

STEEL ARMS REACH OUT FOR OREGON'S TRADE

In the Columbia river basin the heaviest railroad building of the western hemisphere, save that by the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Pacific, in Canada, will be under way next year. Contracts have been let and work has begun on more than 1,500 miles of railroad to aid in development of this immensely rich northwestern region. The outlay for this work will aggregate more than \$100,000,000, most of which will be put into circulation between January 1 and December 31, 1906.

Never in the history of the northwest has there been such railroad construction. Transcontinental lines vie with companies constructing branches. With a dash that dazzles the country, heavy operations have begun with an earnest of permanency.

For years Oregon and the northwest languished for want of railways. Complaints of the people isolated far from transportation were heard from a multitude of districts. National students pointed to the vast industrial vacuum and said that nowhere else in the country was so much valuable land to be found so far from the steel bands of modern traffic.

Golden Irrigation.
In one year the inaction of years was broken and was succeeded by a veritable turmoil of building energy. Portland, Oregon and the northwest had found a place on Wall street, and the coffers of capital were opened. This fructifying stream of wealth is flowing throughout the northwest, and early springs will see scores of great grading crews plowing the channels for its thorough distribution.

In Oregon alone, last year there was actually constructed 97 miles of railway lines, all of which is being operated. In Oregon alone contracts have been let and work is under way for the construction of more than 800 miles of railway, including the 305 miles of line being built on the north bank of the Columbia and Snake rivers, which constitute the state's northern boundary. In Oregon alone, one railway system—that managed by E. H. Harriman—has let contracts, appropriated the money and commenced construction of 340 miles of railway, all of which is expected to be finished by December 31, 1906. This same railway system is jointly constructing 71 additional miles on the north bank of the Snake river, in conjunction with the Great Northern.

On the north bank of the Columbia and opening Oregon more than any other state, another single railway system, that managed by James J. Hill, is rushing to completion 234 miles of railway, which will be operated by the close of the ensuing year.

Benefits Twenty-Four Districts.
This total railway mileage in the northwest which is assured so far as financial strength and fixed purpose of development can attain, is divided between 24 districts of the basin of the Columbia. The effect of this distribution of work will be to benefit the greatest possible acreage of undeveloped land. In addition to trunk lines crossing the untouched regions, branch lines will penetrate contiguous territory to established systems, acting as feeders to open the richest and choicest subdivisions of the country.

Development of the Columbia basin, the mighty empire which is shaped and bounded by the greatest river in the world and which is brought in touch with the outside world along a natural

channel of commerce made by nature, will be quickened by the railway work of the coming year more than by any other single annual achievement. The immense sums of money that will be spent in construction, 50 per cent of which will go directly into the commercial life of the northwest, will be followed by the immeasurable stimulation of more effective transportation. With all modesty, citizens of the inland Empire and Oregon believe that a period of prosperity is dawning which will in a half decade eclipse a generation of the past.

Harriman System Leads.
First in the heavy construction work of next year, as it is first in all Oregon improvement, stands the Harriman railway system, controlling the Oregon Railroad & Navigation company and the Oregon & California line. This system owns nearly all of Oregon's railway mileage. Its trunk and branch lines tap the richest and greatest parts of the state and transport the only through freight that touches Oregon soil. In gathering the products of the soil and mine for the markets of the world, and in distributing to the populace of Oregon their imports, the Harriman railways are closest of all industrial mediums to the vital interests of the people. The authoritative announcement that the system's companies would expend in the state next year \$24,000,000 for railway construction has had a profoundly inspiring effect throughout the state and nation. Perhaps of equal ultimate influence on state prosperity is the policy expounded by A. L. Craig, general passenger agent of the system's companies in Oregon.

"We are seeking to bring farmers, artisans and laborers to Oregon. Our highest effort is to populate the undeveloped sections and intensify industrial work. When we persuade the farmer to locate here we establish a self-perpetuating unit of society, who will, with the aid of the artisan and common laborer, bring factories and the long train of industries which mean the highest prosperity."

The Harriman system's work is to be distributed next year as follows: Elgin to Joseph, 63.5 miles; Drain to Marshfield, 51 miles; Natron to Klamath, 155 miles; Springfield-Henderson cut-off, 1,125 miles; Lafayette-St. Joseph cut-off, 2,333 miles; St. Johns extension, 3.33 miles; and joint work with the Northern Pacific in the Riparian-Lewiston extension, 71 miles.

The latter line will open the rich Clearwater basin of Idaho for direct connection with Portland, the Columbia basin seaport, tapping one of the richest wheat and fruit districts of the northwest. The line to Joseph will penetrate the Wallawalla country, prosperous in agriculture, livestock, timber and fruits. The extension to Drain will open the great timber reserves of coast counties, the coal fields of Coos and dairying and agricultural districts that occupy the western slope of the coast range. Of greater significance to the state is the Natron-Klamath work, which is destined ultimately to press onward through central Oregon and touch the main line of the Harriman line about Ontario. At present the management gives assurance of only 153 miles of work, but no doubt remains that central Oregon will be belted by this project, opening the great lake district and plateau land, where irrigation is reclaiming one of the most promising parts of the entire state.

Next to the work of the Harriman system of railways in Oregon this year is that undertaken by the Great Northern and Northern Pacific companies, which will give Portland another trunk line, following the only natural pass through the great Cascade range. Work is being rushed on this line at present between Kennewick and Vancouver, Washington. The appropriation of \$10,000,000 has been made for the track, two great steel bridges across the Columbia and Willamette rivers and terminal grounds in the heart of Portland. When finished this road will give the Hill system of railways a direct and short route to Portland, and place the system in easy position to branch into any part of the state that may be desired as feeding territory. With this work came the assurance that when the channel across the Columbia river bar and up the Columbia and Willamette rivers to Portland were of sufficient depth, the Hill companies would operate a great steamer line from this port.

Not so much in local development, but in advancing the positive assurance that ultimately the entire inland Empire would find a market by this route, the project of Mr. Hill has given Portland and Oregon the feverish animation of wonderful progress. Accepting the pledge, capitalists are commencing the important work of preparing this city for an immense export business. Great buildings are going up, arrangements are complete for larger and better docks, and every property holder is confident in his anticipation of the future.

Opening another section of the rich coast country, and bringing it into close relationship with the exporting metropolis, the Pacific Railway & Navigation company has undertaken construction of a branch from the Southern Pacific at Hillsboro to Tillamook, and later from Hillsboro to Portland, a total distance of 80 miles. Seven miles of this work is finished, about 30 will be completed the coming year, and other work will follow quickly. A branch from this line to Astoria, having a length of 80 miles, is also promised.

Other Lines.
The Spokane, Columbia, Railway & Navigation company proposes to construct a line from Spokane to boat navigation on the Columbia river, below Priest Rapids, and the management says that arrangements have been completed for constructing the first 53 miles of the line from the river.

The Great Southern Railway company built 80 miles of track and has been operating it for the last months of the year, connecting The Dalles with the rich fruit and agricultural section of Wasco county immediately to the south. Further work the coming year, probably as much as has already been completed.

The Willamette Valley Traction company, which is believed to have the backing of some great transcontinental concerns, has commenced building a 62-mile standard gauge electric line from Salem to Portland, passing through parts of the lower Willamette valley that are not traversed by Southern Pacific lines.

The Mount Hood road, which starts from Hood River, on the O. R. & N. line, taps Hood River valley, famous the world over for its fruits. Seventeen miles of this line was built this year, and an extension of 13 miles is to be made next season.

The Washington, Idaho & Montana line, from Palouse, in Washington, to

Princeton, Idaho, a distance of 45 miles, is being built by the Weyerhaeuser lumber interests, and may be extended further than the indicated terminus.

An independent branch line connects with the Southern Pacific at Medford, being owned by the Medford & Crater Lake company. Eleven miles of track was built this year, and next season it is the purpose to continue on toward Crater Lake, and possibly tap some of the eastern Cascade country.

The Forage Road.
Of moment in the general transportation system of the state was the completion this year of nine and a half miles of portage railroad between Celilo and Big Eddy, near The Dalles, to facilitate steamboat traffic on the Columbia river.

A company, known as the Spokane & Inland company, has announced its purpose of constructing an electric line from Spokane to the Snake river, in Asotin county, Washington. Preliminary plans have taken serious form.

In Grant county the Sumpter Valley railway has completed nine miles of new track, giving it a total trackage of 62 1/2 miles, and tapping to that extent the timber, mineral, agricultural and livestock interests of Baker and Grant counties. Assurance has been given by the management that the extension next year will be to the main fork of the John Day, an additional distance of 15 to 20 miles.

A short line, 17 miles in length, has been promised for the district between Ontario and Vale, of Malheur county, and the statement has been made that contracts are being let for grading.

In the immediate vicinity of Portland the Oregon Water Power & Railway company has completed seven and a half miles of new standard gauge track, and is letting contracts for eight and half miles more track next year, to connect the present line with the Columbia river.

These come under the head of the more positive achievements, in most of which contracts are being let and work is under way. The work by the larger companies is absolutely sure, and nearly all of it completed within one year. Several of the smaller and independent lines have strong financial backing, and are moved by the urgent entreaties of residents who offer good tonnage.

And Now Rumors.
Less defined rumors credit the state with far heavier railroad work than the above. Surveying parties have traversed the state for other large lines, and many people of the state believe that Oregon Water will result in many miles of track the coming year. The Central railway of Oregon has been financed to construct a belt line in the Grand Ronde valley. The Lewiston & Southwestern company began construction on an 80-mile electric line from Lewiston to Grangeville, but may defer in favor of the combined work of the O. R. & N. and the Northern Pacific into the same territory. The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul has authorized extension of its line to the Pacific coast, the diverging point for the extreme western end being Wallula, on the Columbia. A branch to Portland and another to Seattle are stated as certainties of the near future. The Portland, Oregon, Seacoast Railway company is also estimating on a second line into the Tillamook country from Hillsboro or Portland. The Public Service company has been organized to build a loop line from Castle Rock, on the Northern Pacific, in the state of Wash-



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ington, through the rich timber and mining belt of St. Helens, and down through the timber and agricultural section of Clarke county, to the Columbia river, delivering this traffic to Portland.

PETTY THEFTS ANNOY CITIZENS OF MILTON
(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)
Milton, Or., Dec. 23.—The citizens of

Milton are becoming somewhat alarmed over the disappearance of numerous valuable articles from different homes in the city and nearby farmers are also being pestered. Among other things meat has been stolen in large quantities from various people, canned fruit has been taken from cellars, chickens and other fowl have been missing. Coal to the amount of about a ton has been hauled away from the Ferndale and Sunnyside school houses. A close watch is being kept and if the perpetrators are found they will be severely punished.

Will Exploit Malheur.
(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)
Vale, Or., Dec. 23.—A new weekly newspaper issued its first number Thursday evening. The paper is styled the Weekly Oriano and is owned and published by G. A. Hurley, recently from Independence. The Oriano will be devoted chiefly to the exploitation of the natural resources of Malheur county and to general news. With some people every lawyer is "Judge."

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