THE POST-INTELLIGENCER.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:
Delivery by City Carrier.

Daily and Sunday, per month	$0 75
Daily and Sunday, six months, if paid in advance	4 00
Daily and Sunday, one year, if paid in advance	7 50
Sunday edition, per month	25
Sunday edition, one year	2 00

Persons desiring the Post-Intelligencer served at their homes or change of delivery can secure it by postal card request or order through telephone Main 7. When delivery is irregular please make immediate complaint to this office.

BY MAIL, PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

Daily and Sunday, per month	$0 75
Daily and Sunday, six months	4 00
Daily and Sunday, one year	7 50
Sunday edition, one month	25
Sunday edition, six months	1 25
Sunday edition, one year	2 00
Sunday and Weekly, one year	2 50
Weekly edition, one year	1 00
Weekly edition, six months	50

OFFICES:
Seattle, Second avenue and Cherry street.
New York, Rooms 13, 14, 15 Tribune Bldg.
Chicago, 317 Chamber of Commerce.
Tacoma, 1208 Pacific avenue.

Give postoffice address in full, including county and state.

Remit by express, money order, draft or in registered letter, at our risk.

Telephones: Business Office, Main 7. Editorial Rooms, Main 382.

Address all communications and remittances to the POST-INTELLIGENCER PUBLISHING CO., Seattle, Wash.

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CITY OFFICIAL PAPER.

SEATTLE, FRIDAY, AUGUST 20.

AN IMPORTANT CHANGE.

A very important amendment to the Dingley bill was made by the senate, and it will have to be admitted in justice to that body, that if the delay in the passage of the act resulted in no other advantage the country has gained immeasurably by the omission of five words.

The omission of those five words may have very much to do with the rebuilding of our merchant marine, and in time make us the commercial rival of Great Britain on the seas. At one time in our history we had a maritime service of which any nation of our class at that day might have been proud, but an unfortunate revulsion of public opinion, which is sometimes not satisfied with the ills it has, but flies to others that it knows not of, took action whose consequences have been disastrous to our shipping.

It seems that one of the last sections of the bill found on the 160th page of the official copy of the bill as it went to the senate is numbered 16 in that bill, but it appears in the law itself as section 22. They agree perfectly, the 16 and the 22, except that five words in 16, namely, "or any act of congress," are not found in section 22. It is the omission of these words which is relied upon to open up the way for a revolution in ocean traffic, and it falls to the lot of the Inter Ocean to make conspicuous the effect of the change. In justice to Mr. Alexander B. Smith, editor of the Seaboard, it should be noted that he had already pointed out the significance of the change and, while he modestly refrains from alluding to the fact, it is not improbable that he had something to do with the elision. The section, as it originally stood, was as follows:

"That a discriminating duty of 10 per centum ad valorem, in addition to the duties imposed by law, shall be levied, collected and paid on all goods, wares or merchandise, which shall be imported in vessels not of the United States; but this discriminating duty shall not apply to goods, wares and merchandise which shall be imported in vessels not of the United States, entitled by treaty (or any act of congress) to be entered in the ports of the United States on payment of the same duties as shall then be paid on goods, wares and merchandise imported in vessels of the United States."

Mr. Smith says that there is only one treaty between the United States and England on the subject of discriminating duties, and that applies only to British goods and products. That treaty was first negotiated in 1815, and made indefinite in time in 1827, since which time it has undergone no change. But in 1849, according to Mr. Smith, congress passed the act referred to in the original Dingley bill as "any act of congress." The secretary of the treasury at that time was that eminent Philadelphia lawyer, William M. Meredith, and on October 15, 1849, he issued a circular to the several custom house officers instructing them that from January 1, 1850, British vessels would be allowed to enter our ports "with cargoes of the growth, manufacture or production of any part of the world," on the same terms as the vessels of the United States. Subsequent tariffs have taken cognizance of that act of 1849, quite as a matter of course. No doubt Mr. Dingley followed the custom without any thought, quite as a matter of course, but Mr. Aldrich, or some other member of the senate committee on finance, just drew his pen through those five little words, and all the rest concurred.

The Inter Ocean says that it does not appear that anybody at any stage of the proceedings made any attempt to restore the words, "or any act of congress." At any rate, the law, as it actually stands, does not contain those words. The numerical change in the section is of no consequence, but the elimination of these few words may, as we have already said, in effect be the beginning of a new commercial era in the history of the United States. By this one little change the object aimed at in the bill on the subject of discriminating duties, introduced by Senator Elkins, of West Virginia, is attained. Very likely it was the keen eye for business of that senator which first saw how easy it would be to secure by the short cut of this amendment the goal of his pet measure, a measure the Inter Ocean strongly urged congress to pass. It is certainly none the less significant or effective because, like the kingdom which is not of this world, it came "not by observation."

The opinion just rendered by Attorney-General McKenna in regard to a consignment of diamonds which were shipped to this country by way of Canada seems to leave no room to doubt that any import not the product of a contiguous country or of some part of the British empire is subject to 10 per cent discrimination if coming in any other than an American ship. The right of congress under the constitution to levy such discriminating duties cannot be questioned, nor can the right of congress to repeal in 1897 an act of 1849 be questioned. That repeal was indirect, but none the less effective. It is a matter of amazement, however, that the usually alert representatives in this country of foreign steamship companies did not "catch on" and fight the senate amendment tooth and nail.

FRANCE AND SILVER.

The country is not in a mood to listen very patiently to a discussion of the currency question, but it is a very opportune time to call the attention of the people to the arguments which seemed so plausible when they were in distress. A year ago it was of very little use to attempt to argue with a man who had made up his mind that free silver was the only hope for the country's salvation. Probably half the number of those who voted for Bryan on the free silver issue did it on the ground that things could not be any worse for them and they might as well try a change. They were told that the price of wheat and the price of silver always went up together and down together. It was useless attempting to point out to them the notable exceptions which proved that to be an inaccurate rule; and nothing but the illustration afforded by this year's events could shake them. It will be remembered that not as a joke, but in solemn earnest, the rise in the price of wheat last fall was attributed to the manipulations of Mark Hanna in the interests of the Republican party. Those who knew better stood aghast at the credulity of the people, and the audacity of the promulgators of that absurd campaign falsehood. It was in vain to point out that it would take millions of dollars to maintain the price of wheat by artificial support; and that, indeed, it would be utterly impossible, because whenever a buyer would offer a higher price than that created by the law of demand and supply, he would find a hundred ready to sell for the sake of the profit, and who would be utterly indifferent about party success.

The silver advocates constantly pointed to France as an illustration of the ability of a nation to keep up the price of silver by law. Many attempts were made to refute the fallacious conclusions drawn from facts and distorted versions of conditions. Those who were in favor of sound money might be induced to pay some attention to the refutations last year, but the free silverites ignored them. It will do no harm to invite their consideration of those same arguments in the light of present conditions.

George E. Roberts, editor of the Fort Dodge, Ia., Messenger, has written a very forcible article on the subject of bi-metallism in France. He writes from the standpoint of the average business man who observes facts carefully and reaches conclusions logically. Mr. Roberts shows that there never has been for any considerable length of time actual bi-metallism in France, and that the small difference between the commercial and legal values of gold and silver has always been sufficient to drive the more highly priced metal out of circulation.

First, he says, to be considered, is the fact when the influx of gold in 1850 began the money of France was mainly silver. From 1820 to 1850 practically the entire increase in the money stock of France was in silver. No silver was exported during that time. The gold imported was received in the course of trade and exported without entering into the circulation of France. An ounce of gold during those years was worth more than 15½ ounces of silver, the ratio in France. Consequently, when in the balance debts of trade were due France they were commonly paid in silver, and when any were due from France they were collected in gold. The production of gold and silver varied but little during this time, and the commercial ratio was but slightly above the legal ratio, but it turned the cheaper metal into France in a steady stream, to the exclusion of gold. The authorities and statistics upon the subject support the statement by Mr. Robert Giffen that by 1848 the Bank of France had hardly any gold in its till, and France was a silver-using country. Furthermore, this silver, instead of being in the custody of the banks, as money is kept in the United States, was scattered in the tills, pockets and homes of the people. France was thus richly prepared for the redemption of gold in silver which her people carried on for the following ten years.

It was manifestly easier for France to keep gold and silver at par, even as this country does now, than it would be to bring them together after there has been a divergence. Under the increased output gold lost first its preference, then stood at par, and finally silver was slightly preferred. Then Gresham's law began its inevitable operation, and gold began its movement into France and silver out. France became to the world a great bureau of redemption. Her stock of silver answered the purpose of the gold reserve in our treasury. During the eight years, from 1853 to 1860 inclusive, France lost $200,000,000 in silver. If, instead of the discoveries of silver which followed had come then the discovery of the South African gold fields, the power of France over the metals would have been exhausted, and her people would have found themselves loaded with depreciated coin which they could not use at the value they gave for it. That is the situation in India today. When the great silver production came, and the reverse movement of silver in and gold out became large, the statesmen of France saw nothing in their previous experience to reassure them. They knew they could hold silver up to gold only while their people gave gold for it, and they were unwilling to have the French people lose their gold for this purpose. Hence the French mint was closed to prevent speculators from loading the country with silver to its ultimate loss.

As silver became relatively less valuable France began to get it when any debts were due her, and finally in a steady stream to exchange for her gold. The preamble of the bill suspending free coinage of silver contains an explanation which summarizes the entire French experience. It says:

"The circumstances that have occurred within recent years concerning the relations of gold and silver have reached a crisis here. Since 1873 the gold policy pursued by Great Britain has been followed by an ever-increasing number of nations. The double standard theory on which our monetary law of the year XI. rests has been called in question ever since its origin. Recent legislators have met the difficulty by giving unlimited scope to gold alone and by reducing silver to the place of subsidiary money. Since 1867 the French government has studied the question, and successive administrations have regarded the gold standard with increasing favor."

Then follows an account of the monetary history of France during the period, "If," the preamble continues, "since 1874 certain precautions had not been taken to arrest the effects of that great disturbance in the ratio, France and her monetary allies would have been flooded by silver and correspondingly drained of gold." Hence the conventions of 1874-75-76, limiting the silver coinage of the members of the Latin Union, although "with us the fall of silver in 1873 led to a complete suspension of silver coinage for that year rather than to a simple limitation." That is to say, the French government stopped the free coinage of silver because it was satisfied that it could not maintain the parity, or even hold the metals in a steady relation after its stock of gold had been drawn away.

A CORNUCOPIA OF PLENTY.

In the excitement following the discovery of gold in such large quantities in a district tributary to Seattle's trade, we have almost overlooked the many other sources of wealth which seem to have sprung up in this state like living springs. Six months ago the location of the army site would have been regarded of itself as an important event. With no other favorable circumstances the erection of the great mill which is already so far completed that it stands out like a great monument on the newly filled land of the tide flats, would have been the cynosure of all eyes as a beacon of hope. Were there no other things to encourage this city, the construction of nearly $400,000 worth of vessels at Seattle shipyards would have been hailed with rejoicing.

There was a period in our history not so very long ago when the news which now almost passes unnoticed of the increased price for lumber, and the fact that all the mills are busy, would have been one of the most important topics for the newspapers. This activity alone means the income of large sums of money and the employment of thousands of men who for months spent their days in dreary idleness.

The wheat crop of the state of Washington would have sent us wild with delight, had our attention not been distracted by the diversity of our prosperity. Even now, we scarcely realize what a Godsend the splendid crops at present prices have been to this state.

Had we been without any of these prospects of better times we would have been hopeful and contented at the outlook for hops. It is years since the hop growers of this state have looked forward to a profit, and so disastrous has been their experience that two years ago the pride of Washington, the largest hop farm in the world, was abandoned, and its land turned to other products.

The year 1897 will end in a flood of prosperity such as has blessed no state in the Union for nearly ten years, and Washington will become famous all the world over as the synonym for plenty.

REPAIRING SIDEWALKS.

The board of public works does well to put into force the ordinance relating to the repair of sidewalks, but it could make the burden on property owners much lighter by exercising its power to do the work in a systematic way. Frequently the repairs needed are so slight that the work could be done at very little expense to the city, which has all the facilities for doing it.

If the board, instead of merely sending a warning, would specify the work to be done and an estimate of the cost many people would gladly order it done, even before the planking became sufficiently dangerous to warrant the notice required by ordinance. All property owners are not wealthy. Most of them in this city own their homes, and no more, and the plan suggested would be a great convenience and saving of cost, with no loss but considerable advantage to the city.

While the prospectors are writing about the difficulties of the trail at Skaguay, few seem willing to give up. They are getting their first lesson in perseverance, and we look forward hopefully for most of them to get through.

The wreck of the San Pedro, at the entrance to Victoria harbor, has at last disappeared. She ran aground in 1892, and has ever since been one of the landmarks of the eastern end of the Straits of Fuca.

The importance attached to the subject by the Canadian government is shown by the fact that Hon. Clifford Sifton, minister of the interior, will make a personal inspection of the facilities for landing passengers at Dyea.

Arkell has a rival in Capt. Parmien, who claims to have annexed Clipperton island, now that it proves, by the work of others, to be valuable. Another illustration of unearned increment.

As Mrs. Ferris, the widow of the builder of the Chicago wheel, has married Francis Schlatter, who imagines all sorts of things, she evidently desires to continue in the "wheel" business.

It is becoming evident that a man has not done so much after all toward reaching the Klondike when he raises a grubstake and turns around West Point on a steamer's deck.

The queen would have performed a graceful act if she had compensated Chang Yen Hoon by decorating him with the ribbon of the Order of the Bath.

President McKinley is supposed to be taking a vacation, but it looks as if he was doing considerable thinking of a very active kind.

Our Washington hens must hustle themselves: it is absurd to be buying eggs from the East and Oregon, weeks after date.

There is no aggregation of men which so soon develops the genius for self-government as a band of mining prospectors.

The Armenians who participate in the bomb-throwing at Constantinople are the worst enemies of their own race.

The Duke of York, the heir presumptive to the English throne, is making a visit to Ireland. It is a marvel that the royal family does not take more pains to win the affections of the most courteous, hospitable and most warm-hearted people in the world.

If the prospect for hops continues the prices will go with a hop, skip and a jump.

President's Power of Removal.

Law Notes.

In 1886 Mr. Cleveland summarily removed Lewis E. Parsons from the office of attorney of the United States for the northern and middle districts of Alabama. Mr. Parsons wrote to Mr. Cleveland that he was advised by counsel that the president had no power to remove him, and acting on such advice and his own opinion he respectfully declined to surrender the office. It seems, however, that Mr. Cleveland was likewise acting on the advicce of counsel, and it turns out that he was better advised than Mr. Parsons, for the supreme court of the United States has recently upheld the president's action. In Parsons vs. the United States, the supreme court considers at great length the power of the president to remove executive officers, and in its opinion, delivered through Mr. Justice Peckham, gives an interesting historical review of the struggles that have been occasioned by this question. It would seem that the power to remove executive officers is one which certainly ought to be lodged with the president whether it is or not; but as early as 1789 Mr. Smith, of South Carolina, expressed on the floor of the house of representatives the opinion that an executive officer appointed by the president, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, could not under the constitution be removed by the president, and that he could be removed only by impeachment. Mr. Madison and a majority of the members of the house took the contrary view; and in the senate, that body being equally divided upon the question, Mr. Adams as vice president cast his vote in favor of the president's power of removal.

A Coroner's Court Romance.

London Sun.

Mr. A. W. Wyatt, deputy coroner, held an inquest at the Camberwell coroner's court on Wednesday night on the body of Henry George Pickett York Lees, aged 55 years, a tailor, lately living in Allendale Road, Camberwell, who committed suicide by taking spirtis of lemon. Mary Ann Lee, the widow, said she was an heiress in her own right, and married the deceased in December last. About a month since the deceased ascertained that the witness was his own sister, which fact seemed to upset him very much. Since that time he had often remarked that he intended "taking a long sleep, and that she'd better do the same." He seemed to have something on his mind which troubled him very much. Shortly before his death he said he had a dreadful secret to divulge, and, upon the witness promising to keep it, said that some forty-five years ago, while with a tribe of gipsies at Epsom Downs, his father placed a dagger in his hand and plunged it into the back of a woman, whom he had subsequently heard was his mother. He was "spirited away" by the gipsies, and subsequently enlisted in the army. No arrest was made for the murder. Nearly the whole of last Tuesday night the deceased was pacing his bedroom, and early the following morning he went down stairs. The witness followed and saw him standing in the kitchen with a glass in his hand. He remarked, "I've done it," and fell forward on his face in an unconscious state. He died shortly afterwards. Dr. C. Boyd, of Denmark hill, who was summoned, stated that the cause of death was spirits of lemon poisoning, and the jury returned a verdict of "suicide whilst of unsound mind."

Infringement of Personal Liberty.

Law Notes.

Sunday laws and liquor laws, which are often passed by legislatures without any regard to the invasion of liberty which would arise from their enforcement, frequently tax the ingenuity of the courts. It is a question whether the courts should enforce them strictly, and even literally, in the hope that their enforcement would lead to their repeal, or should strain a point in favor of a culprit who is guilty of no moral wrong, and refuse to inflict punishment upon him for the sole purpose of enabling others to reap the benefits that would ensue from demonstrating the hardships of such statutes. We recall a case in point. A gentleman who had, at his private residence, invited another to join him in one or two drinks of whisky, and whose invitation had been accepted, was indicted under a statute making it unlawful for any person to make, sell, or otherwise dispose of" any spirituous liquors. With all deference for the learned court's opinion as to the defendant's guilt, the statute had been violated. But the supreme court of the state, without taking, as it might have done, the position that the legislature did not intend to denounce the occasional disposition of liquor as an act of hospitality, boldly announced that there had been no disposition of the liquor, because there had been no parting with the right to or ownership of it.

Don't Want Silver.

Portland Oregonian.

The international conference will come to nothing because no civilized nation will use more silver than it can help, and none that has escaped from the bondage of the silver standard will risk falling into it again. No nation on earth but our great, wise and free republic ever accepted an inferior money when it could have a better.

THE STATE PRESS.

Vancouver Columbian: Whisky is reported as selling in Klondike at $100 a gallon. It would keep a good many fellows sober in other places at that price.

Vancouver Independent: One man writes from the upper Yukon that the chief food in that region is bear fat, and that to change the clothing in the winter means death. How the bears get fat is not explained.

Spokane West Coast Trade: Forest fires are making their annual devastation about the state, and vie with the saw and shingle mills in the amount of our timber consumed. Some system of protecting our forestry from these great losses sustained from this source should be devised and put into effect as soon as possible. Now that our timber promises to become of greater immediate value, because there is an increasing demand, this question of fire protection will probably be given the attention it certainly deserves.

Walla Walla Union: One of the notable features in the almost mad rush to the Alaska gold mines is the large numbers of persons who have heretofore been persistent in their denunciation of gold bugs and capitalists, and who are now among the most eager pilgrims to the Alaska and Klondike gold regions, striving to become both a gold bug and a capitalist. It would seem that the opposition to gold bugs and millionaires is, after all, but a selfish sentimentality, stimulated by a jealous envy of others' more prosperous condition.

COAST PAPERS.

Los Angeles Times: If this thing keeps up, the quotations on silver will shortly be in car load lots, f. o. b.

San Francisco Bulletin: Will Mr. William Jennings Bryan please go somewhere and get a reputation before he challenges this whole nation to a second joint debate?

San Francisco Chronicle: Germany is trying to keep out American wheels. It feels that the kaiser is amply able to supply the local demand from his private stock.

San Francisco Post: It should be understood that Mr. Bryan's forthcoming trip to Mexico is not taken at the solicitation of that government. The Mexicans "have troubles of their own."

San Francisco Examiner: Mayor Wood, of Seattle, who is taking an expedition to the Klondike, has not burned his boats behind him. It was expected he would resign his office, but instead he asked for a leave of absence. He apparently wants to be sure of being either a millionaire or a mayor.

San Francisco Bulletin: It does not make much difference what Spanish statesman is chosen to take the place of Canovas. He will rattle around like a dry pea in a pod, anyway. The point is to select the gentleman who can rattle with the minimum amount of noise.

Portland Oregonian: President McKinley would do a wise thing if he would gently hint to his international monetary commissioners the advisability of a prompt return home. Every point that silver drops adds to the ludicrousness of their position.

BITS OF HUMOR.

Fuddy—Really, now, I suppose the average amateur fisherman is the prince of liars.

Duddy—Perhaps so; but then there's the man with a smart baby in the house.—Boston Transcript.

Young Father—Is it a boy or a girl?

Doctor (a cyclist)—No, it's a tandem!—Chicago Times-Herald.

Practical Father—I've given you a good college education; what more do you want?

Son—You haven't yet supplied me with the means to live up to it.—Philadelphia North American.

"How much insanity develops in hot weather!"

"Yes; people lose their minds when their ice bills come in."—Chicago Record.

NOTABLE PEOPLE.

President W. A. Hutchinson, of Pennington seminary, New Jersey, has been elected president of the East Maine Conference seminary, at Bucksport, Me.

B. J. Peters, who is very ill at his home in Mount Sterling, Ky., was a classmate in school of Jefferson Davis, and was chief justice of Kentucky for a number of years after the war.

Dr. Edward Everett Hale, in a recent sermon in Boston on "Faith, Hope and Charity," explained his text thus: "Faith, by which we know God; hope, by which we expect to live in heaven, and charity, or love, by which we live with our fellowmen."

Sir Donald A. Smith, who was honored by Queen Victoria with a peerage at her diamond jubilee, left Scotland fifty years ago as an apprentice clerk of the Hudson Bay Company. He was poor in pocket, but had a good education, plenty of grit, perseverance and an indomitable spirit. Just before he was elevated to the peerage he was Sir Donald A. Smith, knight, D. C. L., K. C. M. G., and high commissioner of Canada and London. He is the second Canadian raised to the peerage by Queen Victoria. The first was Sir George Stephen, who became Lord Mount Stephen. Mount Stephen is a peak in the Rockies and was named after Sir George.

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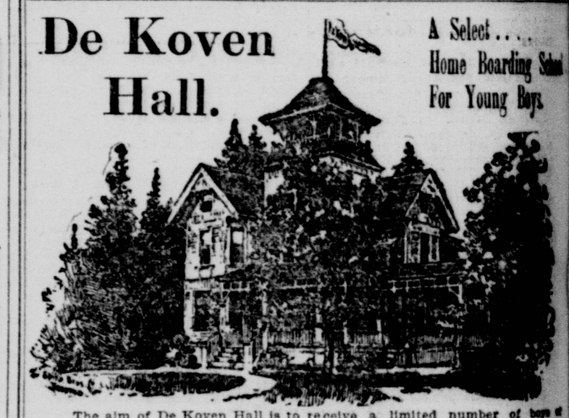

The aim of De Koven Hall is to receive a limited number of boys of good character, under the age of fourteen, and prepare them for college or a business life, combining the discipline of a school with home influences. The school building is well equipped and located in a beautiful spot in the country, offering to the pupils excellent opportunity for outdoor games.

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