

The Daily Morning Astorian.

VOL. XXVII, NO. 64.

ASTORIA, OREGON, THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 1887.

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AN IMPORTANT LETTER.
From the Commissioner of the General Land Office.

Through the courtesy of Mr. C. J. Trenchard, county clerk, the following letter, important to many in this section, is furnished for publication:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
GENERAL LAND OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan'y 28, 1887.
Douglas W. Taylor, Esq., U. S. Surveyor General, Portland, Oregon, Ore.

Sir:

I am in receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, transmitting copies of communications from different parts of the state asking what steps are necessary to secure a survey in order to throw certain lands open to settlement under the homestead and pre-emption laws.

In reply you are informed that the present policy of this office is to confine the surveys of the public lands to agricultural and agricultural and grazing land, combined, which embrace existing settlements, and are actually occupied and improved by bona fide residents or similar land in the progress of the public surveys adjacent to said settlements. All applicants for surveys should therefore transmit to you sworn statements as to the number of settlers within the specified township, and the nature, extent and approximate value of the improvements, also a description of the class and character of the lands for which surveys are desired.

On receipt of said applications, you should forward the same to this office together with your report and recommendation as to the advisability and practicability for the surveying the land in question.

Existing surveying instructions provide "that survey of a township must be completed in the entirety, unless natural obstacles render such completion impossible."

It is also required that your first attention should be given "to closing up the fractional surveys," which have hitherto been omitted by reason of presumed difficulty in executing the work. Fragmentary surveys of such character should of necessity embrace settlements, or be contiguous thereto.

The surveys of the lands coming within the foregoing requirements can only be executed at the legal rates now allowed by the appropriation act approved August 4th, 1886, namely: \$9, \$7 and \$5 per mile for standard, exterior and subdivisional lines, respectively.

Referring to your suggestion as to the advisability of increasing the rate per mile in Oregon, owing to the rough character of the country and the dense undergrowth, you are advised that such increase can only be made by authority of congress, and until the same shall have been authorized, this office can take no further action as to augmented rates.

Parties desiring surveys will not be benefited in any way by applying for the same under the provisions of sections 2401-3, revised statutes U. S. special deposits, for the reason that existing laws governing the rates of mileage under surveys payable from the annual appropriation also apply to those payable from special deposits.

When applications for surveys shall have been received, and the same are found to comply with official requirements as stated, you will be authorized to invite proposals for the execution of the surveys at rates not to exceed those allowed by law.

Very Respectfully,
(Signed) Wm. A. J. SPARKS,
Commissioner.

The Wonderful Healing Properties of Darby's Prophylactic Fluid.

Wherever a preventing, healing, cleansing and deodorizing injection or wash is required use Darby's Prophylactic Fluid. Any inflamed surface, external or internal, treated with the Fluid will be quickly relieved. It has effected cures that had resisted the best medical skill.

The Indian still holds 134,000,000 acres in this country.

If you would enjoy your dinner and are prevented by Dyspepsia, use Ackon's Dyspepsia Tablets. They are a positive cure for Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Flatulency and Constipation. We guarantee them, 25 and 50 cents.

J. W. COBB.

CAUGHT BY A BIG CLAM.
A Thrilling Story Told by a Navy Lieutenant—Dangerous Situation.

The following swimming story is told by a lieutenant in the navy: "I kept my eyes fixed on my companion, Brown, who was acting in a singular manner. After every few seconds his head would appear beneath the water in which he stood, then it would appear again. He seemed to be struggling violently. As I approached him he threw up his hands and cried out, in accents that haunt me still, 'For heaven's sake, Lieutenant, quick, and help me!' I dashed out to him through water up to my waist. 'What is it? What has hold of you?' 'It's a big clam,' he groaned. 'I was wading here and stepped into it, I expect. Its shell closed, gripped my ankle, and to save my life, I can't move; and the tide will soon be over our heads here,' he added, and with something almost like a sob. He had been struggling here for 15 or 20 minutes. I had heard of the tridacnagas, or monster clam, of this coast, and instantly realized the danger of his situation. 'Courage, old fellow,' I said, 'I'll stick by you. Here, hold this paddle and the hatchet.' I then ducked down under the water and with my hands felt about his foot."

"The huge mollusk had what might be termed a death grip on him. The creature's shell was several feet long and of proportionate breadth, and the weight of the shell fish must have been at least 300 pounds. The creature was attached to the coral rock by a grisly byssus as thick as my arm. Raising myself, I got breath, then, seizing the paddle, thrust the shaft of it between the converging edges of the two valves of the shell, and using it as a lever attempted to pry the shell apart. But I could not open it. Brown, too, ducking down, seized hold with his hands and pulled with all his strength, but exerting all our power, we could not release the monster's hold. Again and again I threw my whole weight on the shaft of the paddle, and at length broke it. By this time the water was up to my shoulders when I stood up. Fully realizing that whatever I did must be done in a few minutes more, else the poor fellow would drown, I snatched the hatchet from Brown's hand, and, diving, tried to cut under the shell to break the creature's anchorage on the rock. With might and main I cut and hacked—then rose an instant for breath—then down and at it again. But it seemed as though I could not cut through the tough muscle.

Four times I dived, and with frantic haste cut at those tough byssus. "It stirs!" at length Brown cried, bracing his weight upon his free foot and lifting at it. Then, with a final blow, the byssus was severed, and the buoyancy of the water aiding us, we dragged the great mollusk—still fast to Brown's ankle—back to higher ground on the reef. Here the water was waist deep, however, and I looked anxiously around for Mac, in the lakatoi. To my inexpressible joy he was close at hand, and between us we lifted Brown, with his now captured captor, into the canoe. Even then we could not—both of us together—pry the valves of the shell apart enough to release Brown's foot, until with a knife we had reached in and completely divided the tridacna—sawing under the huge muscles at the base of the bivalve. It was truly a gigantic clam, and as a poetic retribution upon it for the attempt on the life of one of our party, we ate a portion of its flesh for our supper, but found it rather tough. Brown's ankle was severely bruised and wrenched, and he suffered for many a day from the vice-like grip of the huge mollusk.

RELIEF FROM INDIGESTION.
221 SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, Jan. 9, 1886.
I deem it my pleasure to testify to the phenomenal effects of BRANDENBETH'S PILLS, upon myself in eradicating from my system the most aggravated form of indigestion, the attacks of which were nearly as severe as spasms. After a costly medical treatment two boxes of BRANDENBETH'S PILLS have put me in a better condition than I have been for many years.
FRANK W. GILLET.

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