OREGON REPUBLICAN.

VOL. 1. DALLAS, OREGON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1870. NO. 42.

The Oregon Republican

Is Issued Every Saturday Afternoon at Dallas, Polk County, Oregon.

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OFFICE—Main street, between Court and Mill streets, two doors south of the Postoffice.

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The History of the Lucifer Match.

[From the Technologist.]

Few things afford a finer type of the results of modern civilization than the little splints which we use to procure a light, and then so carelessly throw aside. The laboratory of the chemist is introduced into our very households; results which but a few years ago were only to be produced by men who had long pored over crucibles and retorts, are now obtained by children; and the product of deep alchemical research becomes a daily, we had almost said an hourly convenience. Other inventions are on a grander scale and assume more magnificent proportions, but the lucifer match excels all in constant convenience. It requires no special engineer or chemist to operate it, as do the locomotive, the steamship the telegraph, the printing press and the spinning jenny. No bright brass work, no costly gearing, no elaborate ornaments surround it; and yet, if the question were between the telegraph and the lucifer match, we doubt not but that if the latter were buried in oblivion, it would abstract more from the general convenience and comfort of society than would the former. The telegraph would be missed by thousands. it is true, but the loss of the lucifer match would carry inconvenience and discomfort to every man, woman and child that has ever even heard of the telegraph.

But the match possesses much in itself that is intrinsically beautiful and interesting. We wonder if it has ever occurred to our readers that all the three kingdoms of nature contribute to their convenience every time they use a match? To form the little covered tip, animals gave their bones for phosphorous and glue; long and tedious voyages were undertaken to volcanic regions, probably to Stromboli or Girgenti, to procure the sulphur which is a constituent of most matches; while, to form the splints, our own American forests gave their tallest and noblest pine—some tree long the pride of the forest, and beneath which the Indian and the deer had found shelter—for it requires the very best of matches to make the splints of timber. Truly a match, trivial though it seems, is interesting and beautiful; but then most common things would be interesting and beautiful if we only examined them. The difficulty is that we walk through a world of interest and beauty with our eyes shut. Many, doubtless, remember the time when we had no matches; but our younger readers have probably never known a time when we were without this essential requisite of modern housekeeping, and probably they wonder how people ever got along without them. So we feel confident that, to old and young, the history of the match can not fail to be interesting, as on the one hand it calls up the vivid associations of early life, and on the other it will reveal a great many new facts.

Beyond all question, fire was a direct gift from God to man, whether at the first sacrifice, or at an earlier period, we know not. And, curiously enough, all tradition points to this origin of fire. The Moslem tells us that Gabriel instructed Adam and Eve how to make bread; and when an oven had been made under his direction, he fetched fire from Hell with which to heat it. The Angel, however, took the precaution to wash this fire seventy times in the sea, as otherwise it would have burnt up the earth and all that it contained.

We must here distinguish between a mere knowledge of the existence of fire and a knowledge of its use. Volcanoes furnish examples of fire by no means rare, and woods have often been set on fire by the lightning stroke. Yet man might know fire as an element long before he thought that it might be rendered of some use; and the ancient accounts have scarcely exaggerated the importance or difficulty of the discovery. This is indicated by the fact that various nations have been found to whom the use of fire was altogether unknown. This was the case with the inhabitants of the Phillipine and Canary Isles at their first discovery, and also with various tribes in Africa and America, who consequently fed on raw flesh. The inhabitants of the Mariana Isles, discovered in 1521, had not the least idea of fire. When they first saw it, as introdnced by Magellan's people, they regarded it as a species of animal which fed upon wood. The first who approached were burnt. which inspired great fear of the terrible creature which could painfully wound with its strong breath. (Kitto.)

Dr. Bartas, in his "Weekes and Workse," gives the following account of Adam's discovery of fire: copying the account given by Sanchoniatho of the production of fire by the rubbing together of two trees, he tells us that Adam, who witnessed this, fled with terror when he saw the ruddy flame arise from the copse, which was soon all on fire. The flame pursued him till a naked plain arrested its progress. Recovering his courage, Adam turned back, and observed with interest that cheerful glow which the heat imparted to his frame, and the speed with which it drien his damp clothing. Amid the cold of the ensuing winter, Adam often thought with regret of this, and, since this fire was not again kindled among the trees, tried a thousand ways to achieve its production. As we have previously remarked, Sanchoniatho tells that men first found out fire by rubbing two sticks together, and that the forests of Tyre took fire from the branches of the trees rubbing against each other during a severe storm of rain and wind, a result which is evidently impossible. For, although savage nations still obtain fire by this process, it is tedious and laborious, requiring constant friction and dry material—circumstances very different from those of a storm of wind and rain, with its fitful gusts. The labor reqnired to produce fire by this method will be appreciated on a perusal of Dr. Marcy's account:

"The most difficult of all methods of making a fire, but one that is practised by some of the Western Indians, is by friction between two pieces of wood. I had often heard of this process, but never gave credit to its practicability, untill I saw the experiment successfully tried. It was done in the following manner:

Two dried stalks of the Mexican soap plant, about three-fourths of an inch in diameter, were selected, and one of them made flat on one side; near the edge of this flat surface, a small indentation was made to receive the end of the other stick, and a groove cut from this down the side. The other stick is cut with a rounded end, and placed upright upon the first. One man then holds the horizontal piece upon the ground, while another takes the vertical stick between the palms of his hands, and turns it back and forth as rapidly as possible, at the same time pressing forcibly down upon it. The point of the upright stick wears away the indentation into a fine powder, which runs off to the ground in the groove that has been cut; after a time it begins to smoke, and by continued friction, it will at length take fire.

This is an operation that is difficult, and requires practice; but if a drill stick is used, with a cord placed around the center of the npright stick, it can be turned much more rapidly than by the hands, and the fire produced more readily, The upright stick may be of any hard, dry wood, but the lower, horizontal stick must be of a soft, inflammable nature, such as pine, cottonwood, or black walnut, and it must be perfectly dry. The Indians work the sticks with the palms of the hands, holding the lower piece between the feet; but it is better to have a man to hold the lower piece, while another holds the drill bow."

In addition to this original process, various have been the devices by which men have sought to rekindle their household fires when they have gone out. The blacksmith lights his forge with a red hot iron, made red hot by rapid and dexterous strokes of the hammer. The philosopher, dealing with more subtle agencies, accomplishes the same end by hammering air—a singular statement, yet one that is literally true. Iron, when hammered, becomes red hot, and will set fire to shavings; air, when strongly compressed, becomes so hot that it will ignite tinder. So the philosopher takes a brass tube, fits to it very accurately a piston, with a suitable handle, and then attaching to the lower end of the piston a piece of tinder, he drives it smartly to the bottom of the tube. If the operation is dexterously performed, the tinder will always be ignited. The sun, too, has often been the origin of terrestrial fires, and his rays, concentrated by a burning glass or by mirrors, have often enabled men to imitate Prometheus.

Domestic Happiness.

One great cause of unhappiness in the domestic circle, is the deception used by both parties before marriage. The endeavor on the part of each to hide his or her real character, and to appear to the best possible advantage, not thinking that after the hymenial knot is tied, that they will appear to each other in their true character.

The young gentleman, in essaying to secure the love of his inamorata, never ushers himself into her presence unless he is in "prime condition;" by this we mean, unless he is in good humor, good health, and well calculated to interest and please. And while proceeding to her place of residence, if possible, he procures a bouquet of her favorite flowers, a choice book, a periodical of which he knows she is fond, or some other token of his regard. With these, he would of course find her, or at least soon cause her to assume, a pleasant appearance; and under these circumstances the two pass a few hours, during which they mutnally exchange those expressions of tenderness, which are common among lovers.

In this way they pass on for months, and in some cases for years, their only study being to deceive, and their only and inevitable doom to be mutually deceived. Where courtship is prolonged for years, the friends of both parties commend their exercise of judgment and discretion, and justly too, in the matter, and if they do marry, the world says "their alliance was founded upon good qualities that each perceived in the other." This is right and proper; but the difficulty is, the gentleman has, in many instances, if not in all, created in the lady a desire for positions in life which it is impossible for her to ever attain, enjoyments which she can never procure, and excited expectations which, in the very nature of things, is impossible for her to ever realize. He has pictured to her the bright side of life altogether, without ever saying one syllable of its dark phases; he has shown her the sunshine, without ever mentioning the clouds; he has allowed himself to dwell altogether upon the romance, without bestowing a thought upon the realities of life. The unavoidable result is, the lady, when the vail is drawn aside, and she sees matters in their true light, is disappointed, thinks she has been deceived, finds fault with her companion, and, in many instances, yields to the legitimate results, and becomes gloomy and despondent; and following this, as a natural sequence, are unhappy marriage, domestic discord, and, often desertion.

Some will say, "the lady should have a mind of her own, and not allow herself to be deluded in such a manner;" but in the great mass of cases, she is young and inexperienced, with false views of life and its responsibilities, learned from novels, and what she observes in a short experience in the dizzy vortex of fashionable life. These are both calculated to mislead her, until she has reached the point in age and experience, which will dispel those dreamy fancies, and show life in its reality. To avoid these unhappy results, we need a few radical changes. Ladies and gentlemen in their intercourse with each other, with a view to wedlock, should cease to endeavor to deceive each other, bnt act their true character. We do not mean by this that the young gentleman who delights in obscene language and vulgar assertions, should indulge in conversations and habits of that nature, while in the presence of ladies, but rather, on the contrary, endeavor to produce a radical change in his tastes, habits, &c., so that he may not only the more easily gain, but also retain, the esteem of his ladylove. But whatever practices and course of life he calculates to pursue in after life, he should, by all means, give her to understand them before hand, in order that she may know what to expect in the hereafter. If he uses any artifices to gain the love of the lady of his choice, he should deem it his duty, as well as pleasure, to make equally as great efforts to retain that love after it is once secured. Several years since, while on a visit to a friend, a man of standing and acknowledged ability, I noted the deference and marked respect with which he and his wife treated each other in their intercourse. While rambling through his garden, in the afternoon, in company with this gentleman, I asked him how, through a long series of years, he had managed to always have everything so pleasant, and his family associations so genial and affectionate. "My young friend," said he, "Let me give you a little advice. If, in your intercourse with the world, you chance to find a young lady whose affections you desire to gain, endeavor to secure them by every laudable means; and always remember that the same means which are used to secure those affections, should also be used to retain them. By using those means, I have found in my own case, that life is one continuous courtship."

Before we left the garden, I noticed him pluck one of the finest roses he could find, and, as we passed up the steps to the piazza, the lady met us, and, with a genial smile that I shall never forget, the gentleman approached her, and handed her the rose which he had plucked, at the same time giving her an affectionate kiss. The lovely smile on her face, and the look of love and confidence which she gave him as he turned away, more than ever convinced me of the truth of the assertion, "That life is what we make it." In view of the many difficulties now observable in social life, it is to be hoped that these matters may be more noticed than they have been heretofore, and that we may see a reform in these matters that will result in the good of society, and a greater enjoyment of domestic happiness.—*Exchange.*

California seems to have awoke to the fact that the lottery business is an evil that should be stopped, and accordingly has taken measures to secure that result. This seems to have caused considerable excitement and contention in the Courts, as well as among the people. This is a step in the right direction. Gambling in all its phases is an evil, a great and growing evil, and steps should be taken to put a stop to it in all parts of the country. When we see such ruinous results following as we behold in the late California and Nevada lotteries—men committing suicide on account of losses sustained, and other fatal results, to say nothing of the depravity of morals that must inevitably follow in the wake of such practices, it is time to awake to the importance of prohibitory measures, and put a stop to such nefarious practices, and throw a guard around those who are unable to guard and govern themselves.

The *Oregonian* of the 12th inst. under the heading of "The Secret Out," gives an extract from a letter of the *Herald's* special correspondent on the Holladay Excursion; and, after making some other severe strictures upon him, says, "he felt as if he had made a fool of himself."

We wonder if the *Oregonian* and the *Bulletin* will profit by this poor fellow's experience, and stop their nonsensical scribblings about Ben. Holladay, and not, like the *Herald's* correspondent, continue to make fools of themselves, after they see their folly.

The *Gazette* thinks we need the instructions proposed to be given by the *Messenger*. That's true, without doubt. Of course our young friend of the *Gazette* is already too much of a saint to need any instructions as to his spiritual welfare, and too wise in his own conceit to require it upon any other subject. We have observed that young gentlemen sometimes arrive at an age when they are apt to imagine there is nothing more for them to learn.