

# West Shore

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**The West Shore offers the Best Medium for Advertisers of any publication on the Pacific Coast.**

Saturday, April 10, 1900.

**W**HEN the location of the site for the chamber of commerce building was under discussion, no one seems to have given a thought to the question of whether the building would be within or without the fire limits. Portland has a splendid fire department, perfectly equipped, thoroughly organized and disciplined and splendidly handled when called into action. Last year the fire record was the best in the United States, the total loss being but \$37,730.23, though there were 127 alarms. Gratifying as this is, it is not sufficient that the city be well equipped to extinguish fires, but precautions against their occurrence should also be taken. One of the first things to be done is to extend the limits of the fire district, within which no wooden structure will be permitted to be erected. The present fire limits cover a ridiculously narrow strip, extending from Madison to Ash from the east side of Fourth street to the river and from Ash to G from the east side of Second to the river. All west of Fourth street between Madison and Ash, and all west of Second between Ash and G are outside the fire limits. The court house, post office, new hotel, Marquam opera house, the new Perkins hotel, the Merchant hotel, and many of the new brick blocks contemplated, lie beyond this line that marks the boundaries of new frame buildings. Portland should follow the example of other progressive cities in this matter and extend the fire limits. It is urged that if compelled to build of brick many property owners could not afford to improve their property; but the best answer to this is that, within certain limits, it is not for the best interests of the city that property should be "improved" by the erection of cheap and combustible frame structures. Our business streets within the fire limits are a sufficiently terrible example to serve as a warning. Business is pushing westward, and the city council

should take the necessary steps to make it certain that this new business area shall contain blocks of brick and stone and not wooden sheds.

Any person owning real estate in the city of Portland will do well to hold it, and any one with a few hundred or a few thousand dollars at command will also do well to buy property in this city. It is a conservative estimate that nearly all property will double in value the next five years. The reason for this is plain and simple. Portland already has the three greatest transcontinental railroads running into the city over their own tracks, besides being the center of the greatest system of local roads on the Pacific coast, and has, also, the promise of a greater number of new lines in the immediate future than any other city. Railroads make cities of business and substantial wealth, while booming makes mushroom towns. Any industrious mechanic who comes to Portland and invests the little he can save from his earnings in real estate, will be able in a few years to give his tin dinner-pail away and do without it.

It is evident that a large appropriation will be asked for by southern members of congress to rebuild the broken levees of the Mississippi and protect the vast fertile areas along that great highway from the annual floods. That it is necessary can not be disputed and that it ought to be done at government expense is admitted by all who recognize the fact that the general government is interested in the prosperity of the whole country. Here is an opportunity for the Pacific coast members to strengthen their hands in congress by pooling issues with the southern members, so that together they may secure the appropriations that singly neither might be able to obtain.

The telegraph bill passed by the Washington legislature has become a law by being filed with the secretary of state. Under its provisions the Pacific Postal Company will at once extend its lines into Eastern Washington and give that region the benefit of competing systems now enjoyed by Western Washington and Oregon. During the blockades last winter the value of this system was fully demonstrated, as without it business would have suffered more than it did.

The Northern Pacific will be the first great railroad to reach Gray's harbor. It has purchased the line running from Kamilche, on Puget sound, to Montesano, and will extend it down the Chehalis to the harbor. Hunt's line from Centralia, to be connected with his other system at Portland, will be the next, and the Union Pacific will probably be the third. Gray's harbor is on the eve of great things.