

AN AMERICAN SONG OF THE SHIRT.

It is not to a poet but to a professor that we owe an American version of the pathetic stanzas with which so many years ago Thomas Hood roused the conscience of England to the dreadful condition of the poor seamstresses of London:

"In poverty, hunger and dirt, Sewing at once with a double thread A shroud as well as a shirt."

In a letter recently published on the profits insured by the existing tariff to certain manufacturers at Willamette, Prof. Sumner has made a clear and vigorous statement of the amount and pressure of the taxation imposed, in the interest not of the public revenue at all, but of these Willamette manufacturers, upon every poor and industrious woman in the United States. This tax is levied, like the tax of death, with impartial hand at the proud portals of the rich and at the humble doorway of the poor. But, unlike the tax of death, it presses with peculiar weight upon the feeblest and the most needy.

"From the cradle to the grave," Prof. Sumner truly says, "every individual from the beggar to the millionaire, must have thread," and a tax on thread comes therefore almost as directly and inevitably out of the earnings of every man, woman and child in the community as would a tax on air or a tax on daylight. But upon no persons in the community does such a tax press so cruelly as upon women who are compelled to support themselves by needlework. It is the custom of the employers of women in our towns and cities to impose upon them the purchase of all the thread which they use. Now, if there be any class of laborers in these United States who can put forward a righteous claim to protection, this certainly is the class. And how does it protect these poor and helpless women? In order that the managers of the Willamette Mills may astonish visitors by the "perfection and elegance" of the appointments of their factories, and at the same time pay dividends of 20 per cent to their stockholders and water their stock in addition once in every three or four years, this system compels every one of these toiling, ill-paid women to contribute of her hard won earnings day after day to the Willamette manufacturers the difference between three cents, for which she could buy in Canada every spool of thread she uses, and five cents, the price which our existing tariff laws force her to pay in the United States for every spool of thread she uses! If she uses six spools of thread a week she must pay a tribute of twelve cents a week towards the 20 per cent. dividends and the watered stock of the Willamette company! And what does this tribute of twelve cents represent? An eastern working-woman who earns one dollar by ten hours' work—and how many working-women earn so much?—earns one cent in six minutes. If such a woman lived and worked in Canada she would earn the price of a spool of thread in eighteen minutes. Living under the "protection" of our own beneficent laws she must work for twelve minutes more to earn the price of this spool of thread in New York or Boston or Philadelphia. So that to pay her tribute of twelve cents a week to the Willamette mill-owners every working woman in the United States who uses six spools of thread a week must labor with weary eyes and hands an hour and twelve minutes more each week than would be necessary did she live under the British flag in the Dominion of Canada. Well may Professor Sumner exclaim:

"When we consider what this means to the women whose lives are running away in the minutes spent in that way, it arouses all the honest indignation and love of justice of which a man is capable. The linen company do not like to have the truth pointed out, but a man who sees the truth and would not preach it would be the most contemptible coward."

Is this the best "protection" that American voters can award to American women?

The sewing women, the saleswomen, servants, teachers, washerwomen, and the laborers' wives and daughters, scattered in garrets, tenements and cottages, struggling often with poverty and misery, and enduring a diminution of their comfort and well-being to pay the taxes which go to keep up the mill.

"The Willamette mill started in 1854 under a 25 per cent. tariff, turns out between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 dozen spools per annum, the enhanced cost of which to the consumers is not less than \$1,000,000. The consumers would no doubt make a good bargain if they should hire the whole establishment at present rates of wages and profits to stand still, provided that thread might be bought here as cheaply as in Canada. "The Willamette mill is, therefore, very much what Yale College would be if it were supported by taxes on sewing women and laborers and were owned by a joint stock company which ran it to make money. The public treasury gets a revenue from thread of \$65,000 or \$70,000 per annum, being for 1883 78 per cent on

the cost. The consumers of thread pay as much tax to the Willamette company in twenty days as they pay to the public treasury in a year.

NO CAUSE FOR COMPLAINT.

THERE is an undertone of uneasiness throughout the state. While Oregon never does nor never need know what "hard times" are, yet the present scarcity of money and general dullness is of near kinship. Especially is this the case in the interior and among those who have obligations to meet. From the comments of the journals it would seem to be general.

In Eastern Oregon the complaint partakes of the nature of a surprise. The line of completed railroad brings results that though partially foreseen, are unpleasant when they do appear. Competition finds merchants unprepared for the new order of things, and the inevitable adjustment of modes and values makes trouble.

In the Willamette valley mortgages seem to be in trouble; in Portland the real estate boom has subsided, and the O. & T. deal has hurt a good many.

In our own section of the state no one is out anything, and, on the whole, we of Astoria are to be congratulated.

Selfishly speaking, Astoria is better off than any other section of the state. The building of the Northern Pacific railroad cost us relatively less than any other portion of the north-west; our gain will be relatively more. It gives us all the benefits of competition; it gives us prompt and easy communication; it insures us a thousand comforts and conveniences hitherto unappreciated; it opens to us the markets of the east.

We have no wheat to hold, nor market to stock; the grain crop of the northwest will seek the sea by way of the Columbia; the completion of the fourth line of transcontinental railway will in no way interfere with Astoria's commerce. It will, on the other hand be of great and growing benefit to us in disposing of our great crop, our staple production,—salmon.

Up to the close of the last fishing season the Columbia salmon canners were under disadvantage in the American market. Sacramento shippers were able to place their pack along the line of the Central Pacific; to reach the Mississippi valley the Columbia shipper had to first send his salmon to New York. The completion of the N. P. R. R., changes this by creating a new market for the disposal of the Columbia river pack. Already three agents of Astoria salmon-canning establishments are taking orders and establishing trade on the line of the N. P., and the sales effected where a dealer can buy from 100 to 500 cases as he needs will be an important item in the sales of '84.

As to railroad progress in Mexico, the New Orleans Times-Democrat says: "The English were twenty years in building 263 miles of railroad from Vera Cruz to the capital. The Americans have built 2,500 miles of railroad on Mexican territory within five years. The Central Company alone has constructed 1,400 miles at different points, and the Mexican National about 900 miles. The subsidy granted these companies will average \$11,000 in round numbers per mile. It results then that the present administration has paid these two companies the enormous sum of 2,900 miles of road of \$22,000,000. It is probable that more than 1,000 miles of road have been built by Mexican and other companies during the same period, and which enjoy the same or even greater subsidies. To the above sum must be added \$11,000,000 more. This total of \$33,000,000 has in a great measure been paid in cash."

The force of contrast has been seldom greater in the history of the world than in the present case of Mr. Willard's altered fortunes. But 119 days ago he was at the head of three great railway corporations, the host of an assemblage selected from two continents, the central figure in the driving of the last spike in the Northern Pacific railroad; the man that had achieved that result, and had caused the Atlantic and North Pacific to be connected by a railway; the acknowledged manipulator of millions, with the prestige of success and in the flush of triumph. Last Friday, worn and weary he lays down the last semblance of leadership, and if the telegraph tells truly, is bereft of fortune as well as power. "But yesterday the word of Cæsar might have stood against the world; now, none so poor to do him reverence."

It is a striking commentary on the transitory nature of man in his best estate.

Every newspaper man knows there is no other such delicate and sensitive commodity as news. There is nothing else that depends so largely for value upon the source whence it emanates. There is nothing which comes before the public on which the "label" is so carefully scrutinized. Newspapers have characters as various as the individuals who conduct and control them. It is just as true now as it was in the morning of the Christian era, that "men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles." The character of the news not only depends upon the label—the name of the journal in which it appears—but upon the character for truth and veracity of the persons who furnish it.

EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FOUR is the presidential year, but what is of greater importance, perhaps, is that it is also leap year, when every young, middle-aged and old lady in the country has the inalienable right to propose to whom she pleases. This is one of the immemorial privileges of the sex. Its origin is lost in the mists of matrimonial antiquity, but its observance is wide as the boundaries of civilization itself.

CAPTAIN EADS, replying to the overtures of the Galveston City Council, undertakes to give thirty feet of water at Galveston bar, twenty feet guaranteed inside of two years, for a total consideration of \$7,500,000, the payment to be made as water is obtained upon the same plan as was pursued in deepening the south pass at the mouth of the Mississippi. For a further expense of \$100,000 a yearly depth of thirty feet will be maintained for twenty years.

AFTER putting in Villard's hands \$150,000 in coin for the Green River branch, Seattle justly complains that in the new Northern Pacific maps that enterprising city is totally ignored.

NORTHERN PACIFIC earnings for the third week of December increased \$83,270. Manitoba earnings for the same time decreased \$20,350.

ALL railroad work on the Baker City branch has been stopped. The Oregon & California extension goes on.

"BY JOHN ROGERS" when spoken in the right tone of voice, is considered an oath in Vermont.

DIED.

In Astoria, Jan. 5, 1884, of typhoid fever, B. G. Cabanis, son of Dr. T. T. and E. G. Cabanis, aged 20 years, 11 months and 12 days. California papers please copy.

Stockholders' Meeting.

THERE WILL BE A STOCKHOLDERS' meeting of the Point Adams Packing Co. at their office, at Upper Astoria, on Thursday, January 17th, at 10 o'clock A. M. By order of the Board of Directors. W. T. CHUTTER, Secretary.

Annual Meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE STOCKHOLDERS of the British America Packing Company will be held at the residence of G. Holmes, in Upper Astoria, January 18th, 1884. By order of the board of directors. B. YOUNG, President.

Annual Meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE STOCKHOLDERS of the British America Packing Company, Skena, will be held at the residence of G. Holmes, in Upper Astoria, on January 20th, 1884. By order of the board of directors. GUST HOLMES, President.

Notice.

THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL MEETING of the Astoria Social Club at the rooms of Hook and Ladder Co., No. 1, Tuesday evening, January 8th, at 8 o'clock. All members are requested to be present. By order of M. C. CROSBY, C. W. STONE, Secretary.

CLOSING OUT Auction Sale

ON MONDAY, JANUARY 7,

At 1:30 and 7 P. M. at

Carl Adler's Old Store.

DEALERS, ATTENTION!

The special attention of Traders in Toys, Notions, Fancy Goods and Cigars

is called to this auction announcement.

I am instructed by Mr. Carl Adler to take possession of all the stock remaining in his old store on Saturday morning next, and close it out at public vendue, POSITIVELY WITHOUT ANY RESERVE, MINDRANCE OR INTERFERENCE ON HIS PART. The sale will commence at half-past one o'clock on Saturday afternoon, and be continued in the evening and so on until all is sold.

The goods (for which he cannot possibly find room in the U. S. N. Co., case of the steamer "General Miles," for Gray's Harbor, prior to the date of sailing, will go forward without delay. For further information apply to J. H. D. GRAY, Astoria, Oregon.

E. C. HOLDEN, Auc'r.

The A1 Fast Sailing Schooner

"GEN. BANNING,"

156 tons register, will leave Astoria, on, or about

JANUARY 10th, 1884.

FOR

Gray's Harbor.

All freight now in Astoria, or that may be shipped by the U. S. N. Co., case of the steamer "General Miles," for Gray's Harbor, prior to the date of sailing, will go forward without delay. For further information apply to J. H. D. GRAY, Astoria, Oregon.

Steamer TOM MORRIS.

THIS NEW and Favorite Boat

IS NOW READY FOR BUSINESS AND can be chartered for excursions, special parties, etc., at reasonable rates. A general steamboating business transacted. V. BOELLING, Master.

NOTICE TO PILOTS.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO ALL in whom it may concern that there will be a meeting of the Washington Territory Board of Pilot Commissioners for Columbia River and Bar, held at Ilwaco, W. T., on the 15th day of January, A. D. 1884, at 10 o'clock A. M. Done by order of the Board. C. A. REED, Secretary. dt-wit December 25th, 1883.

You Are Sure to be Suited AT THE Leading Furniture House OF ASTORIA. CHAS. HEILBORN.



FOR THE Hall, Office, Library, Parlor, Chamber and DINING ROOM, in WALNUT, CHERRY, ASH, AND MAPLE.

We are without a doubt showing the Largest and Most Complete line of CHAMBER, SUITS in this city, unequalled in Design, Workmanship and Finish.

CARPETS.

We Carry an IMMENSE STOCK OF CARPETS of All Designs and Colors in Body, Roxbury, and Tapestry Brussels, Three Plys, Extra Supers and Ingrains.

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THE Billiard Parlors and Club Rooms

Are not excelled by any north of San Francisco. Nothing but the best dispensed, and every convenience for the comfort of guests.

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The Most Complete Establishment in Astoria. AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE O. R. & N. DOCK.

SAINT MARY'S HOSPITAL, OREGON

THIS INSTITUTION, UNDER CARE OF the Sisters of Charity, is now ready for the reception of patients. Private rooms for the accommodation of any desiring them. Patients admitted at all hours, day or night. No physician has exclusive right, every patient is free to send and has the privilege of employing any physician they prefer.

United States Marine

Seamen who pay Hospital Dues, are entitled to Free care and attendance at this Hospital during sickness. Permits must be obtained for United States Marines at the Custom House. SISTERS OF CHARITY

PERUVIAN BITTERS!



Wilmerding & Co., San Francisco. Loeb & Co., Agents, Astoria.

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Tin, Sheet Iron and Copper Ware. A General Assortment of

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Agents for Magee Stoves and Ranges

The Best in the market. Plumbing goods of all kinds on hand. Job work done in a workmanlike manner.

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And other first-class stoves. Furnace Work, Steam Fitting, etc., a specialty.

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You will be sure that it is worth taking. Every Variety of Fine Cakes and Confectionery

Special Inducements For the Holiday Trade. Candies, Christmas Tree Trimmings, Etc. The Best Quality of Fine Bread

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Wines and Liquors

Kept Constantly on Hand Domestic and Foreign Cigars of the best Brands.

NATIONAL BREWERY BEER.

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FOR TILLAMOOK. (Weather permitting.) The new Steamer

A. B. FIELD.

N. P. JOHANSEN, Master.

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