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Canal Will Mean Much

Cities located on the Columbia are not the only communities advantageously located on navigable streams which anticipate great things when the Panama Canal is completed. St. Louis is putting on an important navigation service between that city and New Orleans, preparatory to the great traffic expected to move down the Mississippi following the opening of the canal. Already Kansas City has a company organized to navigate the Missouri down to St. Louis. Commercial bodies all along the upper Mississippi and the Ohio are also active and it is also apparent that the entire Mississippi basin country looks forward to the opening of the canal as a great event and will expend large sums of money to make the water route effective. Hood River county is acting in common with other progressive communities similarly located the country over by seeking to build a public dock and thus take advantage of the Columbia river as a mighty transportation factor under the new order.

In the Right Direction

All agricultural sections are interested in the movement to obtain from the government increased endowments for agricultural colleges in order to enable these institutions to put into practice the best methods of soil production. Bills will be introduced in Congress asking for such appropriations. The general plan is to employ trained agriculturalists as practical farm demonstrators. These men would take to the farmer on his own farm the information that would enable him to adapt to his local conditions the most approved methods. It is proposed to put these trained men, selected by the state agricultural colleges, in each agricultural county of the United States. Authorities have expressed the belief that the plan would in a few years increase the farm output at least fifty per cent.

Oregon is already doing a great work in teaching better methods of agriculture and the O. A. C. is training hundreds of men and women how to get the best returns from the soil. Oregon is making a name as a great agricultural state and is sure to support a measure whose aim is to teach the youth of the land how to farm.

Teaching Fairy Stories

As old Roger de Coverly used to declare when presented with a difficult matter for adjudication, there is much to be said on both sides of the question now being discussed here as to whether fairy stories are helpful or harmful reading for children in the primary grades. There are many delightful fairy tales which cannot help but stimulate the child's imagination and fancy. One of the most objectionable features of such stories is the fact that a witch, a wolf, a Blue-beard or a cruel stepfather have to figure in most of the stories. These characters are all, figuratively speaking, wolves in sheep's clothing, hiding evil designs beneath an exterior of feigned friendliness. Reading of such characters must naturally result in making a child suspicious of strangers, however friendly they may appear. They also stimulate the sense of fear, like the mother who threatens her child with the "bugaboo." However, it is an easy matter for the teacher to eliminate such stories should experience teach her that they have a harmful effect.

Do We Want A Public Dock?

BY W. H. WALTON

Do we want a public dock? According to 230 residents of the county, out of 335 who have been asked by the county commissioners for their opinions, we do, and according to 105 we don't.

So far the majority in favor of the dock is more than two to one. Many of this majority enthusiastically state their approval, while some of those against the proposition are as bitterly opposed as their fellow citizens are enthusiastic. Two of the latter, A. I. Mason and C. L. Rogers, have had recourse to public print to voice their opposition and in so doing a miracle has apparently occurred. Mason and Rogers for once agree. This is indeed unique. In fact it is more than this, it is uproarious, and injects humor into a question that otherwise would be dry as the summit of the lava beds in the middle of August.

Mason advises waiting for five years and Rogers to defer the matter until the canal is open for traffic. In the meantime, what about the railroads? It wouldn't surprise the writer to learn ere the ink had dried on this paper that the dock frontage at Hood River had been acquired in their interests. This statement is not being made for the purpose of "corporation baiting," but in the light of fact. Fact that cannot be sidestepped in view of the action of these same railroad interests during the past twelve months along the Pacific coast.

It is estimated on competent authority that \$100,000,000 is being spent in the cities on the Pacific coast from Los Angeles to Victoria, B. C., to improve harbors and dock frontage in anticipation of the benefits of water transportation through the Panama canal. Over one-fourth of this sum is being spent by the railroads. It was only last week that many acres of land fronting on the river was secured in Portland by the Hill and Harriman interests. For what purpose? The answer is easy. To enter into steamship competition for traffic through the Panama canal.

Furthermore, Portland was the last Pacific harbor on the list in which the railroads secured big dock privileges, but it is far from being the least in importance. On the contrary, the Columbia river, with its 450 miles of navigable length, gives it and its tributary territory an advantage not possessed by any other section on the Pacific coast of the American continent, north or south—an open gateway owned by the people, free from restraint of trade.

There is but one menace to prevent the people of the Columbia river section from benefiting from this natural advantage and that is the monopolizing of the accessible dock frontage. The municipalities of San Diego, Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, Portland, Tacoma, Seattle and Vancouver are spending millions to secure these privileges and the railroads are hurrying to keep pace with them. Already the latter have secured immense dock facilities in all these cities. The question is, if Hood River wants a public dock, can she afford to wait five years, or even two years? Los Angeles, twenty miles away from San Pedro, her natural harbor, is spending \$13,000,000 for docks; Oakland is spending \$15,000,000; Portland is spending a like amount and, like her sister cities, is looking forward to the opening of the Panama canal in 1914. Yet the amount asked for a public dock at Hood River, with its assessed valuation of over \$10,000,000, is \$10,000, or one-tenth of one per cent. In two years from now, if water transportation to the Atlantic coast is the means of saving even ten cents a box on

apple shipments the dock would be paid for several times over if it cost twice ten thousand dollars, and there is no reason for not believing that the saving will be much greater. What about the direct shipments to Europe? Only recently two extensive handlers of apples from Hamburg, Germany, were at Hood River and told the writer that they looked forward to the time when they could have their apple shipments from here sent direct to Europe through the Panama canal. And they no doubt will receive shipments this way. But it remains to be seen who will dictate the terms. In their efforts to control or share the expected Panama canal traffic the railroads cannot be blamed. With them it is a matter of maintaining their earning power whether on land or sea.

Perhaps the vast expenditures for harbors and docks being made by the Pacific coast cities mentioned are in vain. Perhaps the master minds of the big railroad systems who advised securing great areas of dock frontage, to drop into the language of the street, are too previous. But neither of these great forces think they are. The dock question at Hood River is a matter for settlement NOW, not in the misty future.

The intelligent action of the Hood River county commissioners in bringing the matter to the attention of the community at this time should be commended rather than criticized. Their action depends on the decision of the Oregon state supreme court as to the legality of the bond issue. Later the question will be submitted for the approval or rejection of the taxpayers, if the lower court's decision is sustained. The question is whether we want to take steps now to secure independent water transportation or to allow the railroads to control it for us.

Scores of cities throughout the United States are getting much free advertising because some of the young ladies, residents therein, have taken advantage of leap year and are now more or less happily married. Hood River is famous for its large number of eligible bachelors, but so far this city has not had its name mentioned in the press dispatches as the home of fair damsels who are not afraid to take a chance.

Now that a suffragette looks like a "comer," politicians and organizations which may have an axe or two to grind later on are taking Father Time by the forelock and endorsing woman's suffrage. At The Dalles last week the State Federation of Labor passed unanimous resolutions to that effect. Armed with the ballot, the women may soon discard their timeworn title of the "weaker sex."

Spokane has the doubtful distinction of being one of the thirstiest cities in the Northwest. Approximately \$6,000,000 was spent for liquor of all kinds by her citizens during 1911. Of beer alone more than 85,000 barrels were consumed. Spokane is a city of boosters, as she has good reason to be, but here is a piece of information which might well have been suppressed.

Spooners in Los Angeles parks will hereafter be compelled to pay for the privilege. Private benches, big enough to seat only two and opened automatically by dropping a nickel in the slot, are the latest innovations.

Already the optimistic anticipation that the valley will have a bumper crop this year is having its beneficent effect on business.

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