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VOL. 2. GRANT'S PASS, JOSEPHINE COUNTY, OR., FRIDAY DECEMBER 17, 1886. NO. 38.

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The Telegraph in Oregon.

(Oregonian, Nov. 15.) Yesterday afternoon the Portland office of the Western Union Telegraph company was moved from the New Market block to Kamm's block, corner First and Pine street. This is the second time the Western Union has moved in the twenty years it has served the Portland public. The occasion gives an opportunity to relate some facts connected with the early history in telegraphing in Oregon. The first line in this state was built by Wm. Johnson and associates in 1855. It ran from Portland to Corvallis, and was ily constructed. The Portland office was located in A. M. and L. M. Starr's building, on the southeast corner of Fourth and Stark, where the Oregonian office now stands. Warren Davis was the first operator. There was very little business, and in a short time the line was abandoned. Many farmers and merchants in the Willamette valley had subscribed to the stock. In 1856 and '57 the wire, which had fallen from the poles, gave a great deal of trouble to residents of the valley, and it was not uncommon for horses to stumble over it. The failure of this enterprise worked one important measure into the state constitution. Several prominent members of the convention favored a clause making stockholders of a corporation individually liable for its debts; but so many members were stockholders of Johnson's telegraph line, and had lost enough without paying salaries to employees still unpaid, that they succeeded in passing a measure to the effect that stockholders should be liable only for the amount of their stock. Johnson after a while deserted his family here, and was lost sight of. The next telegraph company was organized by J. E. Strong of Salem, and construction was commenced in the spring of 1863. W. S. Ladd, H. W. Corbett and other prominent business men of Portland subscribed liberally, as did the well-to-do men of the east side of the Willamette valley. Strong's plan was to build from Portland to Yreka, the northern terminus of the California State Telegraph company's line. Enough stock was subscribed to pay the cost of construction. Poles were erected as far south as Canyonville, Douglas county, and the wire and other material on board the American ship Noonday from Boston, which was wrecked off the Farallones in the spring of 1863. The line could not be finished. It was operated in a very lame sort of way as far as Eugene. In the summer of 1863, Strong transferred the line to the California company, and the stockholders lost every cent they put in. They received a little indirect benefit the next year by securing telegraph communication with the outside world. In the fall and winter of 1863-4, the California company completed the gap between Yreka and the Willamette valley. R. R. Haines, now manager of the Los Angeles office, was superintendent of construction and afterwards was district superintendent with headquarters here. Subsequently he built the line from Portland to The Dalles for the Oregon Steam Navigation company, and the line from here to Victoria for the California company. Connection was made with California and the east in February 1864. This line served as the only medium of telegraphic communication with the east for more than nineteen years. On the 8th of September, 1883, the completion of the N. P. R. R. gave a second line. In March, 1884, Dr. O. P. S. Plummer, the well-known physician and druggist arrived here from California and, on April 1st, assumed the duties of manager of the Portland office. For the first month or two he was manager, operator, messenger and line-repairer. Part of his duties was to keep the line in repair half way to Oregon City. The first office was a little corner 6x7 feet, surrounded by a railing in the Pioneer hotel, on the north-east corner of Front and Washington, owned by S. N. Arrington. This was the heart of the business section of Portland at that time. The Portland office "paid big" from the word go. There was a comparatively large business done, and not at low rates. It cost \$3 for ten words to San Francisco, and \$1.50 for the next five words, one word beyond ten counting as five. To New York the rate was \$10 for ten words. Besides, the sender had to pay for the United States internal revenue stamp which was required to be affixed to each message—something like three cents for every dollar of toll. In 1885 the office was removed to the Arrington house, on the northeast corner of Front and Stark, afterward the Cosmopolitan hotel. The office was situated back of the hotel office. Business increased so rapidly that soon an independent office became necessary, and this was secured on Front street, two doors north in the same building with the Cosmopolitan. In 1896, the California State Tel-

graph company was sold to the Western Union, the office remaining in the same place until 1872, when it was moved to the New Market block, where it remained till yesterday. Of hundreds of interesting incidents connected with the service in Oregon, which space forbids publishing, one is worthy of mention. It was a case of transmitting a very important message before office "hours." About six o'clock on the morning of August 2, 1873, Dr. Plummer was awakened with the startling message that the town was burning. He dressed hastily and rushed out doors. He was met by Mayor Henry Failing and others, who urged him to telegraph to Oregon City and Salem for help. Neither of these offices opened till 8 o'clock. That was an hour and a half away and moments were precious. In the vain hope that he might receive an answer, he called up Salem and kept up the call for several minutes. E. A. Brown, now operator at Heron, Montana, was the station agent and operator at Salem. He was up, ready to sell tickets for the Portland express, being sort of lonesome, and for want of anything better to do, he connected his instrument with the main wire and heard the Portland call, which he answered promptly. Dr. Plummer told him Portland was burning and urged him to send down town for an engine. G. M. Stroud was conductor, and he was urged to hold his train a few minutes. In the mean time C. D. Failing, train dispatcher of the O. & C. was awakened and hurried to his office. He ordered the track cleared and the express to make Portland in the least possible time. Salem had responded with an engine and a hose cart, both well manned, which were loaded on a flat car and attached to the express. It made the unparalleled time of fifty miles in fifty-six minutes. An incline had been prepared at L street, East Portland, the apparatus quickly ran down to the slip and thence across the river on the Stark street ferry. It was given a position at Front and Morrison and saved the St. Charles hotel and possibly a great part of the business district.

Opening the Umatilla Reservation. The Umatilla Indians have decided at last to accept the terms of settlement proposed by the government two years ago, and allow the bulk of their reservation to be sold to white settlers. It is a magnificent body of land, comprising 256,000 acres. After establishing the Indians in severally and reserving an ample proportion of wood and pasture land for their use, the remainder estimated at 142,000 acres, will be sold at auction. Only 200 acres will be sold to a single bidder (60 of agricultural and 40 of wood land), and each buyer must make oath that "he is buying said land for his own use and occupation, and not for or on account of, or at the solicitation of any other, and that he has made no contract whereby the title thereto shall directly inure to the benefit of another; and before a patent shall issue for unimproved lands, the purchaser shall make satisfactory proof that he has resided on the lands purchased at least one year and has reduced at least twenty-five acres to cultivation." This regulation is designed to prevent the purchase of the land by "grabbers" and to protect the country from the evils of speculative and monopoly ownership. Although the Indians have fully agreed to the arrangement, a considerable time must elapse before it can be carried into effect. The land must all be surveyed and platted, and the Indians must make their selections. After that the land to be sold must be advertised. The money accruing from the sale of these lands will be used to establish the Indians in their new homes, in maintaining schools among them, etc. Every dollar of it is to be reserved for them, and it will be expended under government authority. The lands which they retain in severally will not be patented to them individually for twenty years and are not to be taxed during this period. It is hoped in twenty years to make the Indians independent. The scheme of guardianship is a very elaborate one and contains minute provision for every emergency which is believed to be within the bounds of possibility. [Oregonian.] Another Pioneer Gone. Lagrand H. Hill one of the early pioneers of this valley died at the residence of his sister Mrs. Pat Dunn Nov. 30, after a lingering and painful illness. Deceased was in his 59th year; older than his appearance indicated. He came hither early in the "Fifties" with his parents, Isaac and Elizabeth Hill, who settled upon the donation claim south of Ashland and whose home so hospitably entertained the early settlers of the valley. He was the eldest of their children. These sisters and one brother survive him. [Monitor.]

(From our Regular Correspondent.) WASHINGTON LETTER.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4, '86. About the time this letter reaches you the two Houses of the Forty-Ninth Congress will meet and open in the usual way for the short busy session. The rush of Congressmen to the city, and of the crowd that always follows them, began yesterday, and will continue for the next month. The indications are that there will be pretty full representation of both Senators and Congressmen on next Monday, when the gavels fall simultaneously in both ends of the Capitol. The question which excites the most attention in the minds of the members who are coming in, is whether anything can or will be done with the tariff this winter. The high-protectionists are bound that there shall be no reduction of purely protective duties, if it can be prevented. The reform leaders are as anxious that some deference shall be paid to the promises of the party to which the majority belong. One of the things which the President is credited with saying in regard to the tariff is that it should be arranged with reference to economic interests instead of political conditions, that as a party issue it is distracting, and as experience for several long and fruitless years has shown, leads to no practical results, nor even points out practical methods of reform. A Pennsylvania member-elect of the Fiftieth Congress, who has been here during the week, was talking about the surplus millions and about the probability of the Administration being able to submit a plan for their reduction. He thinks a great deal will depend upon what the President will say and he thinks the President has before him now the greatest opportunity of his life. It amounts to a crime, said he, to heap up needless taxes in the Treasury in time of peace, and if the President takes a bold stand against it he will have the country to back him. Just at this time the President is giving the last polishing strokes to the message with which he has been wrestling for the last few weeks. He has had a very hard time with the figures of those surplus millions and in trying to solve the problem of reducing those needless taxes, —so hard a time, indeed, that he has grown nervous and irritable and explosive over the work, to the great consternation of his obsequious attendants. Secretary Manning's annual report will deal almost exclusively with the surplus and the best method of reducing the taxes, and it will be interesting to see whether he or the President can produce the better financial matter. The report of the Postmaster-General was before the public more than a week ago, but the report of Secretary Endicott will not amount to anything this year, nor will that of the Attorney-General. Secretary Bayard will make no report, but will represent the State Department by sending to Congress the diplomatic dispatches of the year. He is not discouraged, however, by the indifference shown at the last session of Congress to his recommendations. Secretary Whitney will ask for five more millions this year in addition to what has already been given for a new navy, and Secretary Lamar will reiterate his views on the settlement of the Indian problem. He advocates a generous policy on the part of the Government towards its wards, and at the same time recommends such measures as will result in their becoming independent of its fostering care. Our Indian policy, he insists, is based on considerations of national honor and philanthropy rather than of trade or self defense. Last year he said the Indians as a race are few, poor and harmless, and they have a just claim for help and protection which should be scrupulously respected. The well worn argument that it would be cheaper to keep the Indians at a fashionable hotel than as they are now dealt with, is often revived by western people who come here. The argument is strictly true, but the trouble lies in the fact that the United States has no right to save money in that way. The Indians enjoy no privileges that are not theirs by right, and those cannot be taken away, because the country would make money by the act. Mr. Lamar's report reflects a breadth of view and force of expression which gives the document a literary value not always to be found in a state paper. Last year he was startled by the estimates for pensions for the fiscal year just passed, "but," said he, "it is a tax that is cheerfully borne."

TO ADVERTISERS.

Grant's Pass, so named after General Grant, is a county seat centrally located in Southern Oregon. It is a progressive railroad town of 600 inhabitants, and is the main supply point for a large portion of country devoted to mining, lumbering agriculture and fruit-raising. Climate unexcelled. The Courier being the only paper published in Josephine county, with a good circulation in Jackson county, enables it to be one of the best advertising mediums in Southern Oregon. For rates, address The Courier, Grant's Pass, Oregon.

Cables Laid by the Postal Company Across the Columbia and Willamette.

On Wednesday the employees of the Postal Telegraph Company successfully accomplished the feat of laying the cable across the Columbia river at Kalama. The cable is one and a half inches in diameter and weighs seven tons. There are five separate wires, which are insulated from one another by means of rubber. It is similar in size and appearance to the Atlantic cable. This cable was wound on a huge reel, which was placed on a barge. This was towed down to Kalama, and one end fastened to the Washington Territory side; the barge was then slowly towed across the river, a distance of 3,000 feet. Then the wire was cut off, after making due allowance for a drop sufficient to reach the bottom of the river, so as to allow vessels to pass. The shore end was then fastened to the Oregon shore, and the party returned to this city, arriving back at 12 o'clock on Wednesday night. Yesterday a section of the same cable was laid across the Willamette river in a similar manner. One end was fastened to the East Portland shore and then the barge was slowly taken across the river to the foot of Pine street, where it was made fast. The distance across the Willamette at this point is about 900 feet, but it took considerable more than that of the cable, as it rests on the bottom of the river. The laying of these two cables only consumed about one half the material on hand. It will be stored away to be used if either of those already laid should be broken or destroyed. [News.]

To be Tried for a Brave Act.

Captain M. A. Hackett was summoned before Inspectors Lotan and Ferguson yesterday to undergo an investigation on a charge of having left the wheel of the steamer Rowena, of which he was in command on the morning that John Barrett was drowned, several weeks since. When Barrett fell overboard the boat was stopped and backed to keep from running over him or getting too far away from him. Then a skiff was launched, and as no one else would go in it, Capt. Hackett went. The skiff filled and he came near being drowned himself. He did all in his power to rescue Barrett and is now to be investigated for leaving the wheel to try and rescue the drowning man. It seems rather a strange proceeding, to say the least. Three witnesses were examined yesterday and the matter was continued. [Oregonian.]

Our Railroad.

We are thankful to our exchanges generally for the kindly way in which they have noticed the Umpqua R. R., but one of them seems a little skeptical and says after mentioning it, "if it is as good as reported etc." Well now we want to say that it is as good as reported, and better. If you don't believe it come and see. There is not another such a favorable scheme running loose in the woods of Oregon. We expect to get a ride (free pass of course) on the Umpqua River R. R. inside of eighteen months. Tack this in your hat for future reference. [Echo.]

Tell us the News.

We are often asked why we don't mention that "so and so" was sick, or that "such and such" a party was visiting my folks; why don't you mention something about my family. The truth is we never hear of any one visiting you, and as long as we are kept in such ignorance how can you expect us to publish such facts. Send or tell us the news and we will gladly publish it. [Telephone.]

No Pay Term.

At a regular meeting of the Board of Directors a few days since, the School clerk, T. Ford, presented a report which showed a balance amply sufficient to run the public school full nine months absolutely free, no rate-bills, no nothing. This speaks well for the Roseburg schools. Let every one contribute to this good work. [Es.]

Twenty-four thousand bushels of wheat were pooled at the warehouse in Hillsboro one day this week, and sold for 65 cents per bushel. This is a fair price, and we suspect other pools will soon be formed in the county and equally satisfactory prices obtained on sales. It is hardly possible better prices will be realized soon-in fact, wheat may soon take a tumble and leave the farmers in a much worse condition than if they were to sell now. [Hillsboro Independent.]

A monster locomotive for the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, to be used on the switchback over the Cascade, has arrived at Sprague, W. T. It has ten wheels and weighs 217,000 pounds when in working order. The cylinders are twenty-two inches in diameter and twenty-six inch stroke.