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TELEPHONE MAIN 661.

THE WEATHER

Oregon—Clearing with light frost in early morning.

THE HELPLESS CONSUMER

If the ordinary citizen desires to know pretty accurately his real status in this land where he is supposed to be the whole thing, let him pay particular attention to the rates, estimates, debates, and results of the tariff legislation now underway. It will be a lesson worth his study, though it will leave him quite as helpless as ever he was.

He will find that no man in the Congress pleads his cause; Senator and Representative are charged with other obligations than any to him; they are serving other masters for the most part, and the consumer, otherwise the citizen, is the last to receive any consideration there. He is the victim, not the beneficiary, of the tariff, no matter who frames it nor how it is framed. Already he is paying 5 per cents more for the common commodity of tea, and the tariff ball has not even begun to roll.

We are so big so scattered, so unknit, so heedless, and inept, we cannot rally to our own security in moments of this kind; and our faith is so sodden in what we are pleased to call "representative government" that we are blindly indifferent to its results so far as we are concerned, however we may scoff and rave at the ultimate success of the banded interests that are served.

The farce is so gigantic that it paralyzes protest.

There is nothing in the vast catalog of civic operations to convict the masses of their negligible attitude in "representative government" so implacable and eternal as the federal tariff.

THAT BAR DREDGE.

Major McIndoe gives us but cold comfort in answer to our inquiries about the dredger Chinook and the date we may expect to see her at work on the Columbia bar, though he intimates that the appropriation will be available as soon as the Chinook is.

After $35,000 had been spent on this fine and serviceable craft to repair her boilers and supply other mechanical aids, at San Francisco, she was brought north and berthed at Portland, and for four long useless years, she has laid there; idle, rotting, and the $35,000 worth of improvement rendered futile and barren, and today another $100,000 is probably necessary to make her of any service whatever. Surely the United States Government is ruinously reckless of its nest utilities, scandalously indifferent to graft, hopelessly immune to the rules of business that would safe-guard and maintain its best possessions. No salvage firm in the world would stand still and see a splendid engine such as this go to pieces, sag and warp and decay to worthlessness as the Government does. It is a shame and a reproach, and the engineering department takes no credit from the situation, no matter who is responsible for it. The Chinook could easily be put in temporary shape for a summer shift on the bar, and her full repair be perfect next winter.

In default of the Chinook, we suggest that the Chamber of Commerce and all at interest in this matter, besiege the Government to permit the new ocean dredge now on its way to this port, the Clatsop, to be utilized on the bar until such time as the Chinook is ready for service. There is no use in frittering away the whole of 1909 waiting for some millions of miles of red-tape to be unwound in the job of getting that ship ready for duty. The new dredge can divide its time between the bar and the river this summer and begin the good work of opening the Oregon sea-gates to the commerce of the world, and in justice to all concerned, it should be so ordered.

ONE CENT POSTAGE.

Now there is a movement on foot to give us a postal rate of one cent per ounce on our letters within the home domain. This will help some. There would seem to be nothing quite so free from objection as this; no trust is interfered with; no man nor firm nor company, corporate, or otherwise, will lose by the reduction; it is simply a matter of Governmental interest; it will be a universal concession, if only Uncle Sam can run this particular department with the abated revenue.

It has been talked of for many years, but always failed because the postal authorities declared they could not maintain the service upon any such rate. Other countries do it, have done it for a long time; but few of them had to face such extraordinary distances in despatching their mails as we have. But all the same we would like to see it tried out. The people are entitled to every possible concession that can be made them, and this is one of the expected things.

SOMETHING DOING

The extraordinary zest in timber-cruising, surveying, and so forth, noticeable in this section of the country lately, indicates that there is to be something doing in the huge timber and lumber interests held here in the near future. Some of the great concerns owning the vast reaches of virgin forest back of this city and river have had a tip from some authentic source, and are getting the preliminaries out of the way for solid and sound improvement of their properties and preparing for the added facilities that are indispensable. Between the railroads and the timber people, we are sure to get something before long; and it may be our own "Electric" is at the botom of the sudden activity in the immense solitudes to the south of us. Whatever it is, we are banking on it to help Astoria a whole lot. We would just as willingly advance along the lumber route as any other, and it looks that way just at present. This is still the logical shipping point for the State of Oregon and the Inland Empire.

It takes an optimist, on returning from Washington inaugural weather, to say that he had a corking good time.

Philadelphia will establish a wireless station on its City Hall tower 537 feet high. It is an ill flareback that blows nobody good.

A cargo of oats has arrived in the United States from Argentina. In pitching the crops this year oats should have a little uplift.

On the whole, some hasty legislatures have concluded to recede from the idea that state rights include the nullification of national treaties.

New York's worst blizzard of snow occurred March 12, 1888. The third month in the calendar is a dubious time for picnics and street pageantry.

"Bon jour, Bill," says a Paris paper in its greeting to the new president. But what will the Parisians do when they search English dictionaries in vain for the word possum?

A great hit at the start can be made by the Sixty-first Congress by a prompt, businesslike and thoroughly effective revision of the tariff before the hot season sets in with its accustomed severity in Washington.

A New York paper speaks of "the waterway mania." They have had it to such an extent in Canada that Montreal last year, for the firrst time, exported more wheat than New York City.

The first wireless message was sent in 1895 over a distance of two miles. In 1897 nine miles were covered and now the record is 3000 miles. The public would not be surprised if the earth is girdled in time.

Mr. Bryan's income, it is stated, will be $125,000 this year, and there is nothing in the constitution to get it into a tangle. The country rewards Mr. Bryan handsomely on condition that he remains a citizen at large.

In the enlisted force on the big fleet 87 per cent are native born, 8.3 per cent are naturalized citizens and 4.7 per cent are unclassified. The time is past when Uncle Sam looks to foreign countries for naval crews.

How many years will it be before a fleet of airships goes around the globe to the accompaniment of wireless messages all the way? The world has learned to expect a rapid fire of novelties in transportation.

Cuban politicians pretend that the object of re-establishing the lottery is to increase public revenue. Many governments have had an experience with this form of gambling and dropped it as delusive and demoralizing.

One of Uncle Sam's torpedo destroyers has made a run along the California coast of 476 miles in seventeen hours, or an average of twenty-eight miles an hour. The navy has become a large institution and is accumulating no barnacles.

What would happen to the Panama Canal, asks one critic, if airships should attack it with dynamite? It strikes the average observer that, with inventors like the Wright brotherrs, Uncle Sam will be able to take cars of himself no matter what turns up in aeronautics.

A BRITISH PENSIONER

CHICAGO, March 19.—Six years before Victoria ascended the throne of England Patrick Webb entered the British ministry. He served 22 years and as a result of his service he has been drawing a pension from the British government for 57 years. He is now 96 years old and resides in Chicago. Besides Mr. Webb there are about 120 British pensioners in this vicinity, according to Mr. Erskine, British consul here, who is aiding the United States Civil Service Retirement Association in its efforts to induce the government to make provision for supernuated and disabled members.

Washington and His Birthday.

The first recorded celebration of the birthday of George Washington was by the Society of the Cincinnati at Philadelphia in 1700. The members of the society called on President Washington in Philadelphia.

The story of how Washington came to be made commander in chief of the Revolutionary army is interesting.

In June, 1775, the first army of the Revolution had already been formed around Boston and was in headquarters at Cambridge. General Ward was in command. The Continental congress was in session at Philadelphia, and George Washington of Virginia was a delegate to it.

Two delegates to that same congress were John Adams and his cousin, Samuel Adams, both of Massachusetts. John Adams was the most eloquent orator in New England in those days. He was also very wise and shrewd, as

STATUE OF WASHINGTON IN PARIS.

this story will show you. On the morning of June 18, 1775, John Adams walked back and forth, back and forth, in front of the congress hall thinking deeply. To his cousin Samuel, who came up, he said he was determined at once to make the congress enact that the army at Cambridge should be the lawful army of the colonies and that it should also choose this same morning a commander for the army.

"Well, Cousin John, and who is to be your commander?'

"George Washington of Virginia," replied John Adams of Massachusetts.

"Oh, no; it will never do!" exclaimed Samuel Adams.

"It shall do," answered John Adams. "The southern and middle colonies hang back because New England holds the physical power in her hands. A New England army, with a New England commander and New England perseverance, appalls them. The only way to allay their fears and give them nothing to complain of is to appoint a southern chief, and then all will rush to his standard."

Samuel was convinced. In the session of congress that immediately followed the eloquent and wise John Adams quickly opened the subject of electing a commander for the little army around Boston. He named the necessary qualifications for such a general in chief, the courage, wisdom,

WASHINGTON RUSHED FROM THE ROOM.

force and purity of character and the military training needed. The Massachusetts orator continued:

"Gentlemen, I know these qualifications are high, but we all know they are needful in this crisis in this chief. Does any one say they are not to be obtained in this country? I say they are. They reside in one of our own body, and he is the person whom I now nominate—George Washington of Virginia!"

Washington started as if a thunderbolt had struck him and rushed into the next room. He was just that modest and unmindful of himself.

Shrewd and wise John Adams had arranged with his cousin Samuel to move an adjournment of the congress immediately after the nomination of Washington, that the members might talk the matter over in private. They did so and very soon agreed with Mr. Adams. They ratified the nomination, and that was how George Washington became commander in chief of the American army of the Revolution.

AWAIT DECISION OF COURT.

SPOKANE, March 19.—The Root-Gordon case was not resumed today as the grand jury is awaiting the Supreme Court's ruling as to its right to employ a stenographer to record the testimony.