

Daily Astorian.

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For years the Astorian, in nearly every issue, has published facts and statistics showing the enormous gain in commerce and trade at Puget sound over the Columbia river. It has been repeatedly pointed out and backed by the most positive proof that this growth in Washington was being largely made at the expense of Oregon. The merchants and business men of Portland, Astoria and other sections of the state have been implored to take the steps which might be easily invoked to put a stop to these encroachments on their trade. While our commerce has steadily declined, until there was a loss on inward and outward tonnage last year—the best year ever known in commerce on the Pacific coast—of 294 vessels of all kinds, amounting to over \$40,000 tons, as contrasted with the year 1898, the country papers have almost totally ignored the situation, while the Oregonian has published columns of false figures and deductions to offset the efforts of the Astorian, and to quiet possible clamor by making it appear that Portland was actually gaining in trade over Puget sound. Now the facts are beginning to be better understood, and within six months the subject of Oregon's decline, and the reasons therefor, will form the principal topic of discussion in the Oregon press. But it is to be feared this agitation among the people will come too late to do any good—at least during the remaining best years of many of those now interested in and who have their all invested in the welfare of this state.

The Oregonian recently asserted in a statistical statement, published to quiet apprehension as to the loss of Oregon trade, that nearly the entire wheat and flour export trade from Portland had been attained within a period of the last fifteen years. Now, assuming this statement to be true, a moment's analysis of the government's published records will suffice to show how astounding Oregon's loss of trade has really been. If the wheat and flour trade has grown up since the year 1885, then the exports from the Willamette district prior to that date must have been of products or merchandise outside of wheat and flour, or in other words general trade. The government figures show that the Willamette district exports for the year 1884 amounted to \$4,383,498. In 1899, including the gain in wheat and flour at the end of the 15-year period cited by the Oregonian, the total exports from the Willamette district were \$7,273,223, an increase for the 15 years of just \$2,889,725. But let us see how Puget sound has fared in this Oregonian period. In order to rightly appreciate the difference, it must be borne in mind that it is a part of the Oregonian's claim that Portland today ships nearly three-fourths of the total wheat crop of the Inland Empire. This contention, it must be admitted, is pretty well sustained from the statement by the government that of the exports from the Columbia river in 1899, including all the lumber and other products from all the towns in Washington and Oregon along the Columbia river, there was only a total, in round numbers, of \$909,090 of other exports than wheat and flour. Then, when the government tables further show that while Puget sound's exports in 1884 were only \$1,354,581 (about one-fourth of Oregon's), and exports through that custom house in 1899 amounted to the sum of \$15,428,991, the increase during the Oregonian's 15-year period of \$13,074,410, must, almost entirely, be the Oregonian's claim, have been general commerce. That is to say, roughly speaking, the Oregonian admits the loss in general commerce on the Columbia river during its 15-year period of \$1,493,769—and it was greater according to the government's showing—while

Puget sound gained in that period nearly \$13,544,410 in general commerce. What do the newspapers and business men of Oregon think of this exhibit of their state's commerce and seaport decadence?

It is to be hoped the coming Oregon state convention will not allow itself to be shaken in its allegiance to the great republican doctrine of protection by the influences which seem to be making in certain quarters. It is certain that the national convention will take as firm ground as ever on that question, and the Oregon convention does not want to make the same mistake it once made in its declarations, anticipating the party's national stand, upon a certain other important question. There are some persons who call themselves republicans and suppose they have a fair knowledge of the tariff question who are saying in these days that the protective system has performed its functions, ceased to be necessary and is no longer regarded by the people with the same interest as before, because they have found themselves able to reach out in foreign markets. The one thing certain about such persons is that they are not protectionists and know nothing of the principles upon which republican tariffs have been framed. They are almost as blind as the free traders who used to say that protection had entirely failed because it had not advanced prices of manufactured products. The purpose of the protective system was and is to build up home industries so far that home competition will insure lower prices for consumers—so far that the producing capacity can only be fully and most profitably employed by reaching out into foreign markets, and thus compelling the producers by self-interest to keep prices low for domestic consumers, even when they are able to command the home market. How well that work has been performed in the more important branches of the iron industry all men well know, even those who cannot comprehend that it has been the consequence and was the object of the policy which stimulates home industry. The fact that such magnificent results have been obtained in the iron and certain other industries, so freely commented on in the newspapers lately, makes it the more obviously foolish to stop the good work it is doing for other industries in which progress is necessarily slower. The subject of the tariff, like the money question, is much better understood than it used to be. It is useless any longer for the opponents of the protective principle to appeal to the prejudice of workers in the non-productive industries. They have witnessed by practical observation the helpful influence which has built up for their labor or products a vastly greater demand through the development of the protected industries. There is not the least evidence of such a change of feeling, nor are the plain people so lacking in logic or common sense as to desire the abandonment of a national policy because it has itself been efficient, though its good work is not half done.

THE HAWAIIAN BILL.

There is said to be little doubt as to the passage of the bill pending in the senate for the government of Hawaii. Its provisions are pretty well known and have been discussed at length. It is scarcely possible that there will be any material changes made in the form of the bill as it came from the committee, or that much will be said in debate upon it which has not already been said on one side or the other. There is, however, one feature of the case which cannot be too often nor too vigorously emphasized. That is, that the scheme of Hawaiian government does not aim at the admission of Hawaii as a state; that it is not to be admitted as a state, now or hereafter, and that it will be best for all concerned to dismiss at once and forever all notions of the admission of Hawaii, or Puerto Rico or the Philippines, or any such outlying territory, to statehood in this Union. That is, beyond doubt, the will of the American people, exercised in entire harmony with the letter and spirit of the constitution, and with the traditions and practice of the nation since its foundation. It is an error to say that it is oppressive to hold territory outside of statehood. If it were, the nation would have been exercising tyranny since its foundation. The constitution does not make the admission of a single state mandatory. It leaves it entirely to the discretion of congress: "New states may be admitted by the congress into this nation." "May," not "must." It is compulsory that certain rights be respected and

maintained, but the right to statehood is not one of them. No such right exists. Statehood is purely and simply the gift of the Union, which may be granted or withheld. That has been the practice of this nation for more than a century, and it is not to be departed from.

We assume that there is little danger of any serious attempt being made to take Hawaii or any outlying territory into the Union of states. The sentiment of the American people against it is too strong to be disregarded. But it is just as well for the principle of non-admission to be clearly kept in mind, and to be emphasized in a convincing and conclusive manner. One of these days all the territories within the compact limits of the continental domain of the United States, all contiguous to the present states, will probably be admitted to the Union. One of these days, too, the outlying possessions of the nation, remote and disconnected, may be greater than they are now. But none of these latter are to be erected in to states. There will remain the distinction, geographical as well as otherwise, between the United States and "property of the United States." And toward the preservation of that distinction it is the duty of all right-minded citizens to contribute.

HAWAII AND PORTO RICO.

Chicago Times-Herald. The Hawaiian bill is a model. It admits the islands on an exact equality with our territories, in conformity with the broad principle that there should be no discrimination between different parts of the United States. Such restrictions as are aimed against Orientals already prevail in this country, while the suffrage provisions in general are of the most liberal sort. Both houses of this legislature are to be elected by the people, and the property qualification for senatorial electors, which was established as a precautionary measure by the short-lived Hawaiian republic, is abolished. Natives are endowed with the political rights that belong to our own citizens. The tariff laws are made uniform with ours.

We see nothing here to criticize, but how illogical and worse than illogical it would be for congress to pass this thoroughly commendable bill and the anomalous Porto Rico bill at the same session. Whether the comparison is by race or industries, it militates with equal force against the enactment of the latter.

Of the population of Hawaii but 3,095 are Americans, 2,250 British, 1,432 Germans and 372 Norwegians. There are, on the other hand, 31,919 Hawaiians, 8,485 part Hawaiians, 15,191 Portuguese, and of nonvoters 24,407 Japanese and 21,616 Chinese. It is a very queer combination, with the power of government in the hands of shiftless natives and ignorant Portuguese if they should choose to exercise it. In Porto Rico nearly two-thirds of the population, which exceeds 800,000, are Spanish or part Spanish, the remainder being Negroes. Of the Spanish a very considerable number must be intelligent and well educated. They represent the old society of the island, which had wealth and cultivation and are decidedly superior to native Hawaiians and to the Portuguese emigrants in Hawaii. The negroes are like those in our Southern states, who constitute half the population in Louisiana and more than half in South Carolina.

Neither in the one case nor the other are the conditions ideal, but as it is the reasonable expectations of the framers of the Hawaiian bill that Hawaiian voters will be led by the intelligent minority, so we may suppose that an intelligent minority will direct public opinion among the more homogeneous people of Porto Rico. At any rate, a discrimination against Porto Rico, which limits the suffrage and makes one branch of the legislature appointive, involves us in the most glaring absurdities, as the references to both Hawaii and the Southern states show. We should give the Porto Ricans the same chance that the others have, knowing as we do that government can be learned only by practice and that the immense power of the United States is sufficient to guarantee order.

The tariff differences are equally illogical and indefensible. We are "protected" against Porto Rico largely in the interest of the sugar men. But Hawaii produces five times as much sugar as Porto Rico, nor does the fact that it has enjoyed reciprocity advantages effect the argument. It is granted free trade with us, not because it deserves it any more than Porto Rico, but because its shrewd American population is better skilled in dealing with congress.

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O. R. & N.

Table with columns: DEPART, TIME SCHEDULES, ARRIVE. Lists train routes and schedules between Portland and various destinations.

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