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ANTORIA. . .

VOL. XX, NO. 178

ASTORIA, OREGON, SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1884

PRICE, FIVE CENTS.

BILL ARP'S LETTER.

He Talks of the Time When His Father

Was Postmaster.

The Difference Between Then and Now.

Two cents-only 2 cents. When 1 look at a postage stamp it carries me away back. Back to the time when my father was postmaster and I was his clerk, and had to make up the mails in a country town. The difference between now and then shows the world's progress in a privilege that is hardly excelled in any other branch of improvement. We couldn't bear to be set back again in that line to the old ways that our fathers thought were pretty good. There were no stamps and no envelopes, and no mucilage. The paper was folded up like a thumb-paper, and one side slipped in the other and sealed with a wafer. The little schoolboys, you know, had to use thumb-papers in their spelling books to keep them clean where their dirty thumbs kept the pages open. Girls didn't have to use them, for they were nicer and kept their hands clean, and didn't wear out the leaves by the friction of

Boys are rough things anyhow, and I don't see what a nice, sweet, clean, pretty girl wants with one of 'em. Girls they say are made of sugar and spice and all that's nice, and boys of snaps and snarls and puppy dogs tails. Josephus says, that when the queen of Sheba was testing Solomon's wis-dom she had fifty boys and fifty girls all dressed alike in girls' clothes, and seated around a big room, and asked the king to pick out the boys from the girls, and he called for a basin of water and had it carried around to each one and told them to wash their hands. The girls all rolled up their sleeves a little bit, but the boys just sloshed their hands in any way and got water all over their aprons, and so the king spotted every mother's son

The postage used to be regulated by the distance that Uncle Sam car-ried the letters. It was 12½ cents anywhere in the state, and 18% cents to Charleston, and 25 cents to New York. It was never pre paid. A man could afflict another with a pistareen letter that wasn't worth 5 cents. A pistareen, you know, was 18% cents—
that is 7 pence and a thrip. We had
no dimes or half dimes. The dollar
was cut up into eighths instead of
tenths. When a countryman called
for letters and got one he would look
at it some time and turn it over and
meditate before he paid for it and at it some time and turn it over and meditate before he paid for it, and very often would say: "Who did this letter come from?" Well, I would say for instance, "it came from Dahlonega—don't you see Dahlonega written up on the corner?" Then he would say, "Well, I reckon it's from Dick, my brother Diok. He is up there digging gold. Don't you reckon it's from Dick?" "I reckon it is," said I. "Why don't you open it and see?" "No I'll wait until I get home. They'll all want to see it." When he They'll all want to see it." got home the letter would be an event in the family, and perhaps it would take a half an hour to wade through it and make out its contents.

Nine out of ten of those country Nine out of ten of those country letters began, "I take my pen in hand to let you know that I am well, and hope these few lines will find you enjoying the same blessing." My father kept store and his country customers used to sak him to write their letters for them, and he always sent them to me, and most of them told me to be-gin their letters that way. There was not more than one in five could write, but they were good, clever, honest people, and paid their debts, but they hardly ever paid up in full at the end of the year, and so they gave their notes for the balance and made their mark. My father used to say that he had known cases where a man swore off his written signature, but he never knew a man to deny his mark.

Our big northern mail used to come in a stage from Madison twice a week, and I used to think the sound of the stage horse as the stage came over the hill was one of the sublimest things in the world, and I thought that if I ever got to be a man I would be a stage driver if I could. Well, I come pretty near it. for my father had hired man to ride the mail to Roswell and back twice a week, and the m n got sick and so my father put me on a drumedary of a horse and the mail in some saddle-bags behind me, and I had to make the forty-eight miles in s day and kept it up all winter. I liked to have froze several times, and had to be lifted off the horse when I got home, and it nearly broke my mother's heart, but I was getting a dollar a trip and it was my money, and so I wouldn't back out. The old women on the trip used to growd me with their little commissions and get me to bring them a little pepper, or copperas, or bluing, or pins and needles, or get me to take along socks and sell them, and so I made friends and sequaintances all the way. The and acquaintances all the way. The first trip I made an old woman hailed me and said, "Are you a mail boy?" "Why, yes, mam," said I, "you didn't think I was a female boy, did you?" I thought that was mighty smart, but it wasn't very civil and it made her so mad she never told me what she d she never told me what she wanted, and as she turned her back on me I heard her say, "I'll bet he is a little stuck up town boy."

My father was postmaster for nearly thirty years. It didn't pay more than about \$200 a year, but it

made his store more of a public place. He didn't know that anybody else hankered after it or was trying to get it, but all of a sudden he get his orders to turn the office over to an-other man, an old line Whig and a competitor in business. It mortified him very much and made us all mad, for there was no fault found with his management, and he never took much interest in politics, but voted for the man he liked the best whether he was a Whig or a Democrat. When he found out that Alek Stephens had it done he wasn't a Stephens man any mere, and I grew up with an idea that Mr. Stephens was a political fraud. I didn't understand the science of politics as well as I do now. I told
Mr. Stephens about it one night in
Milledgeville when we were all in a

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premises or to A. M. JOHNSON & CO.

good humpr and were talking about the old times of Whigs and Demo-crats, and he smiled and said, "Yes, we had to do those things, and times they were very disagreeable."

Five Generals and Ope Ex-Judge Smokers.

There is a curious difference in the nanner in which great generals handle a cigar. Gen. Grant, for instance, who is the greatest smoker of the age, uses his as if he enjoyed it. He cuts off the tip with his pocket knife, and, once lighted, the cigar never leaves his lips until the fire gets so near his mustache as to singe it, and then he sticks in it a wooden toothpick and hangs on until the last whill can be drawn. He is a connoisseur in to-bacco, and atways smokes a medium strength eigar, which he imports himself from Havana. He smokes slowly and deliberately, with the greatest enjoyment, and believes that to knock off the ashes spoils the theor of a eigar. He does not use a great many a day, although he is constantly smoking. A box of fifty will last him a week or ten days.

Gen. Sherman's habits are the very reverse. He smokes quite as con-stantly as Gen. Grant, but uses live cigars to Grant's one, but he isn't particular about the quality. He knows a good cigar when he tastes it. but is indifferent whether he has a Wheeling stega or a Reina Victoria in his mouth. He snokes as if it was a disagreeable duty to be performed as rapidly as possible, chews the end that is in his mouth, and bites it off in chunks so that his cigar is consumed at one end as fast as it is at the other.

Grant always talks with a cigar in his mouth; Sherman never does. He

lays it down somewhere when he starts to make a remark, forgets where he puts it, and lights a fresh one say. The result is that his desk or the furniture furniture around the room which he happens to be smoking, is usually loaded with half consumed stubs. At his headquarters when he was in Washington it was generally the case that these stubs were to be found in every room that he frequented, and the staff officers called them "Sherman's old soldiers." He has frequently been known to borrow a cigar to get a light and then throw

the other man's eigar away without regard to consequences.

Gen. Sheridan is fond of tobacco. and enjoys a quiet smoke, but he can not do anything else while he has a eigar in his mouth without losing his fire. He breathes through his nose, and unless he pays strict attention to the business of smoking, his cigar goes out every other minute. The result is that the carpet around his desk and the cuspidor beside him is usually strewn with half burned matches, for he generally needs a full box of them for every eigar he

Gen. Butler always takes what is alled a "cold smoke." He never ome the letter would be an event lights a ciger, but always carries one with the wrong end in his mouth thrust way down his throat until only an inch or so is visible. He doesn' chew it, but rolls his tongue around the tobacco as if he enjoyed the taste. When he dictates letters or speeches or briefs to his stenographer he keeps his eigar in his mouth, tips his chair back, puts his feet on the table, and shuts his eyes. When he finishes the dictation, if he wants the notes written out at once, he goes to sleep until the stenographer has finished writing when he wakes up, signs his name, and goes about other business

Logan smokes by spells. For weeks he will not light a cigar, and then he will smoke constantly. During the period of abstinence he usually carries a cigar in his pocket, and gnaws off a chunk to chew when he feels like smoking. He likes a pipe better than a cigar, and owns several handsome meerschaums, but Mrs. Logan don't like that sort of thing, and the general never uses them when she is

Judge David Davis is an habitual smoker, but niways uses a five cent Whether it is a vitiated taste or a measure of economy is not known, but it is a fact. I asked the cigar man at the capitol to-day what kind of tobacco the statesmen used He said the southern men usually bought cheap eigars, as did the country members from the northern states but the city members used expensive ones.—Chicago Inter-Ocean. The Best Policy.

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