

The Morning Astorian

ESTABLISHED 1873

PUBLISHED BY

ASTORIAN PUBLISHING COMPANY.

J. H. CARTER, GENERAL MANAGER.

RATES.

By mail, per year \$6 00
 By mail, per month 50
 By carriers, per month 60

THE SEMI-WEEKLY ASTORIAN.

By mail, per year, in advance \$1 00



THE END OF THE FISHING SEASON.

A few days ago The Astorian quoted a Columbia river salmon packer as saying that the closed season fishing law should be rigidly enforced, not alone because all laws ought to be enforced, but because to pack salmon taken after August 15 would have the effect of injuring the enviable reputation of the product of the Astoria packing houses.

Following this statement we have read some of the most ridiculous contrary statements that have ever been made with reference to the salmon industry. The Daily News of this city ridicules the idea that the season should end August 15, and points out that it is strange fish should deteriorate in value commencing promptly at 12 o'clock on the night of August 14. Following out this remarkable line of reasoning, the fishing season should never be closed. It is not the contention that fish become poorer in quality within an hour's time, but it is a positive fact that Columbia river salmon caught early in the season are more valuable than those taken later. Some time must be fixed by law for cessation of fishing operations, and, August 15 having been decided upon, the season should end then. Every one who is at all versed in the matter knows salmon retain their color only a short time after the date fixed for closing. The effort to ridicule the demand for prompt closing with the statement that fish deteriorate promptly at a given hour is too childish for serious consideration.

Equally as ridiculous is the "argument" of the Evening Budget in favor of violation of the fishing law: "As a canner well illustrates the matter, he says that it would be the same if a farmer was told that he could not harvest the wheat that he had planted because the season was late, and it had not ripened within the usual time."

Frankly, we believe a canner never made any such statement as that quoted above. In the remote event that the expression came from a packer, however, the fallacy of the illustration should be pointed out. The cases are not in any sense parallel. The situation would be the same with the farmer if, after having allowed his grain to become over-ripe, he was advised against marketing it. The fish which are taken after August 15 are not alone late, but they are "over-ripe"—not fit for packing purposes.

The Astorian believes the season should close promptly at the date fixed by law, and is satisfied the state authorities will see to it that the law is enforced. Its first concern is for the reputation of Columbia river salmon. Secondly, it is anxious for the welfare of the fishermen, who will be asked to fish for 1 or 1½ cents a pound—a price so low that, with the limits which would be placed on the boats, the fishermen would not be able to make decent wages. So far as the packers are concerned, The Astorian is not at all solicitous for their welfare. They undoubtedly understand their business and perhaps realize that an inferior pack of fish late in the year will only serve to give Columbia river salmon a black eye.

It is just possible that the salmon which enter the river this year will continue to be of good quality after August 15. If there is any probability that such condition will exist in the future, the open season should be extended; but open advocacy of violation of the law may well be regarded as bad business, quite in keeping with which are the "arguments" advanced by our evening contemporaries.

NEW QUESTION FOR THE COURTS.

Extraordinary characteristics often are attached to human hair. Sampson's strength lay in his hair. Absalom's hair broke his neck. It was Eve's beautiful hair, according to apocryphal tradition, that first interested the serpent. Coming to the middle ages Lady Godiva is found out riding clad only in her hair, and only a little while ago the song of the orpheum minnesingers at San Francisco, containing the line "and her golden hair" and so forth, very much disturbed the elite of the Pacific coast Athens. Now three Yuma Indians have brought suit at San Diego against the Fort Yuma Indian agent, John F. Spear, to recover \$18,000 damages because he

had their hair cut. This might well cause the question, "What is there in a head of hair?" and it would be no adequate reply to say "Silver threads among the gold." Apparently there is far more than silvery strands mixed with the golden tresses. If the three enterprising aborigines get judgment against the cruel agent at Yuma for the "full amount sued for" the hair market will be likely to bound upward like a Santos Dumont flying machine.

Evidently it is not the intrinsic value of their lost locks that the Indians put a price upon in their suits at law, but some extrinsic and special value arising from the relation of their hair to other things, says the Butte Inter Mountain. The best Yuma Indian hair mattresses will not bring \$18,000 by the carload, and it would take the long straight strands of many an "Injun brave" to fill a mattress.

Manifestly, then, the hair of an Indian, at \$6000 per wig, fleece, scalp or whatever it might be called, must be inventoried and appraised upon a different basis. Perhaps it is pride that makes value in this instance. It must be a proud head of hair that is worth \$6000, or a proud Indian that thinks it worth that much. Most people acquainted with the Yuma warrior, who consists of a dark skin, a feather or two, a gee-string, a pair of moccasins, a cactus-grown background of desert and—it must not be omitted—a head of coarse black hair, would not pay \$6000 for a whole Death Valley full of Yumas. Still an Indian may have his pride. Tribal standing may also be a precious asset. It is possible that these things depend upon the length, luxuriance, mystery, sweep and sheen of the hair that hangs on his head. All the Yumas bundled together probably are not worth 10 per cent of \$18,000, yet the courts recognize sentimental value sometimes, or rather values depending upon established sentiment, and it may be that the three Yumas will succeed in obtaining a judgment for damages approaching the sum asked for their lamented and departed hair. A curious public will await the determination of the case in order to discover what the legal value of a Yuma Indian's hair may be and how far a despotic Indian agent may go in his efforts to conform the aboriginal ward of the government to civilized standards.

FRANCE AND THE VATICAN.

If the rupture between the French government and the vatican should lead to the complete separation of church and state in France, as now seems almost certain, it would be a great gain for the republic and might prove a spiritual blessing for the church, says the Brooklyn Standard Union. M. Delesse's note to the Roman pontiff, demanding the withdrawal of the letters addressed by the vatican to the bishops of Laval and Dijon, in default of which the pontifical nuncio "will receive his passports and diplomatic relations will be severed," is rightly termed an ultimatum, foreshadowing the denunciation of the concordat and a division between church and state. It is quite obvious the Pope cannot comply with such a peremptory demand, which would in effect be an abdication of authority over his own bishops, and the natural inference is that Premier Combes intended to make the breach irreparable. But out of seeming evil the highest good often comes. A union between church and state is an anachronism in the 20th century, which can only result in the irksome and sometimes dangerous limitation of both institutions. A church which is dependent upon the state for the bulk of its revenue is necessarily lowered in its general tone; absolute freedom is essential to its highest spiritual development. On the other hand, the state is unhampered in its economic and political progress when it is freed from the incubus of a salaried clergy and the continued necessity of consulting vested interests. Absolute liberty is better for all.

Agriculture in Oregon has the advantage of reasonably low farm land values, says the Albany Herald. No great interest on investment has to be figured as part of the earning proposition. Dairying, special and general farming are carried on with profit in other and older states where the cost of land is much higher than here. The advantage accruing to farming industries here from this cause is obvious. Sunset for August quotes from the census reports for 1900, showing that Oregon then had 35,837 farms, valued at \$172,761,287 with a total of 10,071,388 acres. The improved acreage was 3,328,308 acres. The value of the land and implements (except buildings) was \$113,137,820; of buildings, \$19,199,694; implements and machinery, \$6,506,725; livestock, \$33,917,048. The average value of an Oregon farm of from 100 to 174 acres, exclusive of buildings, machinery, stock, etc., is \$1,821. A comparison with values for a farm of the same size in 12 other states shows that they cost from two to five times as much. The Oregon farmer has the advantage of low priced land and favorable climate.

Physicians advise us to be pleasant and keep our minds on our food while eating. It is simply impossible, however, to be pleasant if you keep your mind on your beefsteak and the price of it.

A lock of Bryan's hair has been sold for \$65. There are democrats who would give a good many times that sum for what hair David B. Hill has left, with the scalp attached.

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FATAL SPOTTED FEVER.

State Board of Health is Investigating the New Disease.

A new disease, fatal to 90 per cent of those stricken, is being investigated by the state board of health, says the Oregonian. Ticks which live upon the bodies of ground-squirrels or gophers carry the disease germs into the human body through their bites.

Spotted fever is the name given to the new disease. It resembles cerebral spinal meningitis, which is also called spotted fever, because eruptions under the skin become apparent within a short time after the victim feels the first symptoms of high fever. But the disease is entirely different in every other way from the dreaded cerebral spinal meningitis, though equally fatal. It is apparent only during the months of May, June and July.

Dr. Ralph Matson, bacteriologist of the state board of health, has proved that the germs of nearly every disease but malaria and smallpox are not of an animal nature at all, but are of the lowest forms of vegetable life. Malaria's animal origin has been satisfactorily proved, smallpox is generally held to be transmitted by protozoa, and one or two other and less common complaints are on the doubtful list. The fact that it is carried to mankind by supposedly harmless ticks, and that the germs themselves are one of the rare animal microbes are but two of the peculiarities of spotted fever.

The fever is at its worst in the Bitter Root valley of Montana. Here from 85 to 95 per cent of those afflicted die. The cases are mostly sheepherders and prospectors, and for this reason the origin of the disease was long laid to drinking snow-water.

Harney county, the neighborhood of Huntington and the vicinity of Baker City are afflicted with the disease every year. Thus far there have been almost none of the fatalities shown in the Bitter Root valley. It is therefore believed that two distinct forms of the disease exist.

Dr. E. E. Maxey of Boise, Idaho, first brought the strange disease to the attention of medical science. Two bacteriologists were sent to Montana by the Minnesota state board of health to discover the origin of the disease.

Gradually it was found that the disease always occurred in connection with the bite of a tick whose habitat was the gopher. This rodent is plentiful in Idaho as well as in nearly every part of eastern Oregon. Apparently the gophers suffered no ill effects from the bite of the ticks, for the blood of healthy gophers was found to be swarming with the spotted fever microbes.

Finally a man from Idaho developed a case at Hood River. Dr. Woods Hutchinson, secretary of the state board of health, had a guinea pig inoculated with the blood of the patient. But the guinea pig was given too large a dose and quietly died within 48 hours after the experiment started. Had he lived he would have acted as a "culture medium" for the microbe.

It has been proved that the tick which lives on gophers is the vehicle through which the disease reaches the human body. The disease is apparently one of those harmless to one type of mammal but deadly to another. In this case the gopher is at one extreme and mankind is at the other end, and the wrong end at that.

Dr. Matson is now searching for some anti-toxin which will nullify the bite of the tick. But so long as there are millions of gophers there will be more millions of ticks to carry the spotted fever germ to the human body.

WAR BREAKS OUT AGAIN.

Cattlemen and Shepherds Involved North of Usk, Wash.

Spokane, July 28.—Cattlemen and sheepmen are in a desperate war for the range in and around Granite Hill valley, about 15 miles north of Usk, Wash. Trouble has been brewing for some time, and early Saturday morning a band of cowboys descended upon a sheep camp and killed several hundred sheep that were grazing on the hillside. The cattlemen declare the sheepherders persist in disregarding the customary limits of the sheep range. The sheepowners have armed each herder with two revolvers and ammunition and given them orders to kill whoever attempts to molest the sheep, at the risk of the owners.

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