Rogue River Courier.

An Independent Paper, Devoted Especially to the Interests of Southern Oregon.

VOL. XIII. GRANT'S PASS, JOSEPHINE COUNTY, OREGON, THURSDAY, JULY 22, 1897. NO. 19.

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Office at residence—Third St. North.
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Mayor ..... J W Howard
Recorder ..... Thomas Smith
Treasurer ..... Col Johnson
Street Commissioner ..... T B Elliott
Marshal ..... Dave Keenan
City Attorney ..... C E Harmon
Councilmen ..... H C Kinney, Harry Smith, C E Harmon, T B Cornell, George Calhoun, Dr. Wm Flannegan

Regular meetings of the city council of Grant's Pass are held in the council rooms in the city hall on the second and fourth Thursday evenings of each month.

CIRCUIT COURT.

Meets on the third Monday in April and the fourth Monday in September.

COUNTY COURT.

Probate court meets first Monday of January, April, July and September. County commissioners court meets first Wednesday after the meeting of the county court.

LODGE DIRECTORY.

PAHAN ENCAMPMENT, No. 20, I. O. O. F. meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month in I. O. O. F. hall.
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GRANTS PASS LODGE, No. 84, A.F & A M. —meets every Saturday on or before full moon 8 P. M. All brothers in good standing cordially invited.
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REAMES CHAPTER, R.A.M., No. 28, meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month. 8 P. M. All companions in good standing cordially invited to attend.
J. E. PETERSON, Secy. J. S PURDOM, H. P.

GRANTS PASS ASSEMBLY, No. 49, United Artisans, meets 3rd Wednesdayevenings in A. O. U. W. hall.
C. K. ROOT, Secy. A. E. VOORHIES, M. A.

JOSEPHINE LODGE, No. 112, A. O. U. W., meets every Monday evening in their hall in Dixon blk. W. T. COBURN, M. W.
M. T. UTLEY, Rec.

JOSEPHINE LODGE No. 21, D. of H., A. O. U. W. Hall, Dixon blk. Visiting members made welcome.

GENERAL LOGAN POST, No. 39, G. A. R meets 1st Wednesday evening of each month at A. O. U. W. hall.
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Hon. H. L. Benson's Fourth of July Oration.

We were unable to give Mr. Benson's oration last week, but as that gentleman has many admirers throughout the county who did not hear the speech, we are glad to publish it in full at this time:

Some one has said, that "when the United States becomes the greatest nation on the earth, her citizens will stop talking about it." A statement which the newspapers have quoted with approval, and which, like all statements in the nature of epigrams, is liable to be accepted by the hearer without question, not because of its accuracy, but because of the striking manner of its statement.

It has been the time-honored custom of Fourth-of-July orators to dwell upon the greatness of our great nation—to arouse the American eagle to screams of triumphant boasting and unbounded joy: and I shall not be the one to abandon this glorious custom, in the hope of attaining the position of originality, for in spite of the bold and unsupported assertions of cynics and pessimists. I am still profoundly impressed with the idea that the star spangled banner is the proudest emblem that floats in the breezes of heaven: I am still firm in the conviction that to be a citizen of this republic is greater than to be a king. I am still old-fashioned enough to believe that the declaration of Independence so charmingly read to day means something greater than a jingo sentiment: That it spoke into existence a spirit of resistance to tyranny, That from the 4th day of July, 1776, until this hour, has never ceased to echo and re-echo round the world causing tyrants to tremble on their thrones, and to make even the czar of the Russians liberate his serfs.

It has had its influence upon every civilized nation of the earth, and that influence has tended toward the uplifting of the common people, and the enlargement of their liberties. It has given us a nation so free from class distinctions that the bare foot boy upon the tow-path, the weary drudge of the tan-yard, and the stalwart rail-splitter of the Western forest, might march by force of native ability, to preside with grace and glory over the destinies of fifty millions of sovereign citizens. It spoke into existecne a spirit of liberty and a love of freedom which has wiped human slavery off of the face of the earth. And so, my friends, it is fitting and proper, that on this day of days, the flag should float, the drum and trumpet should sound, that gun powder should burn, and that the American Eagle should scream :All joining in a paean of glory over the vindicated triumph of self government. In all of this rejoicing, in all of this love of country and pride in its grandeur, it is not to be understood that our government is perfect: that no blunders have been made in the past, or will be made in the future. For, since it is a government by the people, and since the people are human and fallible, so is our government fallible and subject to error.

But I have little patience with the pessimist who stands upon the street corner and prates unwisely and disloyally about how our nation is going to the dogs: who tries to make himself and those about him, believe that some petty and obscure government of the old world, is better than ours.

I have but little consideration for the man who sits all day upon a dry goods box, wearing out his seedy pantaloons by friction therewith, while he harps upon the mistakes of national legislation and seems to gloat over his false premise that all individual misfortune is the direct result of legislative un-wisdom.

Such men as he, should have filtered into the thing which serves them so poorly for a brain, the idea that the governing power of a nation cannot cause the sun to shine, or the rain to fall: that it cannot control the late and early frost: that it has nothing to say in regard to the coming and going of the drought or pestilence.

It should be driven in upon him, that if he prefers to sit all day upon the dry-goods box chewing a poor quality of plug-tobacco, and talking politics, rather than to plow the ground, sow the corn, and reap the harvest, no nation is sufficiently powerful to legislate industry into his worthless carcass.

If he be the personification of prodigality and unthrift, no legislative power is equal to the task of making him economical and thrifty. That if he be weak of intellect, and prone to make unwise investments, no legislation can improve the quality of his brain. And yet the task of teaching these is practically hopeless, for the lesson is all about them, but they will not heed.

Our forests of uncut timber, our broad acres of untilled soil, our mountains and streams with their hoarded mineral treasures are all shouting to them the lesson of splendid possibilities, but they stop their ears and refuse to listen.

And in the same category with these, is the man, who, without any particular railing at, or fault-finding with our national government, deems it a particularly brilliant thing to play the cynic— to sneer at all expression of patriotism and mock at any declaration of love of country.

Not many years since, it was my fortune, or rather misfortune, to hear a Fourth-of-July orator announce that his spread eagle pinions refused to soar, on that occasion, because he could find nothing in that document, which might in any manner thrill the American heart with pride or patriotism. He could find in it, nothing more than commonplace statements, which had wielded, and could wield no practical influence upon our government or its glory, that it is nothing more than sentimental bosh.

I, too, find myself at a loss for words, when I contemplate that sublime declaration. But God forbid that it should be from any view of the case similar to that which I have quoted. It rather impresses me as did the Pacific Ocean, when for the first time I stood upon one of the cliffs of its rock-bound coast, and beheld its mighty surges roll up and break against the unmovable rocks, with a deafening roar, as they fell back to gather strength for another assault. stronger, wiser than I, does that fact, in the nature of things, entitle you to any broader or higher civil rights than mine?

Because by fortuitous circumstances, you are cradled in the lap of luxury, while I am compelled to fight night and Thoughts of the Omnipotent One filled my soul and I could hear in the mighty waters, the voice of Jehovah, saying "Be still, and know that I am God." In like manner, as I listen to the reading of those thrilling sentences which changed the character of thirteen dependent and down-trodden colonies, to that of an independent, self-governing nation, my thoughts revert to the assembled representatives of those colonies, as with solemn countenance, pale cheek and throbbing heart, they strove to discover the shadowy line of demarcation between patriotism and treason. Their every action impresses us with the truth that although their bosoms heaved with the exaltation arising from battling for a grand principle, they fully realized that failure must result in their ignominious death as base criminals. No doubt, thoughts of home and loved ones—the desolation and want and suffering attendant upon war, were present to their minds in all-sufficient vividness. No doubt they felt the oppressive burden of leading a forlorn hope. No doubt they realized that in the eyes of the world, the chances were all in favor of mighty England, the boasted mistress of the seas. Why, then, were they bold enough to undertake so mournful a task? What was there in all their work, which could eliminate fool-hardiness as the chief element in their daring stand for liberty?

The answer, my friends, is easy enough to the reverent student of history. But to answer it we must go back more than a century for our starting point and reason as we go.

In 1620 a hundred men, women and children landed on the coast of Massachussetts. It is not necessary for me to recall the character of that little band of heroes It is sufficient to say that the Bible contained their code of laws, and was the sole guide of their daily conduct and deportment.

Again fourteen years later Rhode Island was settled by a little band of God-fearing men, under the leadership of the sainted Roger Williams. In character and religious devotion, they resembled the Puritans.

Again Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware were settled by that society of men and women known as Quakers, who feared God and directed their daily lives by his revealed word.

Again Maryland received its population under the guiding hand of Lord Baltimore, who sought an asylum for his persecuted brethren, the Catholics. And so we might continue. But, you ask, what has all this to do with the original question? I answer:—That it was an age and among a people with whom it was not considered a smart or a brilliant thing to cast doubt on the power and providence of an omnipotent God. They were men whose arms were nerved with strength and valor by saying to themselves, "If God be for us, who can be against us?

When before the battle of Bunker Hill, we find the continental army standing with uncovered heads, while the silver-haired president of Harvard College appealed to the God of Battles in their behalf: When alone in the forest, George Washington is discovered upon bended knees in prayer and tears for his beloved people, I say the answer is easy, and it could scarce require a prophet to forecast the result.

If the Declaration Independence means nothing more than sentimental bosh, then is every declaration of war a meaningless jingle of words. If it were destined to exert no influence upon the subsequent history of the colonists, then no revolutionary document could exert any influence upon those by whom it was issued. But, my friends, it has been influential: It severed at a blow the bonds which make the distinction between a bondman and a freeman. It burned the ships behind the colonists in their battle for justice and right. It rendered retreat or reconciliation impossible. It influenced public sentiment in the monarchies of the old world until their constitutional liberties have been largely extended, and has made a republic of France. Yet none of these nations has attained to the full measure of governmental liberty; and, since the human heart everywhere is longing for freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of action, every breeze from the east fills the sails of a ship which bears to our shores, myriads of men and women, self-exiled in their search for liberty.

In every village and hamlet of our nation, where this day is celebrated, these devotees at the shrine of liberty listen with eager pleasure to the reading of that illustrious document, and feel in their hearts a responsive throb as each sentence falls from the lips of the speaker.

"All men are created equal," says the declaration: "But," says the would be critic, "the most casual observation shows that to be false—for we all know that some men are stronger than others—some men are more skillful than others—some men are wiser than others—some men are rich, and some are poor." All this is good enough, if it were not based upon a false conception of the meaning of words, as used by our ancestors when they formulated the declaration which cast the yoke of bondage from their necks, and with Washington as their Moses, they marched out of the Egypt of their thraldom, and into the promised land.

They intended to affirm that accidents of birth, strength, wisdom, or wealth, carry with them no inherent superiority of social or political privileges. The men who framed that writing, were statesmen in whose hands rested the destiny, the weal or woe of a nation; They felt the burden of responsibility resting upon them, and uttered no word without carefully weighing their import. They felt their position too sacred to be marred by quackery or charlatanism. They had neither time nor inclination for high sounding empty bombast.

What matter though you be richer, day, with the gaunt wolves of poverty hunger and despair, that gnash their teeth and snarl at my cabin door. Does that fact indicate with any degree of certainty that the God of the universe designed for you any higher grade of political privileges than mine? Nay, by the declaration of holy writ, "God is no respector of persons." The king upon his throne beside the peasant in his hovel; the queen in her robes of state, with diadem upon her brow, beside the poor washerwoman, who toils from early morn till dewy eve to obtain food for little ones, are, in the view of the all-wise Creator, one blood, and deserving of equally kind treatment, and, thanks to divine guidance, one nation of earth, has based its government upon that splendid truth. For its celebration, we are here today, and our hearts are full of gratitude for the bounties which heaven has showered upon us.

We seek to fix in the hearts and memories of the youth of the land a reverence for the principles which have rendered this country a happy home; so that when we are summoned to the pale realms of shade, the government that we love may be perpetuated to coming generations, untarnished by selfishness, and untainted by national dishonor. That this will be the future of America, cannot be doubted when we contemplate the character and growth of the men and states which constitute the commonwealth.

History teaches in language too plain to be misinterpreted, that nations have fallen into decay and ruin in the ratio of the abnormal increase of enervating luxury, idleness and ease. In the language of Goldsmith:

"Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.
Princes and Lords may flourish and fade:
A breath may make them, as a breath has made
But a bold yeomanry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

The pioneers of this continent were men whose lives had been a continual conflict. They were accustomed only to the sternest realities of life. In the land from which they had emigrated, oppression, want, persecution and death, had grown familiar by their frequent recurrences. No downy pillows and luxurious beds had rested their weary forms. Again and again had the barren hearth, or the mountain fastness been their bed-chamber, the stars their lamp, and the vaulted sky their canopy. Thus, they were well fitted for the fiery ordeals that should attend them in blazing a path through the wilderness. They were the stuff of which heroes were made, and they left to their offspring, a priceless legacy of precept and example.

But as our country grew and extended its borders; as new industries sprang into existence; as comfort and pleasure took the place of toil and hardship; as succeeding generations accumulated wealth, the older families fell into decay and new men stepped to the front and guided the ship of state upon its devious way and up to this hour they have maintained its honor and glory undimmed.

There being no national distinctions of class, no hereditary titles of nobility, and no hereditary succession in office, the question of greatness, of wealth, of position depends largely, if not entirely upon personal talent and industry. The limit of attainment for the ambitious man, is bounded by his energy and ability. Herein lies the hope of the perpetuity of the nation. A hope that is justified by our history thus far. Since all positions of legislative and executive honor, have been recruited from the hill side and farm-house.

There have been but few men in our country who have achieved greatness, during the present century, who have not, in their young manhood, hewn out with their strong right arm, the success which they achieved who have not learned by personal experiment, that manual labor is praiseworthy and honorable. But this is not the only safeguard and promise of life and prosperity to the nation, although it is an important factor. Back of them we find the potent arm of the private citizens who have no ambition to be leaders—who desire only that those who are in authority rule wisely and well. That laws shall be just, and their execution unerring. A people they are who constitute in the eyes of the world, a modern wonder. Not given to tumult and riot; not easily aroused; ever anxious to know what is right and just, and knowing, eager to maintain. A people who, at the close of the revolutionary war, could take up the burdens of civil government, with an empty treasury, ruined credit and desolated territory without murmuring, and impose upon themselves a system of severe taxation, without complaint.

A people, who years later, could raise armies aggregating millions, for civil war, and at the end of the bitterest strife that the world ever saw, quietly disband these armies to resume their work among the laborers and artisans without trouble or tumult. A people who, after being divided by that awful strife could shake hands over the chasm which had flowed bank-full with fraternal blood, and as neighbors, yea, as friends, work together cheerfully and and kindly in the various works of life.

Such a people, I say, are a wonder to the nations across the sea, and are the great and abiding promise of the perpetuity of our democratic government.

The great political parties may struggle eagerly for the administration of public affairs; they may prate of the eternal ruin to which their opponents are liable to rush things, but when the excitement of election is over, we discover the political atmosphere to be just about as clear and bracing as if no change in the administration had occurred.

Today all parties join hands with equal patriotism, in celebrating the nations holiday and rejoicing in the national welfare.

And let us hope that this joining of hands and unity of purpose may abide with us in the years to come, to the end that our land may be more nearly than ever, the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Washington Letter.

[CORRESPONDENCE OF THE COURIER.]

Still sugar! there has been a continual fight from the making of the tariff bill over sugar, and it is being continued in the conference committee, which was in session all day Sunday. Every republican member of the conference committee has been pledged to secrecy concerning the conference, and the democratic members will not be allowed to know what is going on till an agreement has been reached, which will be some time this week, probably by Wednesday or Thursday. The secrets of the conference have so far been well kept, but it has leaked out that both sides are making a fight for the sugar schedule, but the House conferees are expected to win, not only because the original Dingley sugar schedule is more satisfactory to the republican press and the rank and file of the party, but because Speaker Reed has said that the House would never, under any circumstances, accept the Senate sugar schedule. There is talk of attempting to act upon President McKinley's currency commission recommendation, but it is likely that immediate adjournment will follow the disposal of the tariff bill.

Although it was stated when $50,000 was appropriated by Congress for the relief of destitute American citizens in Cuba, that the amount would not be a drop in the bucket, it has turned out to be much more than was needed. Just as soon as the appropriation was available, Consul General Lee was notified to go ahead with the necessary expenditures, up to that amount. Reports from General Lee were submitted to the last Cabinet meeting, and much to the surprise and gratification of the President and his advisers, they showed that although General Lee had rendered substantial aid to every distressed American citizen who needed it and would accept, and shipped a number of them back to the United States, he had only expended $6,000.

The pressure has been so great that President McKinley has decided to modify President Cleveland's extension of the civil service rules, and the order is liable to be issued any day.

It is much easier to hatch up a Congressional scheme than it is to carry it through, even when working for what is favored by a majority. Last week the friends of the Hawaiian treaty concluded that it was advisable to get the treaty favorably reported to the Senate at this session, and voted upon, if possible. As eight out of the eleven members of the Committee on Foreign relations are known to favor the treaty, it looked like an easy matter to get the treaty favorably reported, but it wasn't as it looked to be. A special meeting of the committee was called, but less than a quorum attended, and at a second meeting there was only a bare quorum present. The committee will hold another meeting this week, but it is far from certain that it will decide to report the treaty.

The report, by way of Europe, that Spain and Japan are trying to coax England to enter with them into a triple alliance for the purpose of whipping the United States into keeping its hands off of the islands in both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, has not caused anybody in Washington to lose any sleep, and it would not even it were known to be true instead of a bit of midsummer silliness on the part of its originators.

No member of the Senate enjoyed the respect of the newspaper men to a greater extent than did the late Senator Isham G. Harris, of Tenn., whose funeral services were conducted in the Senate Chamber Saturday, although he always professed to desire to have every newspaper man drawn and quartered. Nevertheless they got much useful information out of the old gentleman—at least, those did who knew how to interpret his burst of anger when he was asked about any secret action of the Senate or of a committee upon which he served. A page, who had grown a little familiar in his intercourse with Senators, approached Senator Harris one day and asked him in a free and easy manner if the Senate had decided to adjourn until noon the next day. Turning upon the boy with a ferocious look, the irate Senator said: "Yes; and immediately after we adjourn today, we shall proceed to hang every — — impertinent page on this floor." The page was said to have been nearly frightened into a spasm. Notwithstanding an affected gruffness of manner, Senator Harris was personally popular and no man stood higher in the political councils of his party. Bad health prevented his taking any part in this session of Congress.

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