

The Oregon Scout.

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THURSDAY, SEPT. 24, 1891.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

We acknowledge receipt of an invitation to attend the Harvest Festival and Industrial Parade which occurred at Minneapolis on the 23rd inst.

The Scout is in receipt of Volume 1, No. 1, of The Rural Northwest, a semi-monthly journal issued at Portland in the interests of the farmer, fruit grower and stockman.

One of the ground planks in the platform of the farmers' alliance is a reduction of the present high and burdensome tariff. Protection means that the masses shall be taxed for the benefit of a few rich manufacturers. All classes, except the lordly few, can meet upon this platform.

An English gentleman puts up \$5,000 for any party who will cause a piano to move across the room or flowers to grow out of the ceiling in any supernatural or unexplainable way. If there are spirits who perform such feats for mundane friends the opportunity is a good one to do them a good turn.

The first importation of pearl buttons received at Chicago since the new tariff went into effect was that last week, and Marshall Field paid \$3,000 duty on \$1,400 worth. They were of high grade. The common ones, such as the people use, would have 600 per cent duty to pay. But the industry must be protected, if it takes the last button.—St. Paul Globe.

The little town of Union, in the Grande Ronde valley, is rejoicing in the encouraging prospects of witnessing soon a woolen factory in full operation. This industry would have been established in The Dalles long since if the least encouragement had been extended to the enterprise; but our business men were slow in considering the project, and it went elsewhere.—Times-Mountaineer.

There is scarcely any state of the Union possessed of so many features attractive to the settler as Oregon. Gold, silver, copper, iron and coal are to be had for the mining, the finest merchantable timber in the world grows in her forests and the valley of the Nile is no richer than Oregon's soil. The climate of the state is one of rare excellence. The home-seeker might travel all over the world and not find a location so desirable as many portions of Oregon can afford him.—Welcome.

The editor of a Georgia paper makes the following liberal offer in a recent issue: "We have taken wood, potatoes, corn, eggs, butter, onions, cabbage, chickens, stone, lumber, labor, sand, calico, sour kraut, second-hand clothing, coon skins and bug juice, scrap iron, shoe pegs, rawhides, chinquepins, tan bark, flea dogs, sorghum seed, jug ware and wheat straw on subscription, and now a man wants to know if we would send the paper six months for a large owl. We have no precedent for refusing, never having declined anything, and if we can find a man who is out of an owl and needs one we'll do it."

These are cold weeks, says the Examiner, for that part of the administration which is not rusticating at Bar Harbor. At the Pennsylvania republican convention there were not enough delegates for Harrison to keep each other warm. At the New York convention it was the same way, and now a canvass of the Massachusetts gathering shows 372 votes for Blaine, 47 for Harrison, 4 for Alger, 2 each for Reed and McKinley, 1 for Lodge and 1 for Fassett. If the number of Mr. Harrison's supporters in Massachusetts were multiplied by the number of the followers of Reed and that successively by the numbers of the McKinley, the Lodge and the Fassett men, the total would be half as large as the tale of retainers of Mr. Blaine. Even arithmetic rightly used may be a source of philosophical consolation.

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that the tariff on cotton goods was increased by the McKinley bill and that the price of cotton has declined two cents a pound since the passage of the law, twenty-nine of the thirty-three cotton manufacturers of Fall River, at a recent meeting adopted a resolution, which concludes: "Your executive committee believes that the time has come when some action should be taken towards reducing the cost of production, and in order to bring the matter definitely before you for consideration, unanimously recommends that a reduction in the wages of operatives be made, to take effect October 5, 1891."

Our Arid Domain.

The transmissouri states and territories are inaugurating a new doctrine. The valuable land, which will produce without artificial irrigation, is nearly all claimed, and now we have attacked the sand and alkali deserts of the west with weapons of irrigation, and this new doctrine is, that we will convert every foot of these lands into gardens and meadows. The rising generation must have homes, and these homes must be productive, hence this grand movement toward the final reclamation of western arid lands. What nobler purpose can a people have in view? What nobler mission can a citizen perform than the labor with hand and mind in the bringing into usefulness and fertility of the vast tracts of land which in their present condition are unfit for all the purposes of civilization—unless it be that of grazing, and its usefulness in that branch of industry is well nigh exhausted. And what is a better course for the American government to pursue than the cession of this part of its domain to the different states and territories in which such lands are located. For what do the states represented at the Irrigation Convention request shall be done with the arid land? Simply that it shall go into their public school fund. And what does this request mean? Simply that their systems of education will be improved and extended. And what does the distribution of free education mean? Echo answers—Civilization!

With this object in view, who is not in sympathy with the army of western irrigators? Who can raise a hand against the tession of every foot of arid land to the different states which claim it, on the conditions proposed, namely, that it shall be applied to their different public school funds? Not an American citizen who gives the subject a sober second thought will raise hand or voice against such a noble work. With rivers and streams distributed over the heated plains of the west, what verdure would spring forth, what productiveness would ensue? With ditches and reservoirs constructed and operated, and canals opened through the vast plains, what fertility and richness would take the place of dust and worthlessness?

The delegates to that Salt Lake City convention had a greater mission to perform than the majority of them realized. The duty assigned them was not an everyday duty—it was a duty the faithful performance of which involves the future prosperity and welfare of the west! It was a duty which, when fully realized, opens up to the man many a resource for honest thought. What does this general uprising of our sister western states mean? Why so hearty a demand for increased farm land, and why the provisions that would make the increased land an increase in public school fund? It means a need! It means that actual settlers are in need of a place "whereon to lay their heads," and that the congenial locations on Uncle Sam's domain have nearly all been claimed. And this state of affairs is a natural consequence of the land stealing and land granting which has cut such a conspicuous figure in the history of all past administrations. Nothing more than an empty treasury and an exhausted public domain could be expected from the flagrant rule which has done duty over American affairs for years—a rule which has given all countries in the world the free right to dump their scum and refuse upon our shores; and further on in the shameful play, to convert such scum and refuse into full-blown Americans and citizenship before the first principle of American independence has penetrated their muddled brains. American born children now seek in vain for self-supporting homes. Foreigners rule the land, and by virtue of what agency? By virtue of loose laws and greedy legislators. The time has come for the American citizen—to the manor born—to assert his right, and in the people lies the power. What use will you make of your prerogative? B. W. HUFFMAN.

From The National Committee on Legislation.

In response to communications requesting the National Legislation Committee to express in plain terms and in full the position of the national order upon action necessary in regard to the declaration of the Supreme Council in favor of the government ownership of railroads, and questions asking information as to what course the membership should pursue when government ownership is not an issue, the committee makes the following reply, and publishes the same to the order at large for the purpose of being thoroughly understood by the membership to the end that all may act in harmony and in concert:

1. Railways under the present system of road-bed and rolling stock in one franchise, either individually or corporate, constitute a complete and true form of monopoly.

2. A monopoly is any kind of occupation or business in which there is no competition, and in which the effects of competition cannot be applied to regulate discriminations, abuses and excessive rates.

3. Monopolies when left to individual management without effective government control, become a serious infringement upon the rights of the people, because they possess power to levy tribute at will, and are in direct conflict with the spirit and genius of our institutions.

4. The government, therefore, has no right to farm out to a class of persons, either individual or corporate, the absolute right to conduct a monopoly; because by so doing it would give such class the "special privilege" enabling them to collect tribute from all other classes.

5. If the government allows these natural monopolies to be owned and conducted by private enterprise and capital a plain duty it owes to every citizen is that it exercise a control so efficient that abuses and discriminations will be suppressed.

6. The effect of rate wars (sometimes erroneously styled competition) at the so-called competing points, has been to raise rates at all towns along the lines of the various roads, has thereby been simply a method taking from the country and giving to city, hence, nothing could be more deceptive than to advocate such "competition" as a benefit to agricultural interests. The fact is, that this falsely called railway competition has been one of the potent causes for the modern growth of cities at the expense of the country, when under correct conditions the growth of one should be a benefit and source of congratulation to the other.

7. All the existing evils and abuses can be abolished by a wise and efficient system of government control, provided the railways submit to and assist the government in inaugurating and applying a system so perfect that the rights of all parties concerned will be respected, and the public benefited. If they refuse to do this, then the government must, as a matter of protection to the people, own and conduct them as purely public necessities.

8. Under a good system of government control, by a competent commission, or otherwise, combinations between railway corporations, whether continuous or so-called competing lines, cease to be a matter of concern, because they can, in fact, be better controlled in a few hands and with few conflicting interests than with many. Let the control be wise, just and conservative, but efficient and certain.

9. The above summed up is: Railways are monopolies. As monopolies they must be under efficient government control. The cry of competition between railroads is a delusion calculated to deceive and injure the farmer. Under efficient government control combinations are not to be dreaded, and railway combinations cannot be combinations calculated to obstruct or suppress competition, because there is no such thing as railway competition. All agricultural states which do not control the railways by a railway commission should use every effort to secure such control at the earliest day possible, and all such as have inefficient commissions should make every effort to secure an efficient one, and endow such commission with sufficient power to carry out the object sought, with certainty and economy.

Another Letter From "Forus."

EDITOR OREGON SCOUT:—

In your issue of August 20th H. C. Emery uses nearly a column in replying to my article of the 13th.

I supposed when he made his first statements that he had some kind of an argument to present on his side,

but I find that I was badly mistaken. In his first article he affirms that science and the Bible disagree in regard to the flood story, but he has never attempted to show in what manner they disagree. He says: "Science demonstrates that the atmosphere is not and never has been capable of holding water enough to cover the earth to the tops of the mountains." I referred him to the 104th Psalm to show him that the Bible and science do not disagree. Then he says that he wants other proof than the old Psalmist David. I then referred him to Schrader, Smith, Sir J. Dawson, the Duke of Argyll, Howorth and Lanormant. In addition I will refer him to Duncker's History of Antiquity page 243-245.

He has not presented one logical proof to sustain him in his statements; he has not attempted to answer a single question I asked and he dare not attempt to explain the 9th verse of the 104th Psalm to agree with his explanation of the 6th, 7th and 8th verses.

He casts aside not only the whole story as it is given in the Bible, but the large mass of collateral testimony from every quarter of the globe which supports it. Now is this a scientific, is it a philosophical, is it altogether a rational method of proceeding? I for one am not willing to cast aside all of their testimony and accept Emery's opinion as final proof.

The Bible is a book which has been refuted, demolished, overthrown and exploded more than any other book you ever heard of. Every little while somebody starts up and upsets this book; and it is like upsetting a solid cube of granite. It is just as big one way as the other, and when you have upset it, it is right side up, and when you overturn it again it is right side up still. Every little while somebody blows up the Bible, but when it comes down it always lights on its feet and runs faster than ever through the world. They overthrew the Bible a century ago, in Voltaire's time—entirely demolished the whole thing. "In less than a hundred years," said Voltaire, "Christianity will have been swept from existence and impious, infidel, have passed into history." Infidelity ran riot through France, red-handed and impious. A century has passed away, Voltaire has "passed into history," and not very respectable history either; but the Bible still lives. Thomas Payne demolished the Bible, and finished it off finally; but after he dropped into a drunkard's grave, in 1809, the book took such a leap that since that time more than twenty times as many Bibles have been made and scattered through the world as ever were before. Up to the year 1800 from four to six million copies of the Scriptures in some thirty different languages comprised all that had been produced since the world began. Eighty years later, in 1880, the statistics of eighty different Bible societies, with their auxiliaries, reported more than 165,000,000 Bibles, Testaments and portions of Scriptures, with 206 new translations of Bibles or portions of the Bible distributed by Bible societies alone since 1804; to say nothing of the unknown millions of Bibles and Testaments which have been issued and circulated by private publishers throughout the world. For a book that has been exploded so many times, this book shows signs of considerable life, and I think it will be able to survive the attack of H. C. Emery. I will say no more on this question now, but wait patiently for some proof to be brought forward on the other side. I claim, however, to be, if not a free thinker, yet a free thinker.

FORUS.

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