

The Dalles Daily Chronicle.

The only Republican Daily Newspaper in Wasco County.

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FRIDAY, - - FEBRUARY 21, 1896

MR. COON HAS THE FLOOR.

Our editorial page is occupied again with a letter from Representative Coon, which is written in reply to the one that Mr. Gourlay published in THE CHRONICLE of February 15th. The controversy will be read with interest by the public to whom the incidents of the struggle preceding Dolph's defeat are yet fresh in mind.

EDITOR CHRONICLE:
 In replying to Mr. Gourlay, who has undertaken the job of "skinning the coon," I felt at a great disadvantage, for he is supposed to be a brilliant writer, and in fact writes for pay, while I have to earn my money working in a primeval strawberry patch, and seldom write at all. Judging from Mr. Gourlay's effort, it would seem that there is a bounty on coon skins.

My action as a representative has worried some people a good deal, but I have never, up to this time, asked for space in any newspaper to say a word concerning the hard things that have been said of me; in fact, these things have never worried me very much. But now comes Mr. Gourlay demanding, as it were, if I have anything to say why I should not be "sequestered in perpetuity" to my "primeval strawberry patch." Now I have voluntarily stayed pretty close to the strawberry patch and think I need no assistance in that direction.

But, a communication bearing my signature appears in THE CHRONICLE, and Mr. Gourlay wonders if it could possibly have emanated from the quiet, unassuming young man I helped to elect to his first term in the Oregon legislature. He says, "what is Mr. Coon driving at anyway?" Just this: As a young man of 42, who is not yet too old to learn, I simply wanted to say to my fellow citizens that in my humble opinion we have a surplus of political bosses, etc., and that such valuable and altogether too expensive these hard times, and I suggested that if we really want to dispense with the services of these captains, lieutenants, etc., it might cause some delay if we wait for these people to voluntarily "hand in their resignation." Why should such sentiments disturb Mr. Gourlay?

But I committed an unpardonable sin because I did not vote for Mr. Dolph for U. S. senator. The statement has been made that I pledged myself so to do, in the campaign, and after my election at different times. This is not true. The truth is good enough for me. During the campaign Mr. Dolph's name was mentioned first and foremost and it was generally supposed that Mr. Dolph would succeed himself. I naturally expected that in the event of my election my vote would go to Mr. Dolph. The election over, other candidates began to be mentioned, and some uneasiness was felt by some interested parties for fear I might wish to vote for Mr. Fulton, as I had known that gentleman in Astoria and had been associated with him in the legislature of 1893. This uneasiness was increased when Mr. Fulton and myself arrived in The Dalles together and were seen talking together at the Umatilla House.

The editor of the Times-Mountaineer made it his business to ask me, "How are you going to vote on senator?" I replied, "I am going to vote right." It was feared that I would pledge myself to Mr. Fulton. The fact is, I made no pledge whatever at any time to vote for any certain candidate. I told Mr. Fulton that I had made no pledge, and would not do so, and that I might think it my duty to vote for Mr. Dolph. Mr. Fulton will corroborate this statement. Several "inquiring friends" sounded me at different times and I always replied that I should endeavor to represent the people on that subject. On going to Salem, I met Mr. Dolph's brother on the train, and during the conversation he said he hoped I would "be able to support the senator." I replied that I had not come to any fixed determination, but would try to do the right thing, and the conversation ended pleasantly. Had I been pledged to Mr. Dolph would not his brother have known it, for men were pledged and held as stock in a corral. I think the Dolph managers simply considered that I would not be hard to influence and would readily join the herd. Senator Dolph himself talked to me pleasantly about his having caused the appointment of an uncle of mine to a position at Washington, and a relation

of mine, a banker, who wanted Dolph, was no doubt regarded as having some influence on me, so that I was regarded as a very manageable "young man."

But Mr. Gourlay asks, "Was there not a caucus?" and "Was not Mr. Coon a member of that caucus? Did he not pledge himself over his own signature, in palpable black and white, to enter that caucus and abide by its decision?" A caucus was objected to by some, and I for one did not wish to go into caucus, except it be a full caucus. This management was finally reached, and I wrote "in palpable black and white," that I would go into the caucus and abide by its decision. A few minutes after going in, and before any business had been proposed, I further replied by wire to parties in The Dalles, who were most decidedly "on the anxious seat," that I was in full caucus and would abide by the result. All this shows that I went into caucus in good faith; and I will add that had there been good faith all round—in other words, had there been a caucus at all, I should have abided by the result. But there were those present who were bent on running that caucus according to a new method, invented for the occasion; one which would enable them to know certain things better than to follow the custom of the secret ballot absolutely. The new method was objected to by those who came in to take part in a real caucus, with a binding resolution and a positively secret ballot. The new method had to be abandoned, and a binding resolution never was passed. A vote was taken to ascertain the choice of those present, but while that vote was by ballot, it was noticed that it was not a secret ballot, as had been demanded. Every element going to make an honest and binding caucus was wanting. Those of us who would not submit to trickery went out of that room knowing that there had been no caucus, and there was none. Had there been a caucus and "no goods delivered," Mr. Dolph would not have been the caucus nominee.

There are a great many incidents connected with the senatorial fight which I wish every voter knew as well as I do. In my opposition to Mr. Dolph, I took no hand in the "sizzle" arguments nor in any personal abuse of that gentleman. I became satisfied that the people of the state did not want him and the reasons seemed to me sufficient. I know that many in my district were disappointed, but while the petitions for Dolph were signed extensively, so were the petitions against him. I tried to do my duty and I am satisfied that my cause is and will be approved by the people. As an independent republican and citizen I cannot view with indifference the course of political events and the manner in which the people are worked for the benefit of scheming politicians and their tools.

I hope Mr. Gourlay will brace himself and not again be "disturbed" if I should make use of a citizen's right of free speech every year or two, for I belong to a long-lived family.
 T. R. Coon.
 Hood River, Feb. 20, 1896.

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 Music furnished by the Orchestra Union. Grand March at 8:30 sharp.
 Hon. John Michell will deliver an address on the history and principles of the Order.

Auction Sale
 Saturday, Feb. 22d.

In spite of the slaughter in prices, it having proved impossible to dispose of the goods at the Auction Sale of Feb. 15th, M. A. Moody, assignee, will close out this large and varied stock of

... **Dry Goods and Furnishings** ...
 by auction at the same place, beginning at 10 a. m. on Saturday. This is positively the wind-up! The prices of last Saturday were so low as to be ridiculous; but one bid must and will be accepted; and if you won't bid, come and take the goods for nothing.

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 The poet unquestionably had reference to the
Closing Out Sale of Furniture and Carpets
AT CRANDALL & BURGET'S,
 Who are selling these goods out at greatly-reduced rates.
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