



Oregon City, Oregon,

D. C. IRELAND, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

Saturday : : Feb. 13, 1869.

SPIRITUALISM—WHAT IS IT?

There has been some considerable excitement in this county the current week, on account of the exhibitions of Cleveland & Funk, spiritual mediums, at the Court House in this city, and at Milwaukie. We understand that at the latter place the spirits failed to perform their work of entering the medium, and the audience was dismissed and the money refunded.

We have our private views about spiritualism, but we do not think that we have received "a call" to preach to the world, hence shall not force them upon the people—and yet, at this time, perhaps, we should not be justified in remaining wholly silent upon the subject. It is useless to deny but that some singular phenomena exists in these things. What it is we are not prepared to say. This however, is a remarkable period, and it is not at all improbable but that the world has in it some Philosopher who will yet solve the problem. It will be recollected that Curtis, Greeley, and others whom people are apt to call learned, have failed to satisfactorily account for the mysteries of spiritualism. The world is filled with the manifestations of invisible things; and sacred history teaches us that many remarkable events transpired in the time of the Patriarchs. The germ of gravitation has never been found out; and all that we know of it is what we can learn from Hamilton, Coleridge, and other students of metaphysics—who explain simply that the tendency of gravitation is to a center; that an apple falls to the ground because all bodies gravitate toward each other, etc., etc., but the germ of gravitation, its first principles, are not known. An Oregonian, however, recently informed us that he knew the secret. That he had accidentally discovered it whilst once looking over a precipice down which he had dropped a pebble stone. We immediately solicited "an item" about it from him, with which we hoped to enlighten mankind, but he said not emphatically; and stated to us that his score and ten were nearly as, and it was his desire to die in peace—that he did not want to suffer all the taunts of the public who would not, in all probability, see the facts as they would be presented by him, but that he had prepared manuscripts for his wife to make public after his day—when he should be unconcerned as to what the world might say regarding his views of gravitation. Why should we doubt the sincerity of that old gentleman? We agree that he is entitled to peace in his declining years; and if it be as he says, that this first principle of gravitation is a simple thing, when once understood, it is only another demonstration to wake men up. But, like the author who wrote of the dangers of our Republic, he would be very apt to be deemed an old fool until the facts do appear to the masses.

We believe that the first principles of what is now called communicating with departing spirits, will some day be made clear to all, and the simplicity of it will then excite about as much wonderment to know why it had not been seen before, as the fact that it is not known now excites so much attention. Planchette is a wonder to many; and yet what is planchette? Only a play! We consider Spiritualists, so called, only the forerunners of the final disclosure of what is now a most singular phenomena. We have no faith in the so called communications from friends and relatives in what is termed the spirit world. But we shall not, as we stated in the beginning of this article, trouble our readers with tedious paragraphs upon the subject. We believe it is a matter worthy of investigation, but would recommend weak minds to keep away from it. This is a matter which requires a well balanced intellect to deal with it—else the mind is apt to be deluged. And this is all we have to say about Spiritualism.

Union of the Telegraph and Post Office.

The Postmaster General is said to be prepared to report in favor of the proposed union of the telegraph and post office. He is satisfied that the post office department can arrange for the reception and delivery of letters, and the transaction of other incidental business, without any great increase in the number of clerks; and that the business may be made a source of profit to the Government. He recommends that Congress grant a charter to a company to contract with the Government to transmit and deliver messages at a low, fixed rate, and submits a bill embodying these propositions. The advantages of the new system, if it is adopted by Congress, will be very great, and one of the most immediate results will probably be a diminution in the number of letters mailed, and the increase in telegraphic messages. When time is of importance in the transmission of news, the difference in cost between the telegraph and the mail will be so slight that the former will have the preference, except where details must necessarily be sent. Heretofore the telegraph has never really been brought within the reach of the mass of the people, the rates having been so high that, save in cases of vital importance, persons of small means naturally used the post office alone. There is but one possible objection to the new system, and that is, that it might be converted into a political machine, and an asylum for office seekers. Should Jencks's Civil Service bill become a law this session, however, that objection would be obviated, and the telegraph, in common with the other Government offices, would be filled only by those who had proved their capacity to perform the duties assigned to them. We sincerely trust that the Postmaster's bill will be passed; but we should prefer to see it laid over for a session, rather than that its passage should occasion another opening for the spoils-hunting mob. Speaking in this connection the Chicago Republican has the following:

Great Britain has a postal telegraph which enables the people of that country to make use of the telegraph with the same facility as they do the mails. The government controls the wires and transmits messages at uniform rates that are much lower than those established by private corporations. A movement is on foot to introduce this reform into the United States. The Boston Board of Trade has recently had the matter under consideration and seems inclined to favor the proposition of Senator Ramsey, chairman of the committee on post roads. His bill authorizes the Postmaster General to establish a private telegraph system, extending to every city and village of 5,000 or more inhabitants—to establish postal telegraph stations at every place on the line of the wires, where required—to provide for the reception of messages at every postal telegraph station, post office or street letter box; also for their transmission by telegraph, by contract with a telegraph company, and for their immediate delivery by special carrier, at a rate not exceeding twenty-five cents for messages of twenty words or less for every five hundred miles, or fractional part thereof. It also authorizes him to advertise for proposals for providing lines and for the transmission of messages by telegraph to every city and village of 5,000 or more inhabitants; and to make contract with the company making the most favorable bid.

To bring about the desirable results proposed by the Boston Board of Trade, other plans have been suggested by influential public men. We are not prepared to say what method is best, but of this we feel confident, this country must soon have the great advantages from the telegraph which are being realized in other lands. So long as private companies control it, only the cities and large towns can have its use to any great extent. It should be made a part of our postal system and this would extend its use twenty fold, and the rates need not be more than one-tenth what they now are. A prompt and effective reform is needed, such as shall accord with our rapidly expanding enterprises and vastly extending resources. The masses of the people, and not the privileged few only, should have the advantages of the electric messenger created by heaven to give blessings to mankind. Let our men in high official positions be prompt to take such action as the exigency of the times so manifestly require.

—San Francisco had a total population in 1868 of 147,950; improvements of streets and highways for 1868, \$1,511,486.66; bonded debt for 1868, \$1,554,200.00; municipal expenses, \$1,788,586.67; assessments and rates of taxation for 1868, \$109,360,826.00.

—There are 40,000 miles of railroad in the United States, and this business affords employment to 420,000 men.

—Cuba has 30,000 foreign whites, 730,000 natives of European extraction, and 100,000 negroes and Chicanos.

—England has a population of 22,000,000, and 1,000,000 paupers; Ireland has a population of something less than 6,000,000, and 73,000 paupers.

—The merchants of St. Louis have adopted resolutions approving the bill for uniting the telegraph lines of the country with the national Postal Department.

—Late accounts from New York say that Pomeroy's Democrat has discontinued its evening edition after one week. It is reported that the morning issue is falling off, and the speedy dissolution of the paper is predicted.

—Boston is a wealthy city. Its taxable property is more than \$495,000,000, being larger than the whole taxable property of the State of Alabama, and more than twice as much as California.

—Exclusive of vessels engaged in the coasting trade, there are now lying in the harbor of San Francisco fifty eight sea going vessels, of which twenty-two are ships of considerable tonnage.

—Australia is larger than the United States. Its area exceeds that of the latter by about one hundred thousand square miles. It is more properly a continent than an island.

—The Australian colonists have 600,000 horses, 4,000,000 cattle, 38,500,000 sheep, 4,000,000 pigs, and 2,500,000 acres of cultivated land.

—The population of the United States is nearly 39,000,000. If it increases in the same ratio as it has in preceding periods, it will be 42,000,000 in 1870, and 170,000,000 in 1900.

—There are one hundred and thirty-four vessels on the ocean bound to the port of San Francisco—of which 70 are from Atlantic ports, 36 from Europe, and 14 from Australia. The commerce of South America is so limited that but 5 are reported from there. The rest are from China, Japan and the East Indies.

—The total length of electric telegraphs in the world, not including the submarine, amounts to upward of \$180,000 miles, which is more than enough to go around the earth several times. Of the total amount there are 43,250 miles in the United States—nearly one quarter of the whole.

—The American and China Steamship line made ten voyages from California to China in 1868, averaging twenty-eight days and twenty-one hours hence to Hongkong. These vessels carried on us \$6,743,672 in treasure, and 4,033 passengers, together with 6,356 tons of freight at \$12 per ton. Returning, they made nine trips from Hong Kong to San Francisco, averaging twenty-nine days and twenty-two hours each, and bringing 6,061 passengers and 11,939 tons freight. The money received for freight and passage amounted to \$804,260. The price of cabin passage was \$300, and of steerage for Chinese, \$40.

—There seems no reason to doubt that the Paris Conference will accomplish the purpose for which it was convened, and that the danger of a war between Greece and Turkey will be avoided. For some time the news from the East has been growing more and more pacific. When first the difficulty attracted the notice of Europe the aspect of affairs was very threatening. Turkey desired to fight, and Greece would not be restrained. It really seemed as though there would be nothing for it to do but to let them settle the dispute *vi et armis*. But gradually the affair has assumed a different complexion.

—The fact that the London Times has raised its voice against a proposition to abolish primogeniture in England, has led many to suppose that that remnant of feudalism is really in danger of speedy extinction. We do not believe that there is any hope of so speedy a termination to so old an abuse. The Liberal party, emboldened by their recent success, may have made some such threats as the Times denounces; but at the present time they are no more able to accomplish such a measure, than were the workmen of twenty years ago, to carry the five points of their much talked of Charter. In truth the strength of the English Liberal party is very much overrated in this country. The late elections showed that, in spite of their apparent popularity, the Tories held nearly as much power as they did, and the Tories are so much better organized a party that the Liberals narrowly escaped defeat in many places where they supposed the field was clear before them.

—The Argentine Republic has offered a premium of eight thousand dollars in gold to the inventor or improver of the best system of preserving fresh meats in a manner adapted to their export on a large scale. This offer will remain open until May 2d, of this year. The proposals will be received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Buenos Ayres. Here is a chance for an inventor to distinguish himself, and at the same time "put money in his purse."

—Considering the length of time during which the small-pox has been raging in San Francisco, it might be thought that the Board of Health could have arrived at some decision as to the best means of fighting the epidemic. Eight months, however, have passed away, two thousand victims have succumbed to the disease, and we find the Board of Health still disputing as to the method to be adopted for vaccinating the public.

A Texan writing to the St. Louis Republican, urging the construction of a railroad from St. Louis to Texas, says that between the Neeces and Rio Grande rivers there are 1,000,000 head of horned cattle, and 10,000 head of horses and mules. The trade of San Antonio with Mexico amounts to \$800,000 annually. It would take a railroad fifty years to carry all the cattle in Western Texas to St. Louis. The cattle in that country are being killed for their hides alone. He says such a railroad would not only make St. Louis the stock market of America, but would develop the finest copper, coal and silver mines in the world.

—The Connecticut River Railroad Company have adopted a new method of heating their cars. Outdoor air is purified by being passed through water, is heated, and then conveyed through pipes which run near the floor the whole length of the car. At proper intervals these pipes are perforated with small holes, through which the heated and purified air escapes. The warmth is distributed equally throughout the entire length of the car, and coming low down toward the floor will enable passengers always to keep their feet comfortably warm.

—There is now at St. Petersburg the richest Chinese library in the world. It consists of 11,607 volumes, 1,168 wood engravings, and 276 manuscripts. The books are on all sorts of subjects, and among them are several rare works, one or two of which are unique, one or two of which are unique, there being no copies of them in even the largest libraries in China. The library was collected by M. Skatchoff, now Consul General in Peking, during a residence of fifteen years in the Chinese Empire. Recently M. Skatchoff offered to sell it for \$1,400 to the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg and the Russian Academy of Sciences, but both institutions were compelled to decline the offer for want of funds.

—The Moscow Gazette urges the Russian Government to make the Russian trade in the Baltic independent of the Prussian harbors and railways. It is a humiliation for Russia, it says, that the principal channels of her export trade should be Konigsberg and Memel, and she should take immediate steps for making a harbor at Libau and connecting that town with Kovno by a tramway. This, in the opinion of the Moscow Gazette, is also essential for the security of the Empire, for in case of a conflict with Prussia, that power could paralyze its trade, and even if a war broke out between France and Prussia, Russia being a neutral, a French fleet blockading the Prussian ports would do as much harm to the commerce of Russia as of Prussia.

—The calico interest of the United States is an important one. The total product of printed goods in 1826 was about 3,000,000 yards. In 1836 it reached 120,000,000. In 1855 there were twenty-seven print works in the United States, which produced in the aggregate 350,000,000 yards per year. This amount at an average of ten cents per yard was worth \$35,000,000. In 1854 our exports of printed goods amounted to \$3,000,000. Our imports of printed cotton in 1856 reached \$17,110,752. Our exports in 1857 were only \$1,785,625 worth. The total products of printed goods in 1860, according to the census of that year, was \$7,748,644. There are 6,000,000 cotton spindles now in operation in the United States, of which, over 2,000,000 are running on cloths for printing, and produce 450,000,000 yards.

—The Bishop of Neutra, in Hungary, has a very interesting quarrel with a wealthy Jew, who owns a large estate in his diocese, and as proprietor of the estate, has the right to choose the priest of the Church in the village attached to the estate. The Jew insists on availing himself of his right, against which the Bishop protests. The Government has been appealed to to decide the quarrel.

The Council and the Fire Department

As the Oregon City Fire Department is now organized, and a Hook and Ladder and a Hose Company have been enrolled and officered, it is now incumbent upon the City Council, as a matter of duty, and responsibility, in case of a fire, to furnish those companies with the necessary apparatus forthwith.

The city is now paying \$1,000 per annum for water, for fire purposes, which is certainly a useless expenditure without facilities to convert the same to proper use, and unless the companies are equipped it will clearly be the fault of the Council. It will be of no use for the Council to shirk this responsibility by submitting the proposition to the people—the Council is supposed to be the proper authority—the fire to them as the custodians of the public interest. The contract for the water, amounting to thousands of dollars, was not submitted to the people, why now bewail words about the matter of \$500 or \$600?

I feel certain that the Council have the right to make this appropriation, the public interest demands it, and it is the duty of the Council to act.

Mr. Editor:—It seems desirable that some plan should be adopted whereby uniformity of time can be secured throughout the city. Why cannot the City Government employ some one to ring a bell at least once a day, say 12 o'clock M.—as a standard for city time. A multitude of inconveniences arise from the want of this. Each one supposes himself to be in possession of the correct time, when perhaps all are incorrect. In such a condition of things, it is almost impossible for men to keep appointments, without either losing time themselves, or causing others to lose it. Meetings are appointed at certain specified times. But in the case of some, these appointed times arrive half an hour later than in the case of others—so consequently, disorder and confusion follows. Meetings are disturbed by late comers, &c. Let us have some standard of time, either independently, or regulated by that of Portland, and let it be announced to all the citizens daily. Then we shall know what a man means, when he gives us the time of day. It used to be said that time is money, but under our present system it has lost its value.

—The Success is now running as far up river as any of the boats.

—The State Journal should read our Salem letter again, and observe what was said with reference to the "principal" towns up this river. If the newspapers of Salem, Albany, Corvallis and Eugene will make an effort they can cause the people to a work much needed, and about which we made a suggestion.

—Mr. Leinenweber, of Astoria, called at our office on Thursday last with a sample of fine sole leather as we have ever seen, being a specimen of what is produced at the Healdock Tannery, of which he is part owner. The leather is being shipped to California by the steamer of this week, and will no doubt attract considerable attention, and become another staple article of Oregon commerce.

MARRIED.

At the residence of Capt. S. Smith, by J. M. Bacon, Esq., M. F. C. GEER, and Miss ELIZA FOSTER, both of Clackamas county.

New Advertisements.

CLIFF HOUSE. MAIN STREET, OREGON CITY. The Proprietors of this well known House receive their thanks to the public for the patronage heretofore so liberally bestowed. Having enlarged and newly furnished our house, we claim to possess accommodations in every respect superior to no house in the State. WHITE RHOADES, Proprietors.

BELVIDERE SALOON. Main Street, Oregon City. M. BROWN, Proprietor, thankful for past favors, solicits a continuance of the same. FREE LUNCH DAILY. And the very best qualities of Wines, Liquors and Cigars. Pigs Feet, Tripe, Herring, Oysters and Sardines constantly on hand.

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J. McHenry, 94 FRONT STREET, PORTLAND, Oregon. Has on hand, and is constantly receiving direct from the East, a large and carefully selected stock of Grockery, Glass Ware, Plated Ware, Lamps, etc., all of which he offers at prices to suit the times, at Wholesale and Retail. Dealers will do well to call and examine his stock, and learn his prices, before purchasing elsewhere.

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In Large Quantities can be Found —AT— J. C. MEUSSDORFFER & BRO.'S S. W. corner of Morrison and Front streets, Portland, Oregon. Also Caps of every style, and Boys' and Girls' Hats in large varieties. Give us a call and examine.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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AT WHOLESALE. The attention of the merchants throughout the Pacific Coast, is called to the fact that we are now prepared to fill their orders for superior goods in

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AT PRIVATE SALE. English refined Bar and Bundle Iron; English Square and Octagon Cast steel; Horse shoes, Files, Rasps, saws; Screws, Fry-pans, sheet iron, L. G. Iron; ALSO: A large assortment of Groceries and Liquor. A. B. RICHARDSON, Auctioneer.

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and Ladies' and Gents' Under Wear and Furnishing Goods, which buyers are invited to call and inspect. JOHN WILSON.

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