

# OREGON SHOULD NOT WAIT FOR HARRIMAN

### Review of Railroad Situation Showing That City and State Ought to Act for Themselves in Matter of Necessary Extensions.

By Thomas G. McCusker.

Harriman has come and gone, and after a few weeks of hibernating Portland as well as some other portions of the state has awakened with a bad taste in her mouth. Much was expected of him, and there was considerable speculation as to what he would do when he gazed—so to speak—into the eyes of that fair daughter of the west, central Oregon. Many predicted that he would tear his clothes in his effort to build a road into that long-neglected territory after he had with his own eyes beheld the wonderful possibilities of that wonderful country.

Some persons went so far as to assert that ignorance alone of the affairs of the state in building into that territory. It might interest misguided individuals to know that there is not a spear of grass, an acre of grain nor a head of stock tributary to his system that he has not had a report of. The railroads have been in the habit of learning all about the condition of affairs along their lines. The "comparative" reports gotten out by the agents snow each month and year the same as compared with the preceding ones, and if there is a falling off they must show cause for it. Harriman is no exception, and if there is a gain, so they keep posted as to the additional acreage put in cultivation, etc. Consequently it was not necessary for Mr. Harriman to visit that section in order to know if it would pay to build a road there.

**Waste Time in Courts.**  
If our citizens were as well posted as to the conditions and resources of this great state, they would not waste so much time in the courts and otherwise in a vain effort to compel Mr. Harriman to give them, not what they want, but what they think they want. For there has never been a time when the merchants of this city have gone to the railroads with a demand for something that they had an argument to support. Their demands are for the railroads to recognize this fact and make the Harriman system are right here and, of course, they will do everything they can to help—those interests.

The fact is that our merchants are too prosperous, and in their efforts to keep competition out of their territory they are afraid to go after the railroad. Because both seem to be working along the same lines. This may seem like a strong statement, but I want some one to point out to me where there has been any great effort made up this city or state by inviting factories, business houses, etc. Going into some other cities, you can see large signs reading, "Free sites for factories and mills," but there is not much encouragement held out here.

In conversation with a business man a few days ago I told him Seattle capital was going to help build a road in Oregon, and that the city of Portland would be called upon to help also. He said that he doubted if they would get any financial assistance here, but intimated that they were long on moral support.

**Need Cash Support.**  
Moral support is a good thing, no doubt, but it will not build railroads, nor will it be of any assistance in fighting Harriman. What Portland and the entire state must do, is to wake up and do things. Don't go along on your knees to such men as Harriman. The city took its hat off to him while he was here, and said he must be given a chance. He had no intention of being come, and has none now of building the road into central Oregon. He will have one into the Klamath country from San Francisco, and take all the business he can to that city, and east via that gateway, and he is right from his standpoint. Why should he bring it here?

There is not a particle of reason why he should attempt to take freight via the longest route, or through a port that has no facilities for handling it, and so long as our citizens remain in their present mood of passive indifference, we will never have any better facilities. Harriman in his remarks before the irrigation congress in Sacramento, said, in speaking of central Oregon, that there was not sufficient population or traffic to justify the building of a road there at present, and further remarked that if they did have a road, the first few years would be spent in shoveling snow. To show the inconsistency of the gentleman, we must refer to the statement made by the man who was with Harriman on his trip through that country, viz.—that Harriman had given orders to build the road from Natron to Klamath Falls and to push the Corvallis & Eastern across central and eastern Oregon at once. Now any one familiar with the lay of the land knows that

the population along both these routes is as numerous as hens' teeth, and that the climatic conditions would result in the same amount of shoveling of the same material.

Of course Mr. Harriman had an object in the position he took on both these points. In discouraging the building of a road up the Deschutes, his statements will go far towards preventing any financial institution from backing any one else who would undertake the project. In giving out the report that he would build the Natron branch and the Corvallis & Eastern, he said that the traffic producing portion of that country will be taken care of, consequently it would be a waste of money to construct another line into the same territory.

**Weight of Arguments.**  
Both these arguments will have weight with those who don't know anything about it, but will mean very little to anyone who is posted. In the first place Harriman don't want anyone to build through central Oregon, as it would be too good an opportunity for J. J. Hill to invade that territory from his north bank road, and perhaps push on to San Francisco by a very direct and short route.

In the next place, he has no intention of building either the Natron branch or the C. & E. unless forced to do so by some one invading his territory, as both these propositions are bluffs. As I said on a former occasion, you cannot find a piece of road in the state that he has built except to keep some one else out, and you won't find it, either, for a number of years, as he is not a railroad builder, but a plunderer.

I had occasion once before to point out that when the Panama canal was completed, the Pacific coast terminals, so far as jobbing centers are concerned, would be off the map, unless the people woke up and fought for open rivers and interurban railways. The actions of the railroads in their position of advancing rates from the terminals compare and shows that they are preparing for a great fight. Hill is hurrying his line to the coast, the Milwaukee is also pushing to the front and we are sleeping. It is foolish to think that the railroads with all the money they have invested in property throughout the interior are going to sit idly by and see the canal take the business, anyone who believes so is an unsophisticated individual and should emigrate to Japan.

What are we going to do about it, and how will we be affected? Portland by reason of its geographical position in the best position to be benefited by the canal of any city on the coast. She has two magnificent rivers which have numerous tributaries that are navigable, and by the expenditure of considerable money, for it will take a great deal, the Columbia can be opened to Lewiston, and the Willamette nearly to Eugene. Then by extending electric lines to the interior she can hold nearly all the territory she now has, and acquire considerable more and with the low rates by the canal route and the low river rates, together with the reasonable rates that will be made by the electric lines, she can compete with any eastern jobbing center and surpass any other city on the coast, for the reason that they have not the waterways tributary to Portland, consequently will be at the mercy of the railroads for distributing rates. This is worth thinking about.

**Don't Ask Harriman.**  
I started to say that the people should not waste so much time asking Harriman to do something for them, but should take such action as will bring him to them for favors.

The state has voted and we have a railroad commission and they seem to be quite busy. We also have a portage railroad owned by the state, and it has been of great benefit, but it was stopped too soon. A few thousand dollars more would have put it into The Dalles where it could have connected with any steamboat on the river.

The actions of the railroads throughout the United States are doing more to bring about government regulation of railroads. It is the dear people who pay the freight, and why should they not have a say?

This brings up a vital question: Why should the state not build a trunk line through central Oregon and clear across the state? The Deschutes route is the best that can be had. It is true that certain people contemplate building via that route, and have rights of way for some distance, but they may be handicapped by Harriman as to be unable to construct it. In that event, the state could either build, or if it did not choose to, could take the bones of those who would build, provided of course that the road would not be a part of any transcontinental line and would always remain open to any one who wanted to connect with it. There are state and government irrigation projects for the development of the country, and it is a well known fact that



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nothing develops a country like a railroad. If the bonds were guaranteed by the state, they would sell in any market, no doubt at a premium. I am assuming now that the state did not build, but would take the bonds of those who did. If the state should build, it could either lease the road to responsible people who could operate it so that the interest could be paid and a sinking fund provided for the retirement of the bonds, say in 50 years, or it could employ some competent person to manage the property. I would favor the leasing plan, but it seems to me that as good a plan would be to take the bonds of those who would build it, except Harriman, of course.

**State Has Money.**  
The state always has a large amount of money on hand and according to the statutes no interest can be derived from it for the benefit of the state, but it is deposited in various banks who loan it and make an interest on same. I would like to see this question agitated and if the people take hold with a will, we can have railroads, and Mr. Harriman will be suit for favors.

In this connection it might be well to attract the attention of the people to the gobbling up of the water power of the state by large corporations who do not intend to use them now, but to prevent someone else getting them in order to compete.

There should be a provision made that water power taken up should be developed within one year or the rights would revert to the state. A further provision should be had that no water power could be taken if same was wanted by the state, and notice of filing or rather contemplated filing, should be given the state at least 90 days in advance and the purpose for which the water was to be used set forth, so that the state could protect her own interests, not only for the present but the future, should it be found that her interests would be jeopardized by such filing. Under the present law anyone can file on water rights and hold it indefinitely, whether they want to use it or not, but most of such filings are for the purpose of speculation to the detriment of legitimate business.

These things are worthy of earnest consideration, as everything of value seems to be getting into the hands of speculators and large corporations. I am aware that the interests which would be affected by action of this kind will ridicule and fight such a proposition, but this is something that interests the people as a whole, and I believe the people can be depended upon to look after their own interests—provided they get started right.

Now is the time to start.

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## FARMER INVOKES UNWRITTEN LAW

### Bullet That Slays Rival Pierces Tell-Tale Letter to Woman.

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)

Kennett, Mo., Sept. 19.—When Aud McMunn, a Portageville farmer, invoking the unwritten law, shot and killed Arch Brown in the office of a livery stable at Kennett, one of the bullets from his revolver pierced a letter which Brown was writing to McMunn's wife.

Because of Brown's attentions to Mrs. McMunn there had been a long feud between the men. Brown formerly was employed as a farmhand by McMunn and lived at the McMunn home, which was then near Kennett.

Last June McMunn and his wife quarreled and there was an agreement by which McMunn was to sell the farm and go away. Of the \$3,000 realized from the sale the husband took \$2,200 and left Kennett for Oklahoma, saying that he would never return.

The remainder of the money he placed in the bank in his wife's name. Two weeks later Mrs. McMunn drew the money from the bank and departed from Kennett. Brown left about the same time. A relative wrote to McMunn, telling him of his wife's departure. When he returned to Kennett he found that both Mrs. McMunn's and Brown's trunks had been checked to Rector, Arkansas, the home of Brown's father.

McMunn went straight to the place where Brown was employed. Many looked for violence, but the men had a long conference and shook hands when they parted.

Yesterday McMunn returned accompanied by his wife's oldest daughter. After taking the girl to the home of his sister, Mrs. Ada Hudspeth, he hurried to the stable where Brown worked.

Brown was sitting in the office writing a letter. Without a word McMunn fired three times. Two of the bullets struck Brown, one in the right arm and one in the chest. Brown staggered to the door and fell, and McMunn fired two more bullets into him.

Last Monday McMunn heard something which caused him to call Brown on the telephone and say: "Be ready, I'm coming up there to kill you!" Brown swore out a peace warrant which was served on McMunn as he stepped from the train here Monday night.

The uncompleted letter which Brown was writing when shot reads: "Hello, darling. How are you? I don't feel like I could hardly live. This morning was at the train and saw him come in with the girl. I am so mad I can hardly see. You keep letting him hang around and some one has got to quit. If it is me, say so, and I will never bother you any more. While I love you better than life, I have stood all I could and I have done everything that I could."

McMunn, held by the coroner for the grand jury, is in jail here.

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