

SHIP BUILDING IN OREGON.

BY T. B. MERRY.

The North Bend ship-yard is the oldest on the Coast outside of San Francisco, and while it does not turn out as many vessels as Port Ludlow, they are more costly and better fastened. The site is the most picturesque and beautiful of any place in Southern Oregon, but it has never been allowed to grow with the growth of the country. The owners have refused to sell lots to any persons not in their employ, thereby constructing an imaginary Chinese wall about the place. It is now too late to think of throwing open the place to settlement, even were they so disposed, for Marshfield is the town of the bay, in spite of defective land titles. If the Simpsons had sold lots at North Bend, three years ago, they would now have had a town of 1,200 people there at least. But it is a place of the greatest neatness and good order—a perfect hive of working bees. The houses, all snowy white, contrast beautifully with the dark maple trees which form the background for it. The vessels built here up to date are as follows:

DATE	RIG	NAME	TONNAGE
1856	Brig	Arago	180
1858	Brig	Blanco	180
1859	Schr	Mendocino	150
1860	Schr	F. E. Walton	75
1861	Brig	Advance	250
1863	Schr	Enterprise	200
1864	Schr	Isabella	200
1864	Schr	Hannah Louise	130
1865	Schr	Juventa	200
1866	Bktn	Occident	280
1867	Bktn	Melancthon	325
1868	Schr	Bunkalation	125
1869	Bktn	Webfoot	350
1871	Schr	Botama	199
1872	Schr	Oregonian	260
1873	Bktn	Portland	480
1874	Ship	Western Shore	1,188
1875	Bktn	Tam O'Shanter	600

Total Tonnage.....494½

Of the above, the Webfoot, Melancthon, Oregonian, Portland and Tam O'Shanter, have been in the Columbia river trade ever since they were finished. The Portland beat the steamer Orillamie from San Francisco to Astoria, last winter, and the Oregonian is accredited with the fastest passage between the two ports. The Florence Walton was wrecked off Rogue River and the Coos Bay bar. The Bunkalation was discharging a cargo of lime at Cape Blanco for the light-house, when a sea washed down the hatchway and set her on fire, destroying her entirely. The Arago and Enterprise are in the Shoalwater Bay trade, where the Simpson Brothers have heavy milling interests.

The ship-building of Coos Bay is not confined to North Bend, however. At Empire City there is a yard, owned by H. H. Luse, where last year was built the schooner Rebecca. She is a cheaply built affair, and very rough in her joiner work, but a good sailer and a large carrier. I append a list of vessels built at Empire City:

DATE	RIG	NAME	TONNAGE
1861	Tug	Alpha	35
1869	Schr	Kate Piper	100
1872	Stmr	Satellite	85
1874	Stmr	Coos	48
1875	Schr	Rebecca	180

Total Tonnage.....448

At Marshfield, E. B. Dean & Co. have a ship-yard in connection with their saw-mill, which is the most extensive on the Bay. Here were built three schooners, last season, the Panonia, Laura May and Sunshine, the latter of which was wrecked off Cape Disappointment in November last. My idea is that she was struck by a sudden

squall and capsized, being badly over-sparged. Her masts were not less than ten feet too long for her, and the hoops of her great fore-and-aft sails were too small for the masts, thus rendering it a difficult task to lower sail readily. The Laura May was rated A 1 for seven years at San Francisco, the highest rate ever given any center-board schooner on this coast. The Panonia is in the Southern trade, but the Frithiof and Laura May are regular visitors at this port. They are profitable vessels, carrying large cargoes and sailing rapidly. The Ivanhoe made the round trip to San Francisco and back in nine days and seven hours. The tug Escort is a handsome and speedy vessel, finer and better than anything you have on the Columbia river, and yet she is inferior to the North Bend tug Fearless in economy and speed. The latter made the run from Gardiner to North Bend, a distance of thirty-one miles, in two hours and twelve minutes, on a consumption of two and a half cords of saw-mill slabs, worth say two dollars, at the most. She has compound engines, of the same pattern as the Colima and Grenada, but of smaller size, of course. The Escort, however, is deeper, and can make a better pull, perhaps, with a large, heavy vessel. I append a list of the total number of vessels built at Marshfield:

DATE	RIG	NAME	TONNAGE
1866	Steam Tug		97
1866	Schooner		180
1867	Schooner		100
1868	Schooner		125
1869	Schooner		120
1869	Schooner		160
1870	Barkentine		375
1873	Steamer		135
1874	Schooner		220
1875	Schooner		380
1875	Schooner		360
1875	Schooner		200

Total Tonnage.....2,452

Now then, gentlemen of Portland, you who have your heavy rent-rolls and plethora bank accounts, if you want to maintain the commercial supremacy of the Northwest coast, you must go into some kind of a ship-yard, or other places will outstrip you. You can build wooden ships as cheap at Albina, Rainier or Oak Point, as they can be built of iron on the Clyde, and they will be a great deal safer after they are built. The number of iron ships that disappear at sea and are never heard from, is a frightful proportion to the total number built. They will be out of fashion ten years hence, on account of the high rates of underwriting, and the forests of Oregon and Washington Territory will be properly appreciated by ship-builders. But is it not a sad commentary upon the enterprise of Oregon's metropolis, that in two years, while she was building four or five river steamers like the Bonita and Champion, a little "cow county," with less than two millions of taxable property and eight hundred voters, should build seven sailing vessels with a total tonnage of 3,153 tons? You capitalists, who want to receive a dollar and a half for every dollar you put out, and want the dollar and a half before you put out the dollar, will have to adopt a new course of financial tactics. The diversion of your hoarded millions into some new channel besides mortgages on town lots and grain lands, will become an imperative necessity. You control the local grain trade of the Willamette Valley, but you do not export that grain to England in your own vessels; and until you do, your control of the Columbia river's trade is liable at any time to slip from your grasp. The old adage that "God helps those who help themselves," applies to you about as strongly as any people I can name.

During the past year, some twenty sailing vessels and three steamships were wrecked on the Pacific coast, aggregating not far from 900 tons, and their place must be supplied by new vessels. Do your Portland capitalists intend to let Coos Bay, Humboldt Bay and Port Ludlow, build them all? Must your tall firs that tower like saintly spires above the lordly Columbia, be cut down for no better purpose than fire-wood? These are questions that affect not only your merchant in his counting-room and your capitalist poring over his rent-roll, but they also affect the logger in the woods and your farmers away up in the classic regions of the Long Tom. The commercial prosperity of the entire State is involved in the question of ship-building at home, that the profits of her grain trade may be realized in Oregon rather than in New York and Liverpool. You have abundance of good fir, which by the comparative tests of Superintendent Murch, at Mare Island, is superior to the best Eastern oak. You can see how the Pacific Mail Company took Oregon fir to repair the Nevada and Dakota, when they were ten years old, in consequence of their Eastern oak timbers having rotted into powder. You can see the old Arago at Shoalwater Bay occasionally, twenty years old and sound as a trade dollar. If that don't satisfy you, try another test. Take a straight-grained piece of Oregon fir and another of Eastern oak, each six feet long and three inches square. Place them between two saw-horses set four feet apart, and then pile your weights on chains and hooks secured to each, and I will bet you the best hat Meussdorffer can make (better than the one Bob McCann burst) that the oak stick breaks first.

It may be possible that my enthusiasm over the certain success of Oregon ship-building, has led me to become somewhat long-winded upon a subject in which I confess a deep interest. Hence, if I have wearied my readers with a recital of plain and solid facts, unhampered with chimerical fancies, I ask their pardon. But as Oregon has been my home for nearly seven years, I naturally feel a pride in her growth and an interest in the development of her industries. And for the day when the wharves of Portland are lined with a fleet of home-built, home-owned and home-laden grain ships, your petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

HEROISM IN HUMBLE LIFE.

A singular story is told of a female servant in England, whose name and history—save this brief sketch—are alike unknown. She was employed by a family who had a store in the same building. Employed about the place was a certain almost half-witted lad. The benevolent master had been prompted by a kindly heart to give the poor lad something to do. Though weak in intellect, he was strong in thwack and muscle; willing to work, he showed his gratitude by doing with all readiness such labor as a porter should do, or running on such errands as he could clearly understand.

One day he was sent (not very wisely) to the dark store-room to fill, for the retail business, an empty powder canister. He procured a candle, without a candlestick, and having lighted it, went on his errand. When he wished to fill the canister from the stock in the barrel he was at some loss what to do with his candle. Utterly forgetful at the moment of the danger of his task, and seemingly unconscious of the need of caution, at once to relieve his hand and to get the most convenient light for his work, he extemporized a candlestick in rather hazardous material. Having re-

moved the cover, he stuck into the loose gunpowder in the open barrel the lower end of his long thin candle. Who ever heard of such a candlestick before? By the light so conveniently close to his work, he scooped up the black grains with his palm and poured them into the canister, as if they had been so much harmless sand.

Had Jack at this point taken up the candle and returned from his errand, it is probable that nothing more would have been known about his dangerous feat, and the peril the place and its inmates had escaped. The deliverance which was wrought was rendered the more remarkable by the discovery of what he had done.

Having, without accident, obtained the requisite supply, Jack departed from the chamber with his well filled canister, without having thought of removing the candle.

For a long while he did not remember his neglect. At last the remembrance came, and with it a frightened and convulsive agitation of the half-silly lad.

"What can be the matter?" said the foreman.

"What is all this about?" said the master.

The more he was asked, the less Jack seemed able to tell. His limbs trembled; his face was deadly pale; his eyes were starting with terror. He was suddenly awake to sense of impending danger, whilst fear seemed to destroy the power of speech.

A maid servant, who was very kind to Jack, and had great influence over him, was called to see if she could solve the mystery, or get the dreadful secret disclosed. At length, as she sought to soothe and persuade him, the lad pointed in the direction of the store-room, and faintly, chokingly uttered the words—"Candle-in-powder."

The afternoon errand was at once called to mind. The threatening danger was in a moment pretty well appreciated, though its precise character was not thoroughly understood. Every moment was precious; but of all the men standing, not one dare volunteer to attempt a rescue.

The gentle, quiet woman is sometimes found to be most determined when her energies are forcibly called into play. Whilst the men were stunned or hesitating, Susan, without saying a word volunteered, as "the forlorn hope." She ran to the store-room, quite aware that there was great risk, though she did not thoroughly understand its character till she entered the door of the chamber. She then saw that the lighted candle was standing literally in the powder, revealing by its light the circular mouth of the barrel which contained it. More than this, she saw, as she drew near, that the candle, though happily whole and long when Jack took it, had burned away since it had been placed there, till the blazing wick was a dull red cap on the top of it, and it had almost reached the very surface of the powder.

Susan looked on for a moment. As she looked, the candle burned, casting its sheen upon the dull black grains around it, silently declaring the full extent of imminent danger. In a few minutes an explosion must have followed. Not a moment was to be lost; yet a hasty snatch might have ruined all. Providentially Susan's presence of mind did not forsake her, nor was there any failure of the courage and self-control on which so much depended.

With prompt ingenuity she laid the back of the fingers of one hand in palm of the other, and opening the fingers of both hands in the centre they formed a sort of dish with a hole in the middle. Susan looked down at the threatening