

# The Dalles Daily Chronicle.

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THURSDAY - JANUARY 26, 1899

## HISTORY AND EXPANSION.

In his letter, read before the New York mass meeting of Sunday night, ex-President Grover Cleveland said, "I am so opposed to the expansionist craze now afflicting our body politic that any organization formed in opposition to it has my hearty sympathy and approval."

This is a remarkable blending of phariseism and lack of historical information. Mr. Cleveland assumes that the "expansion craze" is new in American history, when the truth is this nation owes its strength and greatness to an unceasing response to its inherent instinct of expansion.

At the beginning of the war of the revolution, the territory claimed by the thirteen colonies formed less than a fourth part of the existing area of the United States. The vast domain west of the Mississippi was held by Spain. The city of St. Louis, now in the heart of the great republic, was then a Spanish village.

At the beginning of the present century little change had been made in the territorial limits of the republic. France had divided with Spain the vast region west of the Mississippi, and the Florida country had passed from England to Spain. Then Jefferson, writer of the declaration of independence and the great expansionist of American statesmen, was called to the White House, and the country entered upon the broad policy of expansion which has carried the flag south to the gulf of Mexico and west to the Pacific ocean.

This policy was launched by Jefferson against determined opposition from the contractionists of his day, and it was carried out without consulting the wishes of the inhabitants of the acquired domains. The opponents of Jefferson's statesmanship brought forward every line of argument now employed by the Cleveland, the Bryans and the Hoars. They said it was unconstitutional; that it was in violation of the spirit of American institutions; that it was fraught with peril; that the Mississippi river was nature's boundary, and when driven from that standpoint, that the Union ought to set up the fabled god Terminus on the summit of the Rocky mountains.

But it is not surprising to find Cleveland in opposition to expansion. Although he sat eight years in the White house, his interests and sympathies were always notoriously against the great west and the people who inhabit the superb domain acquired by the genius of Jefferson. 'Tis well that he was president in a period calling for no exercise of the higher qualities of statesmanship. Had he been president when Jefferson was in the White House, the union would have been contracted, probably France and Spain would retain a large part of the existing domain of the United States, the Monroe doctrine could not have been launched, and the American continent would have become the theater of interminable European intrigue.—Spokesman Review.

## LINCOLN'S LITERARY GENIUS.

A writer in McClure's for January asserts that Seward wrote the rough draft of the superb closing paragraph of Lincoln's first inaugural address. Here is the paragraph said to have been submitted by Seward:

"I close. We are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies, but fellow-countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken. The mystic chords which, proceeding from so many battlefields and so many patriotic graves, pass through all the

hearts and all hearths in this broad continent of ours, will yet again harmonize in their ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation."

This was a fine conception, but, marred by inelegant treatment, it became rather ordinary. Note now the change wrought by the literary touch of Lincoln:

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break, our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angel of our nature."

It is interesting to note that the Toronto Globe found this noble address of a "tawdry, corrupt, school-boy style." Was ever a more glaring instance of mediocrity decrying the majestic flight of genius?

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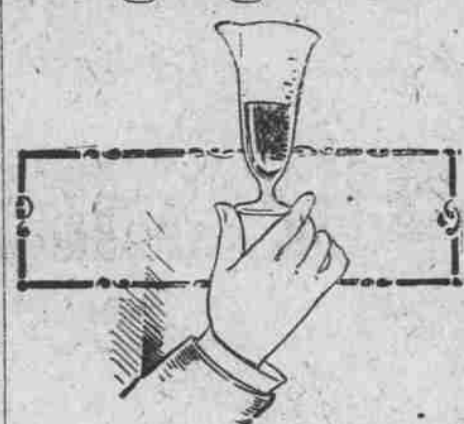
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