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WHY "IDIOTICALLY PREPOSTEROUS?"

A writer in the Times-Mountaineer, over the signature of "Common Sense," passes some very severe strictures on the two Washington congressmen, Messrs. Cushman and Jones, because, forsooth, "they recently stepped over into Oregon with a doubly nonsensical effort to accomplish an impossible and preposterous absurdity by introducing a bill—or bills to appropriate ever so many hundreds of thousands of dollars" for a portage railway from The Dalles to Celilo. "Common Sense" wonders if "these fellows are fools or knaves," and asks if they do not know that "what they are professedly working for is not only absolutely impossible but idiotically preposterous." "Common Sense" then oracularly affirms that "it has been decided over and over again—twice in this same Dalles portage case—that without an amendment to the constitution of the United States, congress cannot appropriate money to build and operate a mile of railroad for commercial purposes anywhere upon the continent or the globe." THE CHRONICLE has no desire for controversy but it would like to know, and thousands of people in the Inland Empire would like to know, upon what historical or legal basis this opinion of "Common Sense" rests. We are well aware that the government has never before attempted such a work. But this is surely not the same as saying that the government is inhibited by the constitution from attempting it. If this question has been "decided over and over again" by any competent authority, "Common Sense" would confer a favor upon a large number of people by letting us know when the decisions were made and by whom. This is not written in any spirit of captious criticism. Far from it. THE CHRONICLE is in favor of any measure that will open the river and open it soonest. It is delighted to learn that "trains will be running on a Dalles-Celilo portage within less than ninety days" on the Washington side. It would be still more delighted to think that another portage on the Oregon side was among the near possibilities. And why not? The right of way has been procured by the government and over two hundred thousand dollars, already appropriated, remain unexpended and available for the work the moment action is taken by congress. Instead, therefore, of "so many hundreds of thousands of dollars," as "Common Sense" speaks of, a small appropriation of about \$200,000 would suffice to construct and equip the road. More than this. A railroad of some kind will have to be built to facilitate the construction of whatever permanent improvements the government may ultimately determine upon. Why could not such a road be built and devoted to the use of the public, as are the locks below, until at least the government is ready to undertake the permanent improvements. And till these are completed the road might be used jointly as was part of the little portage road at the locks. Where is there anything "absolutely impossible" or "idiotically preposterous" in all this? The truth is the letter of "Common Sense" voices sentiments foreign to these parts. Our wishes may be "absolutely impossible of realization and our opinions may be "idiotically preposterous," but all of us who are not under the control of some transportation company are in favor of competition around the dalles obstructions, and the more of it the better. We feel indebted, therefore, to Messrs. Cushman and Jones for their efforts to serve us, and we shall not believe that these efforts are "idiotically preposterous" till we know better.

"The universal defense of the Puerto Rican tariff bill made by Re-

publican papers," says the La Grande Chronicle, "is that it is only of a temporary nature, the law expiring of its own force within two years." The Chronicle is mistaken. The bill is never defended on that ground. If it is wrong in principal, it is wrong if it should be in force only two minutes, let alone two years. The bill is defended on the ground of its absolute necessity. No other means of raising needed revenue was practicable. Taking the constitution there and enforcing our revenue laws would have been confiscation. The masses of the islanders are in the very depths of poverty and wholly unable at this time to bear the burdens of a direct tax. These are some of the grounds on which the bill is defended. The temporary nature of the bill is only mentioned when Democrats and recreant Republicans lyingly insist that it was ever intended as a permanent measure.

COURAGE OR CONSANGUINITY.

"Who are these 'Puerto Ricans' who are interested in the removal of the duty on tobacco (for instance), and how does the bill affect them?" asks a writer in the Salem Statesman and then proceeds to answer as follows:

"The Tobacco Leaf," a trade paper published in New York, devoted to the interests of the wholesale and retail tobacco trade, contains the following advertisement in its issue of April 4th:

The Cream of the 1900 Crop is Ours. The Steadily Increasing Sale of Our Porto Rico Tobacco Has Necessitated the Securing of Two Additional Packing Houses. All Our Tobaccos Are Packed in Havana Style Only. Levi, Blumensteil & Co., 118-120 Maiden Lane, New York. Warehouses in Porto Rico at Caguas and San Juan.

Consanguinity may have had something to do with Senator Simon's vote. "Blood is thicker than water," and it is only natural that Simon should have a friendly feeling for Levi and be easily "influenced" to see the "justice" of the demand for free trade with those suffering Puerto Ricans of 118 120 Maiden Lane, New York, and so he towered aloft in the senate and "courageously" voted against his Republican colleagues, and allied himself (not for the first time) with the opposition. In other words, in order to accommodate Levi he betrayed his party, just as he did in bygone days to accommodate Barney, whose surname is Goldsmith, and his motive was just as lofty.

"Tobacco Leaf," in its editorial columns, commenting upon a section of the bill giving importers certain privileges, says:

"It is not conceivable that the house, or the committees through whose hands the bill must eventually pass, will interfere in any way with this just provision, which we believe was secured by the timely and intelligent action of one of our leading Porto Rico tobacco importing firms."

Is there any stronger testimony needed as to the motive behind the attempt to defeat the Puerto Rican tariff bill? And it was partially successful. The reduction from 25 to 15 per cent. of the regular tariff was a present of an immense amount of money to the Puerto Ricans of Maiden Lane, New York, who farm the tobacco farmers of the island of Puerto Rico, and did the latter so good whatever.

And Senator Simon had the magnificent "courage" to vote in favor of knocking off the other 15 per cent.

Democratic success, says the Salt Lake Tribune, which was intensely Bryanite four years ago, always means depression in business, ruin to thousands, the closing of factories in this country and increased activity for them in England and the consequent filling of this country with idle men and the assembling of vast "industrial armies;" that is, masses of men who want to be industrious but are debarred by Democratic policies. So well is this understood that some years ago to say that a business enterprise had "gone Democratic" was recognized as the same thing as saying that it had failed. The experience of the country with

Republican prosperity following the long gloom of Democratic business depression all over the country has given emphasis to that saying.

The Times-Mountaineer's correspondent, "Common Sense," replies very courteously to THE CHRONICLE's request for information as to when or by whom it has ever been decided that the general government has no power to build and operate a portage railroad. But "Common Sense" leaves the matter precisely where it was. No competent authority has ever made any decision on the matter. The opinion of a congressman, or a government engineer, or even a secretary of war, is worth just as much as that of a newspaper correspondent or editor, even, and no more. Congress may never appropriate money for a portage railroad but, to a layman, the provision in the constitution that gives them power to provide "for the general welfare of the United States" seems wide enough to take in a portage road. If congress has no such power the lay mind naturally wonders where they get their power to appropriate money for a canal and locks. THE CHRONICLE is delighted to believe that a portage on the north side of the river will soon be a reality, but just because it is a private enterprise and, as such, liable to pass into other hands, or to form combinations with other competing lines to maintain prices it never will give the relief that would be afforded by a government portage.

The Oregonian is striking the enemy with Titanic force these days, even if it is at the expense of its own consistency. Here is a word from a review of the late speech of Senator Hoar that we take pleasure in repeating because we agree with it to a dot, and because it furnishes an argumentum ad hominem to those who insist that the constitution followed the flag into the Philippines and in the same breath insist on the right to pull the flag down. Says the Oregonian: "If the 'anti' contention that the constitution already extends to the islands, 'ex proprio vigore,' is correct, where is the constitutional warrant to alienate them? Senator Hoar would regard it as a strange proposal if the Republican caucus brought in a bill to put Massachusetts out of the Union."

The Dalles people will learn with profound sorrow that the Columbia Valley Railroad has abandoned its project to bridge the river at The Dalles. The information comes to us through the Telegram, which explains the situation in this manner: "The citizens desired that the railroad, in consideration of the bonus to be given, should build a double-deck bridge for the accommodation of wagons as well as for the railroad track. The company did not see it that way and has decided not to build." The crushing effect of this announcement is somewhat mitigated by the fact that there probably is not a man in Oregon who ever imagined that this imaginary Columbia Valley Railroad ever had the least intention of bridging the river here or elsewhere.

The Democratic contention is that the constitution runs in every inch of territory belonging to the United States. Be it so for the sake of argument. Then the constitution runs in Puerto Rico, and if it runs there it runs in the Philippines, and if it runs in the Philippines, the Philippines are an integral part of the United States. But if the Philippines are an integral part of the United States, by what authority do Bryan and Oregon Democrats propose to tear down the flag and abandon the islands? If the constitution cannot be controlled in the matter of its extension, who has the power to control it in the matter of its contraction?

Senator Hoar has made a new departure in his admiration of Aguinaldo. Not content with classifying the Malay chief with Kossoth and Oom Paul and Jubert and Ommet, with Egmont and Horn, with Nathan Hale and Warren and George Washington, he exalts him still higher. The senator says the state papers of Aguinaldo are the products of the

Asiatic mind and as such are "not unworthy of the vehicle through which came to us the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the poetry of David, the eloquence of Isaiah, the wisdom of Solomon and the profound philosophy of Paul." This is ethnology and theology gone mad. What racial affinity exists between this Tagal insurgent and that noble people to whom were "committed the Oracles of God." The mere circumstance of Asiatic birth gives the senator no more right to place Aguinaldo on a pedestal beside David and Solomon and Isaiah and Paul than the circumstance of American birth gives a Digger Indian the right to be placed on a racial equality with Daniel Webster or Abraham Lincoln. The senator's erotic eloquence is an insult to the Hebrew race.

Now that the campaign is on, Democratic editors who have not the ability to write their own editorials are making generous use of those of the Oregonian. And they have all the bitterness and disingenuousness of the Simon-pure Democratic article.

Missouri Middle-of-the-Road Populists have contributed to the gaiety of nations by denouncing Wm. J. Bryan and John Rockefeller for their alleged connection with trusts.

NEW TRAIN SERVICE.

The double train service to be established between Portland and Chicago April 22, in which the O. R. & N., the Union Pacific and the Oregon Short Line are interested, will shorten the through time eleven hours. Train No. 2, leaving Portland at 9:15 a. m., beginning on the date named, will be known as the Chicago-Portland special. Its equipment will be new, making it fully the equal of any train now in service from the Pacific coast to the East. It will consist of a mail car, baggage car, two chair cars, and a tourist sleeper. There will be but one change of cars to all eastern points. The full time will be three days through to Chicago, or four days through to Chicago, or four days and two hours to New York.

The second train, known as No. 6, will leave Portland at 6:20 p. m., connecting at East Portland with the Southern Pacific's overland train from San Francisco, and will carry through equipment to Chicago via the Union Pacific and the Chicago and Northwestern, and also the equipment for the Washington division of the O. R. & N., in connection with the Great Northern for St. Paul. This train will reach Spokane at 10 a. m. A dining car will be furnished for breakfast into Spokane, and for dinner on corresponding train leaving Spokane at 3:45 p. m. The new schedule as arranged will supply the most complete service ever furnished on the O. R. & N., as it provides increased service in Eastern Oregon, where it is greatly needed, and gives immediate connection with the Washington division at Pendleton. At this point there is a large interchange of traffic, on account of the various mining districts of Baker county, the Coeur d'Alene, the Republic and Kootenai mining camps. Portland is greatly benefited by this change, in as much as increased service is given from Eastern Oregon and Idaho.

No. 2 will arrive in Chicago at 9:30 a. m.; No. 6 at 7:45 a. m., as at present. The westbound train out of Chicago, corresponding with No. 2, is No. 1. This will arrive in Portland at 4:00 p. m. The train corresponding with the eastbound No. 6 is No. 3, out of Chicago. This will reach Portland at 7:30 a. m. Westbound train No. 1 will leave Chicago at 6:30 p. m., and Omaha at 8:20 a. m. the following day. The time will be reduced two hours and forty-five minutes. No. 3 westbound train will leave Chicago at 10:30 p. m., and Omaha at 4:25 p. m. the next day. The service on the Union Pacific on all these trains include Buffet smoking-library cars, and dining cars. No. 6 will carry a daily ordinary sleeper to Kansas City, with change en route to ordinary cars to Chicago. Consult the nearest ticket agent for detailed information.

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