

The New Northwest.

FREE SPEECH, FREE PRESS, FREE PEOPLE.

VOLUME X.—NO. 51.

PORTLAND, OREGON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1881.

PER YEAR—\$3 00.

AT THE SEASIDE, AND ALONG SHORE.

AN EXCURSION ON SHOALWATER BAY—THE WILLAPA RIVER—SIGHTS, FACTS, PROSPECTS AND POSSIBILITIES—KNAPPA.

PORTLAND, August 31, 1881.

TO THE READERS OF THE NEW NORTHWEST:

At ten o'clock on the morning of the 22d, the General Garfield got steam up while lying in the Shoalwater Bay channel, and waited until several wagon-loads of excursionists were taken through the mud flats at low tide and dumped into a batteau adjacent, from which they were transferred to a "dinky," and from this to the steamer, upon and through which we swarmed all day like the far-famed old woman's "children in a shoe." The General Garfield is a staunch and trim little propeller, built by the Ilwaco Steam Navigation Company for the Shoalwater and Willapa trade, and for carrying the United States mails, for which Mr. Loomis, proprietor of the Ilwaco stage line, is also contractor.

From the steamer's deck we readily obtained a sweeping view of the almost deserted town of Oysterville. Grass grows in its streets, and pigs and cattle roam at will within its borders. Its new and fine school-house is empty, and its court-house was unoccupied at the time of our visit save by a solitary crazy man, whose ravings smote the drowsy ear of desolation like a blast from the trumpet of doom. The steamer had awakened the dormant life yet remaining in the place, and all were on board for a day of pleasure, forgetful for the nonce of the somnolent business that was once so active that the name of Oysterville was synonymous with success. The cause of this decline and decay is the result of a disease among the oysters, which until within a few years were in excellent growing condition, but are now scarce and poor, their erewhile beds covered with mud and slime, in which a new and long and tough and fibrous grass has taken root and is flourishing with a pertinacity of purpose that not only smothers the oysters, but grows so rank as to impede the current in the channel in some places. The whole forms an attractive study as well as a practical example of the manner of land formation that builded up the deltas of the Nile and the Mississippi upon seas of mud.

"In the primeval days when Earth was young," we hear many conflicting opinions about the cause of this change in the bay, the most plausible being the assertion that the great sand-spit at the mouth of the inlet has for a number of years been shifting its position, until now it almost shelters the bay from the rude sea breezes that formerly swept over the waters, tearing up the beach as the tides came in and sweeping it clean, as the tides rushed out. While the shores of the bay were thus kept clean by storms and washings, the oysters grew fat; but this being no longer possible, they are generally unfit for market now. And yet, we know of no place where there is as good a prospect for a valuable speculation as here. The wealthy owners have abandoned the field, and would sell for a song; the poor would be glad to sell their little possessions for a trifle and get away; and the parties who will buy them out and wait a few years for the sands to again shift their position will have a fortune ready made. Oysterville is sure to come up again at no very distant day, and we predict that those who hold on to their possessions here will find themselves in luck. In the meantime, we would suggest to speculators, who are able and willing to run the risk, the propriety of paying the place a visit.

While we are busy with these cogitations, the little steamer is tugging away at the waves and grasses with her staunch propeller, carrying us past Diamond City, another deserted village, past Bruceport, also asleep, and across one of the finest bays on the coast toward the mouth of the Willapa, a river as large at its mouth as the Clearwater, and as tortuous in its course as the Snake. It is navigable at present only to Woodward's Landing, about thirty miles from Oysterville; but if paying business required the use of suitable boats for the purpose, it could be navigated for at least a hundred miles inland, through an alluvial district abounding in grass, game, prairie, water and timber, large enough for a large New England State. The only export at the present time is lumber, the mill at South Bend being the only place where it is made. The monthly shipment is one million feet. Schooners of 200 tons carriage ply between San Francisco and this mill, the spruce lumber it supplies being in constant demand in the Bay City, and bringing good prices. The oyster business is not entirely abandoned, and, we learn, is noticeably improving in many localities, strengthening the hope that the bivalves will soon become plenty as of yore. The bay and its tributary rivers are literally alive with fish.

All the people live on the bay or the river's banks. Every man's team is a boat—a plunger or a "dinky," according to taste or means. The

country is remarkably healthy; so much so that a small-pox rumor, which has alarmed the doctors, produces no visible scare and very little concern among the people, who have named it "effluent chicken-pox." But, let it be what it may, we haven't lost it, and don't care to prospect for it, so we steadfastly refuse all invitations to call the people together for lectures, though we frankly admit that so many importunities to advance our mission are decidedly inducing.

It was almost six P. M. when our party reached Woodward's Landing, where our captain made fast to a log for the purpose of putting some freight ashore, and in a few minutes after informed us with a disappointed air that the steamer was aground and we must wait for the turn of the tide. Cheerful information, truly, for a weary band of pleasure-seekers, whose only prospect of supper was to be found at Oysterville, thirty-two miles away. We went ashore and up the muddy banks, and found ourselves upon an open plateau, with houses, barns and orchards, and were met by Mr. J. W. Whitcomb, who asked the undersigned to walk over to his house, where we found his wife, a former Astoria acquaintance, languishing in a slow decline, but glad to see us, and as enthusiastic over our mission of equal rights as though no fell disease had fastened its fangs upon her lungs for the purpose of feasting upon her life blood. We lingered for a while at the bedside, and then the welcome sound of the steamer's whistle proclaimed the mud blockade raised, and the crowd rushed back pell mell to her floating body, and climbed upon the decks like rats.

We made rapid time on the homeward trip. The children were hungry and the grown folks ditto, and a box of plums wrought direful havoc, one lady falling ill, and many other persons being on the verge of sickness. At South Bend the returning party was treated to an excellent string band concert on the dock, and at Tok's Point we were greeted by a magnificent bon-fire, built by Messrs. Wyatt and Sheldon, of Portland, whom our steamer had dropped here in the morning for a day's hunting and fishing. There was no place at the point to purchase game, so they were obliged to confess an ignominious failure, as the trophies of their prowess were missing.

We must not omit to mention Dr. Balch, a noted physician of the Willapa, who met us in his plunger, and invited the undersigned, with Mr. and Mrs. Loomis, to visit his home—an invitation we would gladly have accepted—but for the small-pox rumors, which hurried us on. The Doctor is a reader and thinker of the freest type, familiar with all the religious and medicinal schools of the world, and accepting what he conceives to be truths from each, while rejecting the great mass of the whole. It was a treat to talk with him; as it is to talk with anyone who has the moral courage to investigate and the not very common honesty to admit his convictions, be they what they may.

We were compelled to postpone a visit to North Cove and the Shoalwater Bay light-house, though the intermittent light flashed far and wide over the bay on the home-stretch, as in full sight of the roaring surf our steamer plowed her backward track toward Oysterville. The night settled down in darkness, the children cried, the grown folks laughed and sang, and everybody "wanted to go home." A pilot stood at the prow with a sounding line, his sonorous cry of "three fathom," "deep," "two fathom," "two-an'-a'-alf," "deep," "shoot!" regulating the revolutions of the obedient wheel as though it were a thing of life and sense.

Not a light to be seen at Oysterville. The captain knows the town is somewhere along shore, and he trusts to luck and steams ahead. By and by a solitary gleam from somebody's window apprises him of the locality of the deserted town. The tide is full now, and we have little trouble, though much delay, in the transfer from the steamer to the batteau. But we're "all aboard" at last, and are patiently "poled" ashore by a jolly fellow whose quaint remarks awaken shouts of merry laughter, in the midst of which we step to terra firma, and by dint of a sharp look-out follow a single lantern across the lawn to the hotel, where what we read of as "tired nature's sweet restorer" takes us all in charge and hies us away to dreamland, from which we are recalled in the morning by the breakfast bell and a welcome summons from the Ilwaco stage.

The drive along the beach is the finest in the world. The surf-beaten road is as hard as an asphaltum bed, and the rolling breakers play at hide and seek among each other like giants in glee. Upon our left is a long line of drift wood, as stark and white and desolate as the ghost of a dead ambition. Beyond this, and above the tide boundary, is a long narrow upland, dotted with farms and fences at rare intervals, and beyond this are the fresh water lakes and evergreen forests which so attract the Waltons and Nimrods of the cities in the Summer months.

We rested for a day at the sea-side-home of Mr. and Mrs. Loomis, and then went on to Ilwaco, where an appointment was out for an evening lecture, and where, after a pleasant day in the company of Mrs. Pike and the Wheelons, we met in the hotel dining-room a goodly company of respectful listeners, to whom we discoursed upon the "Woman Question." Messrs. Pomeroy & Grant, who freely accorded us the use of the hotel for the lecture, are a success in the landlord line. Their house is clean and comfortable, and their table is well supplied with the best the market affords. Ilwaco is a charming Summer resort, and will become more and more popular as the country gets older. Mr. J. D. Holman, the town proprietor and moving spirit of the place, has great anticipations for its future. There are several little stores already here, and one or two restaurants. The new church will command a fine view of the bay and the river, and, like the projected school-house, will be a convenient acquisition to the village when completed.

We returned to Astoria on Thursday, to find that the Robeson trial was ended, or rather continued, as we had expected, and that Mr. Ireland had sold the Astorian, as we did not expect. But, sorry as everybody is to lose so good an editor as the retiring proprietor has been, everybody welcomes his successor, Mr. Pitman Parker, of the Monitor (Cal.) Argus, who, we learn, has purchased the paper and will carry it on in the future.

On Friday evening we were treated by Mr. T. E. Powers to a ride upon the planken roadway to Upper Town, a two-mile drive along the river's margin. No visit to Astoria is complete unless this drive is taken. Mr. H. B. Parker, of the Parker House, furnishes a horse and buggy for the drive whenever desired, and a bus goes over the road at short intervals. The Upper Town has been quite rapidly built up within the past two years. Property commands high figures and is in brisk demand. The location, like the lower town, is as rough as the steppes of Switzerland; but piles in the water, and grades and fills on the land, are slowly conquering the natural difficulties, and she will some day be a city passing beautiful.

Saturday morning and off for Knappa, a dozen miles up the river. We had intended to go by the "Magnet," Captain Hamlin's little steamer, but found her laid up for repairs, and there being no direct boat for the Oregon side on Saturdays, we went aboard the Emma Hayward at six A. M. and voyaged up the river to Oak Point, W. T., where we stopped for an hour till the Bonita came along from Portland, in which we returned to Knappa, having traveled ten hours by steam to compass an air line of a very few miles. The rain was falling in torrents when we landed at the wharf, but that did not prevent an admiring glance at the flower-bordered lawn of Mrs. Knapp's beautiful home site, nor did it prevent a hearty greeting from the lady, who is postmaster and telegraph operator, as well as housekeeper, and a trusty and trusted business partner of her husband, Mr. A. Knapp, who is proud of his capable wife, and, like herself, a Woman Suffragist. It was raining too hard for a lecture, but not too hard for a ride in an open farm wagon to the charming home of Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler, a mile away over the rolling upland, where we awaited the cessation of the storm in the serene enjoyment of genial hospitality.

The next morning was the Sabbath, and it arose clear and beautiful like a vision of Paradise. After a dinner-fit for a president, at the beautiful home of Mr. and Mrs. Bender, we all went down to the wharf, to Knapp's Hall, where the undersigned met a fine audience at two o'clock, and again at eight P. M., to whom the gospel of peace on earth and good will to men and women was preached with evident acceptance.

Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell, of crusade fame, live near Knappa, adjacent to several of their sons and daughters. The old couple are quite infirm, and feeble, but in their way are as public-spirited as ever. The aged mother of Mr. J. B. Knapp, of Portland, and Mr. A. Knapp, of this place, is also living here, near her dutiful daughter-in-law, serene in the sweet assurance that Heaven is very near to her waiting spirit.

We remained over night at the wharf, the guest of Mrs. A. Knapp, and early on the morning departed for Portland, carrying with us happy recollections of a profitable visit and leaving behind a promise to repeat the same at some future time. A. S. D.

Sojourner Truth is living in fair health at Battle Creek, Mich. It is said her hair, which for years was white, is turning dark again, and her eyesight is improving. According to the best information her age is 106, though she thinks she is older.

An exchange says: "Mrs. Dominis, a sister of King Kalakaua, and the wife of an American ship-master at Hawaii, acts as Regent of the Kingdom in her brother's absence."

MARRIAGE INSURANCE.

PORTLAND, August 27, 1881.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW NORTHWEST:

We are certainly living in an age of progress. New schemes are continuously concocted to wring from the unsuspecting, the avaricious, and the unsophisticated their cash. The bunco sharps almost daily have a new device. New features are being added to businesses and new businesses instituted. Those that are legitimate and proper enterprises should be encouraged; but those which have been gotten up for the purpose of public plunder ought to be immediately put down by public sentiment. Before anybody invests in a new scheme, he should investigate thoroughly for himself; not take agents' "say-so," but go to the bottom of it and discover its principles, the motives of its projectors, its workings, its prospects of permanency and success, the persons most likely to be benefited by it, and last, though not least, the chances a person takes upon the investment.

These thoughts have been suggested by noticing that a corporation has been formed for the purpose of assuring certain sums of money to persons who may marry within certain periods. Now, it is very desirable if a means is or can be devised by which we can give to every young married couple commencing the battle of life a nice outfit, say from two to ten thousand dollars. Of course such a start in the world at a time so needed will be exceedingly beneficial, and greatly assist to lighten life's heavy cares.

If this association proposes to give you back at the time you enter into the marriage state ten times the amount you have invested in your policy—viz., your payments—it is well enough for you to inquire where the money is coming from. Are those gentlemen who have organized this scheme public philanthropists and benefactors, who are intending, for the benefit of the community, to go down into their pockets to assist the poor persons getting married? Or are they going into the enterprise for their individual benefit? In other words, do they expect to make anything by the operation, or do they expect to make up the difference between the amount you pay in and the amount you draw out?—(you expect to draw on your marriage about one thousand dollars for every two hundred you put in, and that in a brief period.) Or do these gentlemen expect to invest your little payments so judiciously that in four years they will be able to return you your principal with five hundred per cent.? Or do they expect that nine out of every ten of you who entrust to them your little earnings will forfeit it to them, either by death, failure to keep up assessments, or other *modus operandi*, known only to the initiated? In either case it seems to me like a desperate piece of gambling—worse than stock gambling; a step further down the road to crime.

In plain words I ask, How can the company pay each one that insures such enormous profits? Possibly its members are like the old man's boys, who, he declared, could be locked in a room together for twenty-four hours, and every one of them would make five dollars apiece off of the others swapping jack-knives.

Who will make money out of this insurance company? Everybody? Well, possibly they may, but I cannot see it in that light. But I believe the institution is a good thing for the managers. The managers of all such institutions are keen, shrewd business men—men who know well how to handle money to advantage. They will make money; they always make money; they scarcely ever engage in anything, wherein they do not make money. Money naturally sticks to their hands as it passes through them. I do not mean dishonestly; I mean legitimately. They go in to make money; they stand in the background, and their very names make money for them. Next, the canvassing agent makes money out of it—that oily-tongued, pliant, accommodating individual, who of course is only working for your interest; who is always ready with advice—good advice; the man who knows better what you should do than you know yourself; the man who has always got "a good thing for you," "the best thing out," "something that you can make a fortune from." That man will make money out of it. Of course for him it is "a good thing." He will make something like forty per cent. of what you pay into the company. For him such an institution is one of the finest things out.

I will give you more anon, and in the meantime the wise will look cautiously before investing in any new scheme whatever.

O. P. MASON.

The California State Incorporated Woman Suffrage Association will meet in San Francisco on next Tuesday, September 6th. All friends of Woman Suffrage are invited to be present.

The Denver *Intelligencer* attributes Boston's culture to the fact that there are 18,000 more women than men in the "hub."