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## THE WEST SHORE.

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WHEN the Northern Pacific was first completed and the Villard boom was at its height, it suited the railroad management to represent Portland as the great present and future city of the Northwest. Journalists were brought here in palace cars and royally entertained. The business men were metaphorically patted on the back, and assured that they were marvels of sagacity and enterprise, and that Portland was the "future great." The bubble burst, but our wise men do not seem to realize that this beautiful picture of future greatness was only a painting on its flimsy surface. They sit idly in their offices as though this wonderful future were already attained, instead of being something that must be worked for, and worked for hard, too. Some of them actually believe they really are enterprising and far-sighted. They have been told so, and cannot understand why any one should undertake to deceive them; in fact, they do not admit the possibility of being deceived. They think, too, that it is public spirited, and an evidence of their desire to do their utmost to promote the interests of the city, when they belong to a Board of Trade and assist in passing resolutions and listening to reports, when, in fact, they are making themselves the laughing stock of the nation. What a brilliant exploit it was to get together and sagely memorialize Congress on the subject of the Nicaraguan Treaty, long after that body had knocked it on the head! In three or four weeks it will be time for them to pass resolutions on last month's dynamite outrages in London.

It has only taken two months for our commercial Bolons to absorb the idea which every newspaper in the State has been thrusting at them since the New Orleans Exposition opened—that our display is disgracefully insignificant, and the great State of Oregon has sent a very small boy to mill. Having finally taken intellectual cognizance of this unpleasant fact, they held a meeting the other night to consider the situation. After much friction of ideas, they decided that the time was too short—for which they alone are to blame—to make a collection of manufactured articles, the one thing especially needed, and that their superabundant energy—not cash—should be expended in sending a little more of just what is there already. Having done this they passed a resolution and appointed a committee to pass the hat. For genuine enterprise and liberality these men are without a peer. They stand ready, and even anxious, to pass resolutions in favor of any and every meritorious project, and on special occasions will contribute a committee to solicit subscriptions, which committee, from long experience, has learned to confine its labors to the rendition of a report of its lack of success, or to a request for an extension of time, with the hope that the whole matter will be forgotten before another meeting. It was

only a few days ago that a delegation from the interior sought the aid of our Board of Trade in the construction of a road to the Cœur d'Alene mines, a project which would be the means of bringing many thousands of dollars of trade to this city annually. In addition to the usual dose of resolutions, the Board actually conferred upon those gentlemen a *permit* to solicit contributions, and are too obtuse to understand their diagnet therout. When those men are asked to contribute toward projects that will be of great benefit to the city, State and themselves individually, it is refreshing to witness the alacrity with which they thrust their hands deep into their pockets and—keep them there to hold their purses from slipping out.

It has been truthfully said that if it were not for the fools in this world we would have no wise men, since wisdom is only known by its contrast with folly. That is the only consoling thought when reflecting on the course pursued by the men who control the business affairs and hold the purse strings in this community. With an opportunity to lay the foundation and build the superstructure of a great commercial and manufacturing city, such as no other in the Northwest possesses, our business men sit down supinely and do nothing, letting the golden opportunity pass unrecognized and unimproved. The time is fast coming when the trade of this city will seek other channels; when men with enterprise and public spirit will draw to other commercial centres the business now thrown into the hands of our mossback traders. A correspondent of the *Topoka Commonwealth* described the situation exactly when he said of this city: "Without enterprise to develop her resources, or sagacity to discern the course of events, she is sitting in the ashes of her hopes, while Tacoma and Seattle are planning for her future humiliation." Nothing but phenomenal blindness prevents a recognition of the picture he draws, and suicidal stupidity alone can account for there being a subject for such a sketch whatever. It is pleasant to pose for the artist's pencil, but not when he is seeking a model for dry rot and decay. From the same source we learn that Portland is the "richest, laziest and dirtiest city of its size in the United States," a statement not wholly within the bounds of truth. That it is the richest is a fiction which may, perhaps, please the fancy of our millionaires and cause them to draw their purse strings still tighter, with the determination that she shall continue to be the richest by not giving away a cent, but serves chiefly to tickle the conceit of a lot of impecunious men, who delight to be spoken of as rich, even if it is only "on the average." That she is the laziest no one will undertake to dispute; but as for being the dirtiest, we dissent. In the Alleghenies is a city admitted to be dirtier, a city covered with the soot and grime of industry and great manufacturing enterprises, while Portland's is just simple, plain, every day dirt—dirt which represents nothing done and gives no promise of anything to be done in the future.

PORTLAND is the largest and richest city in the Northwest simply because her location and the past conditions of trade have made her so, and not by virtue of the enterprise, liberality or sagacity of her merchants, as represented by their commercial organization. She has sat by the gate and gathered toll from all who passed in or out, and has returned not a cent. Her wealth represents a huge tax levied upon the industries of the country, to foster which she makes no effort. Where are her great manufacturing enterprises to prove that she has created some of this wealth herself? Their invisibility is prominent. Past conditions of trade enabled her to sit quietly down and command the business of this region, but those conditions are rapidly changing, and the time will quickly come when she can no longer command, but must compete with younger, more vigorous and more enterprising cities, with the odds of prejudice and transportation facilities against her in many places. If she only exhibited a disposition to do something there might be some hope for her in the future, but her moneyed men seem to be unable to grasp the situation. It requires no prophet's vision, no power to pierce the veil of futurity; all that is necessary is the good, practical common sense to perceive the drift of causes already plainly at work, and a knowledge every intelligent man should have of the progress of other places and the significance of current events. If they possessed these they would know that no great city was ever built upon mortgages, or by simply being a leech upon the body of the surrounding country. Some became great by the spoils of nations conquered in battle; but those "good old times" have long