

WILLAMETTE FARMER.

VOL. XVIII.

SALEM, OREGON, FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 1886.

NO. 26.

OREGON PIONEER HISTORY.

SKETCHES OF EARLY DAYS.—MEN AND TIMES IN THE FORTIES.

BY S. A. CLARKE

Copyright applied for. All rights reserved.

NUMBER XXVII. XXIX.

The Cayuse War.

In their new homes among the solitudes of the Pacific, the American settler enjoyed the great blessing of peace. The Hudson Bay Company were a foreign corporation, with opposing, and at times, conflicting interests, but the great humanity and Christian sympathy of its chief factor, Dr. McLoughlin, secured for them supplies and assistance that could not otherwise have been procured, upon terms that were liberal considering place and distance. The Hudson Bay Company might have been, in a covert way, inimical to Americans, and have greatly retarded settlement. It dispels all thought of ill-feeling and intention on the part of "the great monopoly," as some early writers style this company, to remember that kindness and assistance rendered Americans, strengthened and encouraged, an element that would certainly in time supplant English power and dethrone the then all powerful fur company. There had grown up a semi-barbaric empire among the savage wastes and great mountain ranges that occupied the wide continent to the north, from Puget Sound on the west to Hudson's bay on the Atlantic—a stretch of 4,000 miles from ocean to ocean.

The great chief factor possessed many of the qualities of a conqueror, and even more of the characteristics of a great ruler, for he had not only undisputed control of many men who represented civilization, but his name was respected and even revered as that of a mighty chieftain among the savage tribes west of the rocky mountains. He and the company he represented were supreme over this great territory. Had he wished to combine the savage tribes under his dominion to sweep away missions and settlers, to free the mountains of independent trappers and hunters, it could have been easily done and it would have been difficult to fix the responsibility upon the Hudson Bay Company or its chief. That he did not do so is plainly enough shown by the history of early missions and immigrations. His warm sympathy with many Americans was shown by his kind acts, generous deeds and genuine hospitality. So when war actually came the infant government turned toward the Hudson Bay Company for assistance without a suspicion that it was implicated in the massacre, though at this time John McLoughlin was not its chief factor and the London direction had reversed what was considered his too liberal policy toward Americans.

The news of the Willamette massacre came to the settlements of Western Oregon like a thunderbolt from a peaceful sky. McBean sent a messenger—a French Canadian—to Vancouver with the terrible story, and very singularly, ordered him not to give the news to Mr. Hinman, who was stationed at The Dalles mission, though he heard of the war party being sent for its destruction. Mr. Hinman furnished this messenger a canoe and accompanied him to Vancouver, only to learn of the atrocity of Willamette and the danger threatening his own people, as they were wind bound at Cape Horn. This action by McBean was inexcusable. The letters opened at Vancouver told the story and Hinman returned to The Dalles, sending word to Gov. Abernethy to hasten a small force there without an instant's delay. Mr. Douglas also sent an official account of the massacre and the news went hastened by the winter roads through the settlements. It was indeed a "time that tried men's souls." There were few regular routes, not many laid out roads,

and mails were casual happenings rather than an organized system. The only government was the provisional organization, which was everything to the people in this emergency, as it gave coherence to public action, and character to the claim for assistance in the purchase of supplies and munitions of war. The provisional legislature was in session, for it was December when the news of the massacre came, suddenly and so unexpectedly, upon the peaceful Willamette valley. Gov. Abernethy immediately sent a message to the legislative assembly, in which he briefly related the fact and urged, "immediate and prompt action." He suggested "the propriety of applying to the Hudson Bay Company and the merchants of this place (Oregon City) for a loan to carry out whatever plan you may fix upon." He had faith that all expenses would be promptly met by the national government. Assistance must be sent to survivors, and an escort to convey them to civilization.

It was a momentous time when this message reached the house and was read, together with the letters of McBean and Douglas, that conveyed the information of the massacre. Mr. Nesmith offered a resolution that was adopted, whereby the governor was authorized and required to raise and equip a company of riflemen not to exceed fifty men, with officers and dispatch them forthwith to The Dalles mission station and hold possession until reinforcements can arrive. This resolution led to a meeting, called the same evening, that was numerously attended. Stirring remarks were made by Nesmith, Barlow, Lee, and others, and the enlisting immediately commenced. Oregon City was a small city at that time, and there was no opportunity or time to spare for gathering people from the country. Forty-two names were signed to the roll and such prompt action was had that in fifteen hours from the time the roll was signed this company of pioneer rifles was on the way to the seat of war.

The columns of the Spectator, the only journal of that day, read as follows: "At 12 o'clock on the afternoon of Tuesday, the company assembled at the city hotel, where they were presented with an appropriate flag by Judge Nesmith, on behalf of the ladies of Oregon City. With an appropriate address, Capt. Lee, on the part of the company, made an exceedingly happy reply upon receiving the beautiful token of the patriotism of the lovely donors. Two hours after this presentation the company started, amid the firing of cannon and the cheers of assembled citizens." It spoke well for Oregon City, that in less than twenty-four hours her citizens enlisted such a company of noble and brave men, and armed, equipped and dispatched them for the seat of war. It is well worth mentioning that hurried as was their departure, the ladies of the town made them a battle flag as a reminder of home and duty.

This band of riflemen consisted of the following named persons and their descendants require no other patent of nobility than this record bestows:

Captain, H. A. C. Lee; Lieutenants, J. Magone, J. E. Ross; Commissary, C. H. Davendorf; Surgeon, W. M. Carper; Sergeants, J. S. Rinearson, C. W. Savage and Wm. Berry; Corporals, Stephen Cummings and J. H. McMillen; Privates.—I. B. Proctor, Geo. Moore, H. W. Coe, Lucius Marsh, Wm. Buckman, Joel McKee, T. Purvis, S. A. Jackson, H. Levalley, Jacob Witchey, J. W. Morgan, C. Richardson, John Flemming, O. Tupper, A. C. Little, E. S. Tupper, L. Walgamotts, A. J. Thomas, John G. Gibson, Geo. Westby, John Hiner, B. B. Rogers, Edw. Robson, G. H. Bosworth, E. Brattin, Andrew Wise, Jacob Johnson, S. K. Barlow, D. Averson, J. C. Daford, Geo. Weston, John Bolton.

Through the country the news spread "by word of mouth," and those who

could do so gave of their substance, while others gave of their time and risked their lives. The young and active men took the field; the would receive a blanket from a neighbor, a gun from another; this man contributed a horse, that one a saddle and rigging, and perhaps all could furnish a quota of provisions. So the crusader was mounted, clothed, fed and armed, receiving what he lacked. Not standing on the order of his going, he went quickly. There was now active recruiting in all sections. Oregon City was the point where government centered and where troops gathered. The recruit, as soon as ready, bade good bye to the home spot and started by the shortest trail for Oregon City. If he came to some sequestered cabin, newly built on some home spot that was to be, he never doubted what his cheer would be. It might be boiled wheat and rough fare for the table, and chance to spread his blankets on the puncheon floor for his bed, but he was roundly welcomed, had the best they had to give, and a blessing went with him as he went away. There was the hearty greeting at every pioneer's home for the man who went to fight their battle.

Besides the company raised and officered at Oregon City, another company was raised on French prairie by Thomas McKay, among the Canadian French and half-breeds. Judge Grim, who settled near Aurora, in the fall of 1847, describes this redoubtable and the enlisting of some fifty men, mostly half-breed. Mr. Grim had heard of him as an energetic and remarkable man, partly Indian himself, with some education and native wit enough to carry him through ordinary difficulties. He is described as riding like a centaur, the horse he bestrode seeming a part of himself. Some around him were on foot and some on horseback; people naturally grouped according to race and nationality. Mr. McKay would dash from one group to another, narrating the scene of the massacre, the need of prompt action to secure the safety of the settlement, and urging those who could do so to "join the volunteers and go to the war." With eloquence, in polyglot style, he addressed the settlers—the Americans in English. Turning to the French, he appealed to them, with fiery tones, in their mother tongue, while the next moment he would inspire the half-breeds with a torrent in their own vernacular, the hybrid Chinook. It was amazing to see and hear this hero of the wilds exhort, entreat and inspire—and not without effect, for his company of fifty men was raised on the ground that day.

The pioneers of the forties accepted it a serious duty to subdue the Cayuse nation and show them that the supremacy of Americans must be unquestioned. The roads to Oregon City were used by those seeking marching orders, and very soon a small but efficient army was in the field. It was another duty of the time to procure supplies and arms and sustain a commissariat, as well as to provide quartermaster stores. Going to war in an enemy's country, and in the winter time, was no trivial affair, no holiday effort, no mere summer picnic. The massacre occurred in the last days of November, and the call to arms was issued early in December. It was the very dead of winter, and while some were opposed to moving at that season, the majority realized that no time was to be lost in inflicting a lesson on the Cayuses. To leave it for spring and summer would be to earn their contempt. In the summer they could scatter and live anywhere, while in winter they depended on supplies provided in the summer and fall and could neither leave them nor carry them with them. To campaign in the winter might be inconvenient, but if well conducted and actively prosecuted would be sure to bring them speedily to terms. It was December when the American troops

took the field, and mid-winter when the young and active men of this region took up the line of march, by highways and byways, to Oregon City to enlist for the war. Mr. John Minto tells how he equipped for the war, though he afterwards joined Capt. Robinson to escort Jesse Applegate to California in search of help from any source that might be available there—State or National. He sold a yoke of cattle to secure a horse; Rev. J. H. Wilbur furnished him a "buffalo gun," as a large rifle then in use was commonly called. He remembers being present at a meeting of the older settlers, somewhat informal, held in Salem at Thomas Cox's store, where were present Mr. Cox, Daniel Delaney, Daniel Waldo, Jesse Looney, "Jimmy" Smith, W. H. Rector, T. D. Keizer, Towner Savage, the Methodist mission men and others we cannot name. They met to talk over the situation and do something to provide the sinews of war. This meeting illustrates the situation, the feeling of the community, and the loyalty and self-sacrifice that pervaded it. Each man named what he could spare for the emergency. One could spare a horse, another could equip it, a third had one or more guns. Blankets and bedding were needed for the winter campaign. It is probable, and indeed certain, that in every neighborhood of this region—so rich in men and women to make a state, but so poor in worldly goods—there were similar gatherings, spontaneous and earnest to provide means to carry on the war. How different this from the way despots make conscriptions and levy taxes to gather men and munitions of war! The provisional governor and legislature, organized and empowered by the few men who then settled Oregon, had only to recommend a course to be pursued to see it executed by the free will of a brave and self-sacrificing people.

Salem as a Business Point.

In a communication headed "Salem" the Statesman has some good suggestions by "Citizen," of the means that can be used to foster business interests, and their further development. Among other things "Citizen" says, "there must be a commerce running through the city that creates a demand for money, both in receiving and disbursing, and wherever we find commerce doing its work, there we find prosperous banks." This is well said, and I venture to add to it, preceding the very necessity of banking capital, is the necessity of ways by which commerce can reach most cheaply the business point to be benefited by its fertilizing stream. Since writing the short article which appeared in the Daily Talk of July 31st, in which the importance (to the future of Salem) of an highway from here into Central, Eastern and Southeastern Oregon by the best known natural pass through the Cascade range of mountains, I have made inquiries as to the results of a little business that has been going on by a rougher and more roundabout way; yet, passing through this city, because the party conducting the business and the banker who supplies the capital, are citizens of Salem and Marion County. A resident of this county last year began the business of collecting fat sheep and driving from Prineville, in Crook county, to sell in the Portland market or others northwest of the Cascades. His best way to pass the range was via the W. V. & C. M. (Lebanon) wagon road. The road follows the South Santiam valley, crossing the Wyley Hills, the Seven Mile Mountain, which separates the South Santiam from the headwaters of the McKenzie, Fish Lake, and thence up "Sand Mountain," nine miles, to the true summit of the range. Thus involving three mountains to cross, each steeper and more difficult than one on the North Santiam route, and three hard days drive further for fat sheep than the latter involves. The toll is three cents

per head. Yet this circuitous and hard road to travel brings mutton sheep through Salem to the Portland market at 37 cents per head less than they can be brought from Prineville to Portland via The Dalles and railroad. The writer learned from a sheep jobber driving a lot of these bunch grass sheep on foot to Portland alongside of the railroad, that he was making fair profits in this business, and there was not only economy of cost in driving, as against shipping by car, but that the stock went into the butcher's hands in better condition.

Now, Mr. Editor, knowing as we do from reports of viewers and surveyors acting under the County Court, that the North Santiam valley offers the best natural roadway yet discovered leading into Central Oregon for the construction of a good free common road, that can be traveled by the poorest citizen (and it is believed can be traveled at all seasons of the year) is it not worth while for the citizens of Marion county to make an effort to get such a road opened by which not only fat sheep, but bales of wool, fat beeves, horses, hides, skins, peltries and furs may be made to pass through Salem on their way to Portland and other markets of the northwest. It is well worth the consideration of the business men of Portland also. Thirty-seven cents per head and more healthy meat is some consideration on her "chop" account. But, assuming as permanent that there would be about that rate of cheapening in the delivery of all meats on foot from that great body of pasture land west, south and east of Prineville; there is the preservation of her interests in the wool trade, on which there is fifty miles less of railroad freights between Salem and The Dalles in reaching Portland; besides much that is now forced to go to The Dalles, Arlington or eastward to Ontario, will never go to Portland. It will take the other end of the rail. That city has learned, or is learning, that there is more than one road for the products of Oregon to reach distant markets. The little Oregon Pacific, as one of her most wide awake business men recently showed her board of trade, is putting down iron and such imports at Eugene, Corvallis, and Albany, at \$1 per ton cheaper than she herself is receiving it. This means that the same road will take wheat, wool, etc., correspondingly cheaper to the ocean. It then becomes her business men not only to cheapen freights into the mouth of the Columbia to Portland, but also thence to consumers of her merchandise in the interior.

The road I am now speaking for will take large amounts of farm implements, clothing, house and kitchen furnishing, upon the cost of which to consumers a deduction of fifty miles of railroad freight would be worth considering. This would be effected by having a better and freer road from Prineville to Salem than there is now between Prineville and The Dalles. I know whereof I speak, Mr. Editor, when I assert that there is no such "pull" required to cross the Cascades via the North Santiam valley as that necessary in crossing the valley of the Des Chutes at Shearer's bridge; that such a road once opened, and terminated by a free bridge, would bring a rich stream of commerce through Salem and Marion.—Corr. Salem Daily Talk.

As will be seen by an announcement in another column, Mr. Delos Jefferson is agent for the "Sherwood Novelty Harness." He has exhibited it several times on our streets and attracted universal attention. We cannot describe it, but say it must be seen to be appreciated. Messrs. J. D. Jordan & Son are agents for Mr. Jefferson.

The most deadly foe to all malarial diseases is Ayer's Ague cure, a combination of vegetable ingredients, of which the most valuable is used in no other preparation. This remedy is an absolute specific, and succeeds when other remedies fail. Warranted.