

# OREGON REPUBLICAN.

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just claim to its well-earned title, "The Model  
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Decision of Character.

[From the New Jersey Mechanic.]

It has been truthfully said that the  
great moral victories and defeats of the  
world often turn on minutes. Fortune  
is proverbially a fickle jade, and there is  
nothing like promptness of action—the  
timing of things at the lucky moment—  
to force her to surrender her favors.  
Crises come, the seizing of which is  
triumph, the neglect of which is ruin.  
This is particularly true on the field of  
battle. Nearly every battle turns on  
one or two rapid movements, executed  
amid the whirl of smoke and thunder of  
guns that jar the solid globe. It was  
at such moments that the genius of  
Napoleon shone forth with the brightest  
lustre. His mind acted like the light-  
ning, and never with more promptness  
and precision than in moments of  
greatest confusion and danger. What  
confounded others, only stimulated him.  
He used to say that one of the requis-  
ites of a general is an accurate calcula-  
tion of time; for if your adversary can  
bring a powerful force to attack a cer-  
tain point ten minutes sooner than you  
can bring up a sufficient supporting  
force, you are beaten, even though all  
the rest of your plans be the most per-  
fect that can be devised. At Arcola  
he saw that the battle was going against  
him, and at once called up twenty five  
horsemen, gave them each a trumpet  
and made a dashing charge that won  
the victory. So at Montebello, he com-  
puted the distance of the Austrian cav-  
alry, saw that it would require a quar-  
ter of an hour for them to come up,  
and in those fifteen minutes executed a  
maneuver that saved the day. The  
reason, he said, why he beat the Aus-  
trians, was that they did not know the  
value of five minutes. At the celebra-  
ted battle of Rivoli, the day seemed  
on the point of being decided against  
him. He saw the critical state of  
affairs, and instantly formed his resolu-  
tion. He dispatched a flag to the Aus-  
trian head quarters, with proposals for  
an armistice. Napoleon seized the pre-  
cious moments, and while amusing the  
enemy with mock negotiations, rear-  
ranged his line of battle, changed his  
front, and in a few minutes was ready  
to renounce the farce of discussion for  
the stern arbitrament of arms. The  
splendid victory of Rivoli was the  
result. Waterloo was lost by Napoleon  
mainly because the swiftness of decision  
and promptness of action were wanting  
—because he wasted precious hours  
before, on, and after the day of Jigny,  
and on the morning of Waterloo, when  
he should have fallen on the enemy  
like a thunder bolt.

Of course, there are occasions when  
caution and delay are necessary—when  
to act without long and anxious delib-  
eration would be madness. All wisdom  
is a system of balances. It is well  
enough to be wary and careful up to a  
certain point; but beyond that, a hesi-  
tating policy is as ruinous as downright  
rashness. Thousands of men owe their  
failure in life simply to procrastination.  
Broddignag in words, and Lilliput in  
acts, they scrupulously follow Fox's  
advice, "Never to do to-day what by

any possibility can be put off till to-  
morrow." They never know their own  
minds, but, like Coleridge, debate with  
themselves the whole journey which  
side of the road they will take, and  
meanwhile keep winding from one to  
the other. Many a business man has  
made his fortune by promptly deciding  
at some nice juncture to expose himself  
to a considerable risk. "There is no-  
body," said a Roman Cardinal, "whom  
fortune does not visit once in his life;  
but when she finds that he is not ready  
to receive her, she goes in at the door  
and out through the window." Op or-  
tunity is coy. There are two moments,  
says Browning, in a diver's life (and  
the same applies to every man's career):  
One when a beggar he prepares to plun-  
ge; One when a Prince he rises with his pearl.

There are crises in almost every  
man's life when the Rubicon must be  
passed—when the Wellington of the  
mart or forum must not wait for Bluch-  
er to come up, but must himself  
arise and charge. The battle of life  
is constantly presenting new phases,  
and he only can expect to be victorious  
who is ready to show a new front as  
often as the situation shows a new peril.  
A sword that breaks in the very crisis  
of a duel—a horse killed by a flash of  
lightning in the moment of collision  
with the enemy—a bridge carried  
away by a freshet at the instant of a  
commencing retreat—are events which  
are paralleled in every man's business  
career, and call for instant decision.  
They confound and paralyze the feeble  
mind, but rouse a terrific reaction of  
haughty self-assertion in that order of  
spirits which matches and measures  
itself against difficulty and danger. It  
is told of Pellissier, the hero of the  
Crimea, that, getting angry one morn-  
ing with a sub-officer of a cavalry regi-  
ment, he cut him across the face with a  
whip. The man drew a pistol and  
attempted to explode it in the face of  
his chief, but it missed fire. Uttering  
a fearful oath, but otherwise calm—  
"Fellow!" said the grim chief of the  
Zouaves, "I order you a three days'  
arrest for not having your arms in bet-  
ter condition."

It is the lack of this promptness or  
characteristic of the gladiatorial intel-  
lect—of this readiness to meet every  
attack of ill fortune with counter re-  
sources of evasion—which causes so  
many defeats in life. There is a race  
of narrow wits that never get rich for  
want of courage. Their understanding  
is of that halting, balancing kind, which  
gives a man just enough light to see  
difficulties and start doubts, but not  
enough to surmount the one or remove  
the other. They do not know what  
force of character means. They come  
and go like shadows; speak like women;  
sandwich their sentences with apolo-  
gies; are overtaken by events which  
still irresolute, and let the tide ebb  
before they freely push off. Always  
brooding over their plans, but never  
executing them, they remind me of  
Voltaire's sarcasm upon La Harpe,  
whom he called an oven that was  
always heating up, but which never  
cooked anything. They never get  
ahead an inch, because they are always  
hugging some cowardly maxim, which  
they can only interpret literally. "Never  
change a certainty for an uncer-  
tainty." "A bird in the hand is  
worth two in the bush," are their  
favorite saws; and very good ones they  
are, too, but not to be followed too  
lavishly. Of what use is it to be sawing  
about a set of maxims to which there  
is a complete set of antagonistic max-  
ims? Proverbs, it has been well said,  
should be sold in pairs, a single one  
being but a half truth.

Not only is decision necessary, but  
promptness also, without which decision  
loses half its value. "Is Philip at  
Paris?" asked Charles V., after his  
son, the King of Spain, had gained the  
decisive victory over the French at  
Quentin. He estimated Philip's tem-  
per by his own. When Ledyard was  
asked by the African Association when  
he would be ready to start for Africa,  
he replied, "To-morrow morning." A  
similar answer was made by Sir Colin  
Campbell, when asked when he would  
set out to lead the British army to  
India. It was the promptness of Blu-  
cher that won for him the cognomen of  
"Marshall Forward" throughout the  
Prussian army. Again, besides prompt-  
ness, tenacity of decision is indispen-  
sible to him who would make his mark  
in the world, or achieve any rare suc-  
cess. All the men whose names have  
been blazoned on the scroll of fame  
have been distinguished by their firm  
adherence to their purpose—by the  
necesse non missa reverti—which has  
made their spoken word like an oath.  
When a certain commissary general  
complained to the Duke of Wellington  
that Sir Thomas Picton had declared

he would hang him if the rations for  
that general's division were not forth-  
coming at a certain hour, the Duke re-  
plied, "Ah! did he go so far as that?  
Did he say he would hang you?"—  
"Yes, my Lord." "Well, if General  
Picton said so, I have no doubt he will  
keep his word; you'd better get up the  
rations in time." When a man of iron  
will is thus known to be so tenacious in  
his adherence to his resolution that,  
once declared, it is like a decree of fate  
—there is no limit to the good or bad  
results he may accomplish. Such a  
will draws men and things after it as a  
boat does the drift in its wake.

A Hot Weather Story from the Sunny  
South.

A gentleman residing in Green coun-  
ty gives the following remarkable snake  
story:

He says he had repaired to the banks  
of a small stream for the purpose of  
securing a small fry for breakfast. His  
attention was attracted by a water snake  
lying a few feet below him in the edge  
of the water, with his head resting on  
the bank. He had hooked a young aligator  
once by putting a small fish on his hook  
and playing it on the top of the water,  
and it occurred to him that he might  
hook the snake in the same way. Cut-  
ting a small piece from a fish and bat-  
ing his hook with it, he began to play  
it slowly around the snake's head. He  
gave evident signs of interest in the  
bait, revolving around him, but made  
no move. Soon by accident, the piece  
of fish touched the back of his head.  
His snakeship took this as an insult and  
showed his resentment by snapping at it  
furiously, and after three or four ef-  
forts caught it in his mouth.

The gentleman tightened his line,  
and his snakeship discovered that he  
was sold. After performing divers  
evolutions, with the hope of either run-  
ning or fighting his way out of the  
scrape, he acknowledged that though  
his great ancestor had been too much  
for the woman, the son of the woman  
had become too much for him, and  
graciously submitted to be lifted on the  
bank and have his head bruised. The  
quarrel of the first snake had now  
attracted a second to the spot, and re-  
bating his hook with a piece of fish, the  
angler let it down gently till it touched  
his head a little elevated. Soon as the  
hook touched him he seized it, and  
quickly found himself by the side of  
his companion. In less than half an  
hour he had caught four—all that he  
could find. One of them got loose af-  
ter being drawn to land and got back  
into the water, but he readily bit at  
the hook the second time, and was caught  
again. "On a good day for snakes!"  
the gentleman thinks he could catch  
them faster than some men can unhook  
them.—*Agusta Chronicle.*

Strange Fish in Monterey Bay.

On Saturday last a large school of  
huge porpoises coming into our bay and  
cruising about some of our wharves  
launched a couple of whale-boats, and  
went after them. After a short chase,  
one was harpooned and towed to the  
beach. It was a young male about 12  
feet long and perhaps two-thirds grown,  
and proved to be a Short Finned Killer.  
Of the porpoise family, we have in the  
bay occasionally the sperm-whale; the  
common small porpoise, about 4 feet  
long; the bay porpoise, 15 to 18 feet  
long; the cow fish about the same length  
as the last, but thicker and stouter;  
the Long-Finned Killer, the Short-  
Finned Killer, and the black fish 15  
feet long. The "Killers," of which this  
was a specimen, have very peculiar  
habits. They are the wolves or cannibals  
among the Cetaceans, or whale kind.  
They go in bands of two or three  
or more, and prey upon seals and all  
the other species, except the sperm-  
whale. They keep about the head of  
their victim, seizing it by the lips and  
tongue and dragging it under the water  
and retaining it there until dead. They  
then feast upon the carcass, biting out  
large pieces of blubber and flesh, which  
they bring to the surface and devour.  
Capt. Scammon, in his little monogram  
on the Cetaceae says: "Instances have  
been known where 'Killers' have at-  
tacked whales that have been killed by  
whalers, and were being towed to the  
ship, in such a determined manner, that  
notwithstanding they were frequently  
lanced or cut with a bow spade, they  
took the whale from its human captors  
and hauled it under water out of sight."  
The porpoises have but little blubber  
and are of little value. A very super-  
ior oil for watches and other fine ma-  
chinery is obtained from the lower jaw  
of the common species, fin-back.—*Re-  
publican.*

Subscribe for the REPUBLICAN.

A Heart's Love and Anguish and a  
Pawnbroker's Interest.

About a year since a lady of this  
city, a widow, we believe, who had seen  
far better days, called on a pawnbroker  
to pledge the last article she could  
spare without taking the garments off  
of her person. They consisted of a  
silver half dollar that her lost infant  
child had worn, a silver whistle that its  
sweet lips had often clasped, and a gold  
pencil, all ke-sakes, dearer to her than  
anything left save life. The discipline  
of the Lombardies, knowing the ap-  
plicant for a loan, and confident that  
the value to her of the articles she thus  
pledged would ensure a return of the  
money, he loaned her \$5—much more  
than the articles would bring at a sale  
—at seventy-five cents per month's in-  
terest.

Managing to reach Peoria, Illinois,  
where she was forced to struggle hard  
to live, she was never able to get to-  
gether the \$5 with which to redeem the  
trinkets. But this woman would not  
think for a moment of the loss of the  
keepsakes. So, month after month,  
she forwarded seventy-five cents to  
the pawnbroker here, per United States  
express, paying the express charges each  
time in addition until she had paid 11  
months' interest on the \$5—\$8 25.  
When the last modest package arrived  
the express agent here, J. J. Hender-  
son, who had heard the story of devo-  
tion, decided that an end should be put  
to the business. Mr. Clark of the Amer-  
ican, and Mr. Weir, of the Adams, and  
some of the "boys" around the office,  
threw in a trifle each, made up the  
amount required, and sent for the  
broker. He gave the circumstance about  
we have related them, and produced  
the trinkets, which will be forwarded  
to the mother to day. It is not an ex-  
cessive stretch of the imagination to  
suppose that her heart will jump with  
joy when she receives the return of the  
treasure in place of the pawnbroker's  
ticket with the usual receipt endorsed  
on its back.—*Cincinnati Commercial.*

Cupid Tested by Mathematics.

An amusing instance of unconsciously  
splitting a difference is recorded in the  
"Memoirs of Madame de Lunny," a  
French writer of the last century.

A certain literary gentleman of her  
acquaintance paid her marked attention  
for a considerable time. It was his  
habit to call for her at a friend's house  
where she usually passed the day, to  
offer her his arm, and to see her home.  
After an interval, however, at about the  
time when a declaration might have  
been expected, the attention of the man  
of letters relaxed somewhat. He still  
manifested a regard for her, but not so  
intense a regard as he had shown at  
first.

It had been his wont, in passing  
through a large square on his way to  
the lady's house, to take her round the  
two sides of the square. As his fervor  
abated, he still escorted her home—he  
could not at once give up the practice  
—but he made short work of it. In-  
stead of going along the two sides of  
the square, he "split the difference,"  
and crossed it diagonally. "Then,"  
the witty lady remarks, "I concluded  
that his regard for me had at least  
diminished by the difference between  
the diagonal and the two sides of a  
square."

A NEW WAY TO COLLECT A BILL.—  
The New York Tribune gives some of  
the particulars in a case where a citizen  
having a bill against the city for \$10-  
000, tried in vain for some time to col-  
lect it. He finally received an intimation  
from headquarters to make the bill  
\$64,000. This having been done, the  
creditor had no difficulty in collecting  
the original amount claimed. The  
large margin went into the hands of the  
Ring which runs the city Government.  
It is a very tempting way to make out  
bills. They appear all right on the  
face; are duly certified, the money is  
paid over and everything is lovely until  
some prying citizen meddles with the  
peace of Tammany. Then comes a storm,  
and innocence rages with indignation,  
but that the wrong doers have been  
found out.

The following is one of Artemus  
Ward's "answers to correspondents,"  
which appeared in the Cleveland  
Plaindealer. The implied idea which  
pops into the mind is that the "young  
clergyman," has seriously written to  
ask how to make hot rum punch:  
"Young Clergyman—Two pints of  
rum, two quarts of hot water, teacup of  
sugar, and a lemon; grate in nutmeg,  
str thoroughly, and drink while it is  
hot."

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that he is prepared to do any kind of work in  
his line on the shortest notice, and in the best  
style. Thankful to his old customers and  
friends for former patronage, he respectfully  
solicits a continuance of the same.  
39-4f S. T. GARRISON.

Committee on Railroads

Have decided that as soon as the Oregon  
Central Railroad (West Side) is completed into  
Polk County, they will issue orders to all con-  
tractors and workmen on the line to purchase  
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Or anything they may happen to want of M.  
M. Ellis, at LaClede, formerly known as Cluff's  
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will find it to their interest to call and make  
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ing goods cheaper than anybody in Polk Co.  
I buy more Produce than any two stores in the  
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sour, and if it is sour, all the better.  
Yours truly,  
M. M. ELLIS.  
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