

Appropriations for River and Harbor Improvements on the Pacific Coast.

Dispatches from Washington, dated March 3d, state that the river and harbor bill as passed by the senate provides that the following increase in the amounts granted by the house for the Pacific coast improvements: Sacramento river, increased from \$8,000 to the full amount of the department estimate. Canal and Locks at the Cascades of the Columbia from \$50,000 to \$100,000. For improving Coos Bay entrance and harbor increased from \$40,000 to \$60,000. The following sums were inserted by the senate. For the commencement of a breakwater and harbor of refuge at such point between San Francisco, Cal., and the Straits of Fuca as a majority of the board of engineers for the Pacific coast may determine, the general and local interest of commerce being considered, \$150,000; to continue the survey and tidal observations at the bar of the Columbia river, \$5,000. The senate also reported new items providing for accurate surveys of Alsea harbor and bar and the Umpqua river. Other Pacific coast items in the house bill remain unchanged, except that on motion of Sargent, the senate inserted the requirement that the \$6,000 granted for the continued improvement of Oakland harbor should be returned to the U. S. treasury on the 1st day of next July, unless the right of the estuary and training walls be secured at that time free of expense to the government, by making the date September 1st instead of July 1st. The items which have been agreed to by both houses. Willington harbor, \$12,000; lower Willametta and Columbia rivers from Portland to the sea, \$45,000; Upper Willamette, \$2,000; Upper Columbia and Snake rivers, \$20,000, and also provides for a survey of Petaluma creek and for a survey of the Columbia river at the Dalles, including plans and specifications for locks and a canal around said construction.

The Moral and Religious Aspect of the Indian Question.

A Letter Addressed to General John Eaton, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C.

OLNEY, CLATSOP CO., OREGON, December 1, 1878.

HONORED SIR:—I cannot at this moment lay my hand on your letter, inviting correspondence with myself, and others I might name, on the Indian question in our country.

In looking over our daily Oregonian of the 27th November, I find a short article from a gentleman from Umatilla, and, also the editor of the Oregonian's remarks on the question, which I take the liberty to forward to you with my views after a visit of several days during the month of June of the present year among the Nez Perces, and at Walla Walla just at the commencement of what was called the Bannock war—which should have been called the Umatilla or Cayuse war. Those Indians have for a whole generation been trained by their religious teachers to regard the American settlers in Oregon as intruders, thieves, and heretics, coming into their country to rob and destroy them.

While among the Nez Perces I made careful inquiries as to the war with Joseph's band, and found that the whole difficulty originated in the sectarian sentiments inculcated during the occasional visits of the Jesuit Priests, and by the superstitious worship of images extended to their medicine men, now called drummers, including the impression that it was of no use, for them to go

upon the reservation, for if they did, they would not be allowed to keep their homes or improvements, as the heretics (Americans) would steal them from them.

Another fact I learned and was much surprised to find that the Quaker policy or experiment of giving different tribes of Indians to the exclusive religious teaching of different sects, was being wantonly violated by the establishment of what is termed a Catholic mission, about ten or twelve miles from the Nez Perces agency on the reservation which I was careful to visit, and found a respectable sized church building, surrounded by a picket fence, and on entering, by invitation of a man called Father Morillo, a Nez Perces linguist, we found a railing with banisters extending through near the center of the building with a curtain suspended from the ceiling to the railing, and down to the floor enclosing the altar, upon either side of which stood a male and a female image, the female having the image of an infant in her arms, we were told was the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus in her arms, and the male was Joseph the husband of Mary. Around the walls of the church were numerous cheap pictures of men and women, said to be saints. There was but a small effort at cultivating a garden about the premises.

We learned while at Lewiston that the contributions for the establishment were received mostly from that place; as an effort to head off the Protestant mission among that tribe.

On arriving at the place we found no one about, till one, who is called Father Morillo, appeared as we were approaching the rear door to the entrance of the church, who took us to the front door and led us to the interior. While the curiosity of our ladies and the two children were being gratified, our guide appeared to be struck with horror and the want of reverence in beholding the images and pictures, he having crossed himself reverently on entering, and as we retired bowed his head to the floor, crossed himself and retired with us.

After examining the garden and its vegetables, the ladies plucking a few flowers by permission of our guide, we were invited into a log house for a short rest.

The house appeared to be used for a dining and sleeping apartment, with a kitchen and storehouse. In a short time after entering the house, a dark looking young man, called Father Gazoli, a roman patrician and doctor, made his appearance. The old French servant made an effort to introduce us, but so indistinct or embarrassed was he, that we did not at the time catch his name. The patrician or physician appeared not to be able to converse with our party, as he apologized by saying he did not understand the English language very well. After remaining an hour or so at the place, meeting nor seeing but two Indian men—no women—we proceeded on our return to the agency.

We noticed quite a number of fence posts, and was informed that fences had been made at government expense, and that the boards had been removed by, nobody could tell whom. There were no signs of cultivation for several miles, except at a place located by a white man with a Nez Perce wife, till we reached Craigh's place and a short distance below. From thence down to the agency, we were informed by the Indians, that they belonged to Mr. Spaulding's church, and were glad he had taught them to cultivate their land as well as his religion.

You will bear in mind, my dear sir, that six years of my early life in this country, from September 1836 to October 1842, was mostly among the Nez Perces, Cayuses, and a short time the Spokanes and Flatheads. That our visit among them last June was partly in consequence of your inquiries on the Indian question; to learn from personal observation and such information as I could gain from the Indians themselves, their enemies and friends on the ground, to give to you a more conclusive statement on that question.

We did not visit what is called the Lawyers band, some sixty miles above the agency, on the

Clearwater river; but from my early and personal acquaintance with him, and from friends and enemies of his band, I learned that his people had been true to our American principles, and his band had made equal if not more progress than the families located immediately about the agency and military post. One of the Lawyers sons is now a licensed Presbyterian preacher, having received most of his education from Rev. H. H. Spaulding. The Lawyer—his Indian name Ish-hol-hol-hoats-hoats, he discarded, and chose the name he received from the American hunters, with whom he was always a true friend. It was claimed by all whom I had conversation on the subject, that the Lawyers people were the best informed, and had the best improvements of any natives in the country.

Allow me to say, it was not difficult for me to draw from all parties, both white and Indians a full statement of their complaints and difficulties in reference to the Indians while with them.

In visiting the agency school of about fifty boys and girls, we were quite favorably impressed with the manner of teaching. Both teachers understand the Nez Perces language, could speak it readily and explain to the native pupils the meaning of every word in both languages, and by this means make the study of our language an easy and an interesting exercise.

They all seem quite ready in reciting, and interested in the school and manual labor department conducted by the teachers for the boys and girls.

At this point permit me to state my experience, observation and views of the policy of taking native children from their tribe, educating and returning them to instruct and civilize their several tribes, which I see is strongly recommended, and appear to meet with favor.

We now turn to a not less important subject, the education of Indian children and youth. Educational facilities have been considerably increased, and fifty boys and girls selected from various tribes have been sent to the Hampton Normal and Agricultural institute in Virginia to secure an elementary English education and practical instruction in farming work, and to return to their tribes after the completion of the course. An increasing interest is felt by the Indians in this course of education, and they would supply thousands of children could they be provided for.

Before I became acquainted with the natives of this country, and the fact and result of taking several active and intelligent boys from this coast to Red river, giving them a fair education, at least such as would enable an American boy to follow a respectable calling among his own people. These Indian youths came back to their own tribes, and I know of but two boys, even among the half natives who have risen to commanding positions. These were educated, one in Massachusetts, the other in Maine. Of the full natives taken from their people as proposed and returned, not one has met the expectations of his benevolent friends and patrons. I am not surprised at this result, but am at the short sighted policy that attempts at the present day to carry out so hopeless a plan in reference to our Indian population.

In illustrating my views and bringing them to bear upon this question of the special education of Indian children, you will excuse me when I say that having before me in this country, the result of that experiment among the Indians for many years, and having a young family of my own, with no prospect of education half equal to that of our own fireside; but by the time our own were reaching the period of intellectual development, the social surroundings were such that the question came home to us in this land; then so far distant from educational privileges with peculiar force.

We were prepared to educate our own children to our own standard. But how was it with our neighbors? Theirs must advance with ours, or ours would descend to theirs. The common school was our only hope for all together, and to-day, if this coast has anything it can point to with unalloyed sat-

isfaction, it is the high and noble stand it took in sustaining its common schools. Its children go from us fearing they will fail to meet the superior educational advantages of their kindred on the Atlantic side of our country and return bearing equal honors with their eastern associates. Will it be thus with the native children? The answer comes back with the experience of forty-three years—by no means.

The surroundings of the native child have been, and are to-day such that he must descend to the level of his people, or assume, as he generally does, an intolerable and disgusting superiority over his kindred, losing all his influence, he disappoints the expectations of his friends to improve the condition of his tribe. As we proceed with this question we will adduce facts in proof of our position.

After visiting the school and their farms and receiving a most cordial greeting from all the old and young natives during the week days, we met a large number of them on the Sabbath; during the exercise, we were carried back to the years of 1836-8 and 9, when Rev. Mr. Spaulding used to gather them into his log church and school-house, and teach them to sing in their own language, the songs he taught them. Not only this, but a young native, who had been licensed to preach by the Oregon presbytery, went into the pulpit of the agency church, opened the exercises with a fervent prayer, using a few but appropriate words in his own language, which to my surprise, having been 36 years absent from them, I could fully understand; after which a hymn in English was read and sung by the whole audience of Indians and employes of the agency. He then opened his English testament and read a few verses, turned to his Nez Perce testament and read the same in his own language, as translated by Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding. The subject of his discourse was "Salvation by Jesus Christ alone," which he impressed upon his crowded audience with true native eloquence. After a short prayer and singing, what appeared to be the regular exercises of the morning service, to which the older part of the audience gave the usual native assent *naoh*, for amen.

Immediately after, several of the old men and some of the women made remarks relative to the religious views they entertained, before Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding came to teach them. They said they were like people going in the dark, they did not know where they were going, but the talk of Mr. Spaulding and the books he gave them, and what he showed them about digging their lands, and getting plenty to eat from it made their hearts glad. The general opinion expressed was, that if they continued to worship Jesus Christ as God, and labor as Mr. Spaulding taught them, they would be happy, have plenty to eat, and be clothed, (we notice that all of them had on American garments) that they would be happy in the world to come. The frequent allusion to Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding was undoubtedly made from the fact that my wife was with me on this visit, and present, as we have been with Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding in the commencement of his mission. Most of the speakers expressed a wish through the interpreter, Mr. P. Whitman to hear what I had to say about them, and requested Mr. Whitman to interpret for them what I said; which was: That I knew they had many friends who were pointing to the improvements they had made, and we had come from our homes near the salt water to see for ourselves. We were glad to hear them speak, and to see them, their children in the school learning their books, themselves with good clothes, plenty of food to eat and houses to live in, and to hear them say they still loved to worship and pray to the Savior of us all. I knew they had many enemies who would deceive them and try to make them the enemies of those who were trying to help them to become like all honest, industrious and Jesus Christ loving people. We were glad to hear that their young men were ready to go with their true friend General Howard to punish such of their own people as refuse to join them, and to do as we had

seen them doing work on their farms.

They had good teachers sent to them by their true friend, who were ready to help and protect them. In their speeches they alluded to their condition when Mr. Spaulding came to live with them.

We were glad to hear them say that they had plenty of food now, of their own raising, without going to hunt the buffalo, and also to see that they had been cultivating their lands, so that the catching of salmon by people on the river below, would not make them starve, as it did the roving Indians who would not dig the ground, and get from it a good living as they had done, with plenty to sell and buy good clothes with, and look as they did, like industrious, honest, christian people. It made my heart glad to see them with my own eyes, and hear them speak as they did, with my own ears.

While visiting the old mission house we had an interesting interview with a Miss McBeth, at the Nez Perces agency. She had a class of Nez Perces young men who were reading theological works in connection with the bible. She was quite as enthusiastic and sanguine of her success in her efforts as are the Jesuits, judging from their writings.

Another interesting fact I noticed on the Sabbath we were at the agency, the heat of the sun was about ninety degrees in the shade, several of the natives escorted their wives, as I did mine, under an umbrella to the church.

[To be Continued.]

MARRIED.

At Rainier, Oregon, March 3, 1879, by Dean Blanchard, County Judge, Mr. Michael Link to Miss Mary A. Graham.

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