

Champoeg Marion Co. O. T.
16th November 1857

Mr. Editor:

It will perhaps be urged against a division of the Territory of Oregon that by dividing the population it will some years longer subject the people to the evils and political desirabilities our territorial system imposes, an argument of such force if the system itself does not admit of amendment.

It is a curious fact that our Territories are governed on almost the precise plan of the British Colonial System resisted by our ancestors in the war of the Revolution, and the right of self government which they so nobly asserted to the world, and defended against the whole force of the British Empire has been withheld from the people of their own territories. Oregon may say to the Government of the res. as they assert in the emphatic language of the Declaration of Independence as grievances imposed upon them by their tyrant that "He has made judges (and we may add all other officers) dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries."---and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance, etc."

That the people of the Territories have submitted to be deprived totally of their natural rights has perhaps been owing to the fact that by their rapid increase of population they looked forward to a near period when they might recover them under the forms of a State government, and perhaps also being near the central power, their officers could be more speedily and certainly made accountable for neglect of duty.

It also appears to me that there being so far as I know no proscribed mode by which this transformation is effected the irregular and revolutionary process adopted to attain an object so important is rather farical and ludicrous.

The people of the Territory about to enact this political regeneration, assemble in convention, and as if the light of Liberty had but just dawned set out with a Declaration of Independence alias Bill of Rights, in which they repeat the principles, (and might in our case the grievances also,) contained in the model instrument define boundaries they have power to alter and ordain and establish many things "forever" but at the same time retain the power "to change alter or amend at pleasure."

Meanwhile Uncle Sam himself the progeny of revolution and has an eye to such things when abroad and sometimes profits by them, appears unconscious he has lost a territory, until he is roused up to admit another member to his family - then indeed becomes an exciting scene, the whole family appear to be in a state of violent commotion and ready to take each other after being by the ears kept outside a long time listening to the uproar within "as reason sways or interest prompts" the candidate is admitted or rejected, if admitted the "State" is received into the fulness of fraternity, if rejected he shrinks back into an abortion or a "State" nonentity - Such was the fate of the "State" of New Mexico and will be of the state north of the Columbia if our friends carry out their threat.

It seems to be a rule that a state to be admitted must have at least the ratio of representation in the House of Representatives that ratio from the rapid increase of population in the union and the disposition to diminish the number of representatives goes on increasing with each enumeration of the inhabitants.

Oregon is far below the present ratio - and from the many causes to limit her increase either with or without division must be years in attaining it - must we continue through this certainly long period in our present state of vassalage or apply for and obtain redress?

We are ready to take arms for oppressed Cuba and shed tears over fallen Hungary but appear not to perceive the depth of our own degradation. It is true we have not suffered the extremities of oppression to which those people are subjected but have we a single lawful remedy in our own hands to resist it?

Oregon is capable of self government, and self defence we know for she has done both in the days of weakness and infancy - Let us ask of our country again to restore us our birthright, the privilege of making our own laws and electing our own judges and rulers, and to be freed from charlatans and strangers that are neither with us nor of us.

An Old Oregonian

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