future, by the present local and sectional divisions, and be prepared to act in conjunction and unison, whenever such a course shall become necessary. Let this be done, and we have no fears for the result.

☞ We publish to-day the proceedings of a public meeting held at Astoria, relative to the location question, and the course of Jno. Anderson, Esq., member of the Legislature from Clatsop County. Inasmuch as we have heretofore published resolutions upon the other side of the question from other parts of the Territory, we give these a place in our columns. But we first wish it distinctly understood, that we cannot ourselves mix up in this contest. We were convinced from the first discussion of this exciting question in the public journals, that it would not result in any good, or in any manner tend to its early and proper adjustment. The business of deciding this question, very properly belongs to another and quite a different tribunal. It is not at all probable that any sensible man's opinion with regard to it, has been in the least influenced by any newspaper discussion that has taken place; nor do we consider that any light whatever has been thrown upon the subject by all of the newspaper crimination and re-crimination with regard to it. We therefore wish gentlemen on both sides of this question to understand, that we cannot be induced to mix up in the matter.

☞ The propellor "Major Reading" is again running regularly between this city and Portland. Capt. Rogers, master, is well known to the travelling community, and it is unnecessary to assure them that every attention will be given to their comfort and convenience while on his boat.

☞ The Willamette is very high, and the navigation of the river quite difficult. The present wet weather will probably keep it at its present height for some days.

Ma[illegible]

We are frequ[illegible] from the Umpq[illegible] the want of suff[illegible] that part of the [illegible] and [illegible]larly of the non-compliance on the part of Aspinwall & Co., with the instructions of the Post Master General, requiring them to leave the mails for that region at Umpqua City. The citizens of this valley have up to this time, continued to suffer silently the inconveniences thus occasioned, hoping that the sense of justice on the part of this company would induce them to comply, without any interference on the part of those interested. So far their anticipations in this respect have been sadly disappointed, and from all the information we are able to gather upon the subject, likely to continue so. From a consideration of the course heretofore pursued by this Co. in relation to the prompt fulfillment of their contract for carrying mails to and from this Territory, some idea may be formed as to the time when they will probably perform this part of the required mail service. The original contract for carrying the mails on this coast from Panama to Astoria, was let in '47, to a Mr. Harris. Aspinwall & Co. became the assignees of this contract.—No reference was had at that time to California, for we then had no possessions in that country, the sole object of the contract being to supply Oregon with mail communication. By the stipulations in the agreement they were to commence carrying the mails in Dec. '48. Notice was given to the Department that they were unable to perform their contract, and assistance was granted them. California at this time having been ceded to the U. S. it was agreed by the Co. in consideration of the use of this money advanced to them, that they would touch at San Francisco, and leave the mails there.—Thus showing that the principal object had in view by Congress was to furnish Oregon with mail communication, while the course of this Co. makes it but the incident to other service. They were to receive $190,000 per year for carrying the mail over this route monthly. Sometime about the middle of March, '49 the "California" arrived at San Francisco, and from that time they commenced running regularly between Panama and San Francisco, leaving Oregon entirely unprovided with all external mail accommodations until the month of June, 1850, when the "Caroline" made her firs' trip to Oregon. Soon afterwards they commenced transporting the mails semi-monthly, with an increase of pay equal to the amount previously received, making the large sum of $398,000, which taken into account with the $10,000 paid them for carrying the mail from Astoria to this city makes the enormous sum of $408,000 annually paid to this Co. for the above service. By a special order of the Post Master General, under date of Sept. 23d, 1851, they were directed immediately to comply with that condition of their contract requiring them to leave the mails at Umpqua City; but without even assigning any sufficient reason for their non-compliance, they still continue to neglect this part of their duty. We have, it is true, understood that they have given as an excuse for this omission, that there has never been a "government survey" of the Umpqua harbor, showing them that they could enter with safety. But they knew this fact as well before making their contract as they do at this time; and if they have put into this service a vessel too large to perform it with safety, whose duty is it to procure another? But with regard to their not entering a harbor before it is surveyed, it is not consistent with their own course in other places.—They have been and are now in the habit of touching at Port Orford, Humboldt Bay, &c., *whenever a profit can be made by so doing*, and judging by their acts heretofore, we suppose they will perform this service whenever it shall appear to them to suit their convenience. Cannot some other company be employed for $408,000 a year! who will perform this service?

☞ "In *Politics*, we are democratic—Democrats we ever have been, and Democrats we ever shall be; but still *we shall not seek to excite party organizations.*"—*Prospectus of the Statesman.*

"And we trust the movement ("Organization of the Democracy,") will be carried out with the enthusiasm and efficiency with which it was commenced; that the various committees will faithfully attend to all duties devolved upon them, and that their action will be promptly and heartily seconded by the masses."—*Statesman, Jan. 27.*

The above quotations show a slight discrepancy between the *professions* and the *practices* of the editor of the Statesman.

☞ Several communications are on file which we are unable to publish this week. They will be attended to in the order of their reception.

of [illegible] to be [illegible] praise on the meritorious, than censure on the faulty. But as good is only the opposite of evil, and purity the antithesis of corruption — and man from his frailties, and his works from imperfections, like the magnet, must ever be a blending of opposite qualities, it is frequently of more benefit to him to have the glass held up before his defects, and blemishes, by way of contrast or variety—than always to reflect his amiable qualities. In truth though it has ever been the mark of true friendship to expose our faults, so unthankful is the office, our errors are most commonly left to be shown by our enemies. With the hope that I should be able, by deserved praise, to heal the wounds inflicted on the vanity of their authors by my censures, I had taken up the memorials lately emanating from the legislature's at Salem, and Oregon city, not with the intention regularly to review these productions, but merely to touch upon some of their chief beauties—and glance at their most glaring defects. But as the editor of the "Statesman" has preceded me in praise of the memorial of Salem, and the editor of the "Oregonian" has bestowed unmeasured encomium on the other, they have left me little to say of either, except the usually unperformed part of true friendship—and I would here say to those gentlemen who feel for these documents parental tenderness, that if the remarks I shall make upon their productions savors of severity—that they have at hand a "healing plaster," in the unmixed praises bestowed upon them by the able pens of these editors—and to imagine my regret that I am deprived of making the more agreeable part of my intended remarks, by these gentlemen preceding me.

However "free and easy" we may be in all things in the west, there are certain proprieties to be observed in speaking and writing, that even we are hardly safe in disregarding. It appears even here that the oratory of the pulpit should be more solemn and stately than that of the stump, and a last will and testament should be rather more formal than a familiar epistle, and conceived in a style less fanciful than a poetical effusion to a sweet heart. Yet it appears our sense of "the proprieties" has not advanced as yet so far as to settle the style of oratory proper for our court of justice and halls of legislation, or of writing suited to the dignity of legal opinions, and legislative memorials—as when a speaker rises in either of these places you are not certain whether he will deliver himself of wit or wisdom, of sarcasm or a sermon. The same uncertainty attends written matter—a legal opinion may contain more levity than logic, more poetry than truth—and memorials may crowd into a corner its important subjects, and waste pages in petty and personal details—or, mounting on the wings of fancy, soar aloft into the regions of poetic imagination—clothing a little meager substance, in a perfect cloud of hyperbole, far-fetched figures, and sonorous words. But, to these memorials:

These documents are addressed to the Congress of the United States, purport to be from the same body, and to express the wants and wishes of the same people.

The bodies addressed are the law making power of a great nation, as the happiness and prosperity of the people for whom they legislate depend upon the careful examination and prompt despatch of their many subjects of deliberation, their time is too precious to be occupied with frivolity. Holding the controling power over the destinies of one of the first empires of the earth—and chosen from the millions who select them for the purity of their lives—depth of wisdom, and splendor of talents—they are both officially, and personally, the most dignified and enlightened bodies that through all time have ever been assembled. And splendid as are the works of art, the trophies of the national triumphs in arts and arms, which as the ornaments and honors of the nation, the people are proud to collect at their place of meeting—the bodies themselves made up of sages, heroes and statesmen, particularly the Senate, far surpass all other sources of national pride.

In perfect keeping with their exalted and responsible stations, are their written and oral compositions; chaste and pure they flow with ease, not from liquid and sounding words, but from their aptness to the ideas, and the simplicity of their selection—they shine and sparkle, not in the redundancy of ornament, but the fineness of material and beauty of the polish. It seems therefore in addressing these bodies, that besides bearing in mind the value of [illegible] thoroughly mainta[illegible] respect due the people, [illegible] bodies to whom it is addressed, [illegible] but for one favor, and that favor is o[illegible] should be devoutly prayed for by every friend and well wisher of his country. It is only to be regretted that the Legislature in their modesty, abstained from asking for a full participation in the political rights enjoyed in the States. The election of our executive and judicial officers, it is true, will be a great improvement upon our present system, but will be far from removing all the disabilities of which we may justly complain. The veto now exercised by Congress, over our legislation, would be much better vested in an executive of our own choice—and besides the officers named in the memorial, there are many others, which directly effect our interests, that would be better filled by residents, than by new importations from the states.

(*To be continued.*)

Correspondence of the Spectator.

Polk County—Its Dimensions, Resources, &c.

POLK COUNTY, O. T.
Dec. 25th, 1851.

MESSRS. EDITORS:

I have seen communications and editorials from and respecting almost every portion of Oregon, in some, or all of our public journals; but if any information has gone before the reading community, respecting the Agricultural productions of Polk Co., or any of its improvements in progress, or expectancy, it has entirely escaped my observation, or at least recollection. Some of us have entertained fears that the public might conclude that old Polk is no where, and produces nothing worthy of great notice except *legislators*. Therefore, I hope you will allow me a corner, to announce to the world that Polk County still exists—that it covers a large extent of territory, being about 23 miles in width, from north to south, and extending from the river on the east to the "ends of the earth" west; that its inhabitants (for it has inhabitants) are generally honest, industrious farmers, who have been so long accustomed to raising large potatoes, turnips, onions, and long headed and many head oats and wheat, and big-headed cabbages, that they have long since quit talking about them as matters of unusual occurrence—much less do they think of writing a newspaper article about them.

But for the encouragement of the new immigrant, and any who may have their minds eye turned towards the cultivation of Oregon soil, it is no doubt well to give public information occasionally, of what is and can be done in this line of business in this country.

As an instance of the fertility of the soil in this region, I will state that one of my neighboring farmers of undoubted veracity, informed me that last harvest he measured some heads of his oats one measuring 22 inches, another 33 inches in length. He also informed me that he threshed and cleaned the oats that grew on one-half acre of ground and the yield was upwards of 50 bushels. They are the kind called side oats. The above yield was made on ground without any manure, or any *superior* cultivation.

Turnips frequently grow to the weight of 25 and 30 pounds. As to our other vegetable productions, we believe them fully equal to any we "read about," though we have not been careful to weigh or measure particularly.

I hope that the suggestion made by some of you editors below, respecting the formation of agricultural society, and its consequence—an annual Fair, may be kept before the public, until acted upon and carried into effect; so that by next autumn all hands may have a fair chance *to show* what they *can do* in agricultural and horticultural productions.

Perhaps one of these days I will give you a more minute geographical description of our country and its resources.

Respectfully yours, E.

Loss of the "Gen. Warren."

Information has just reached us of the loss of the propeller "Gen. Warren," near the mouth of the Columbia. She had about 70 passengers on board and a large quantity of freight, bound for San Francisco. After getting outside of the bar we are informed that she encountered a very strong wind and rough water, and was soon found to be leaking badly, upon which they immediately put back. As they were passing in over the bar, she struck, and was finally run ashore on "Clatsoph spit," a total wreck, with the cargo all lost. Fears are entertained for the safety of the passengers; but we have no reliable information touching their situation.

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You will no do[illegible] something about the progress of trade and internal improvements in this county. You are already aware that we are favored with the regular weekly "arrival and departure" of steamers at Albany, the shire town of the county as they wend their way upward towards the "head of navigation." This is as yet the only point at which they touch. There is some hope entertained, however, that they will be able to ascend as far as Burlington, if not all the way into the forks in Lane County. The beneficial effects of this improved method of transportation are beginning to be felt in various branches of business. Particularly the mercantile business has become quite brisk on a small scale. One would suppose, however, that it would be more advantageous to the people than to the merchants. There are small stocks of merchandize offered for sale in every neighborhood in the County, and we are much mistaken if this branch of business is not badly overdone.

There is of course, a good deal of town making going on, particularly on paper. The "store," that notable place in the country, usually denotes the piece of ground, on which hope has pictured a fairy city. The principle part of these town sites may, however, be profitably cultivated in *wheat*, for some years to come. To this remark there are some exceptions. Albany is a beautiful town site, and is making pleasing progress in the way of improvement. It is undoubtedly destined to rank among the most flourishing towns on the Willamette. Some ten or twelve miles above Albany the village of Burlington is situated. This place possesses a good many natural advantages, and though it can scarcely be said to have commenced to assume the appearance of a village, there is little doubt but it soon will. Aside from these two places, there is nothing as yet in the way of town or village property worthy of notice.

The milling business, which all must regard as a principle interest in Oregon, is receiving a commendable degree of attention, by the enterprising citizens of this county. There are three flouring and four saw mills erected, and many other fine chances for profitable investments, yet unimproved. There is a *grist* mill on the south fork of the Santiam, owned by the Messrs. Keys, and another on the Calapooya, owned by R. Findley. Both these are noble sites, but the mills are constructed merely with reference to the performance of the most ordinary country work. Whether their owners contemplate an early improvement, or enlargement of their business, has not transpired.

The merchant mill, however, which is being put in operation by the Messrs. Monteith, of Albany, is deserving of a passing notice, as one of the very best flouring establishments in the Territory. It is a large and capacious building, and its machinery is to be, when completed, of the most improved modern style. It is intended to manufacture for commerce, as well as for home consumption—and it is the first mill of the kind that has been undertaken in the very heart of the wheat growing portion of the Willamette valley. May we not wish its enterprising proprietors a rich harvest. It is to be propelled by the water of our noble little Calapooya.

There is another improvement in this country that *ought to be*. Unfortunately, after long years of peace and quiet, we have a trio of worthless loafers quartered on the hospitalities of the country for the winter, in expectancy of the polite consideration of Judge Nelson when he shall have occasion to visit Albany in the spring. Now, for the special benefit of these *par nobile fratrum*, we greatly need to have apartments properly fitted up with all due regard to the security of their persons. Our worthy Judges, however, most impolitely, nay most inhospitably, have decided that the aforesaid personages should go at large, with the honor of flourishing a most substantial *iron guard chain*. The economy of this method of taking care of criminals is very questionable. For the present, no more.

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☞ Read the letter from Polk County.