

PORTLAND, OREGON, SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 21, 1912.

THOROUGH QUIZ INTO CONDITIONS OF PORT IS URGED

Commercial Bodies Asked to Take Steps to Put Portland on Equal Basis With Puget Sound; Figures Given.

In a letter addressed to the port of Portland commission, the Chamber of Commerce, the Commercial club and the public dock commission, W. J. Jones, manager of the Portland branch of Brown & McCabe, stevedores, suggests a thorough investigation of port conditions here in order that Portland and the Columbia river may be placed on at least as advantageous a footing as other Pacific coast ports, and thereby given a full share of the business to which he feels the port is justly entitled.

Mr. Jones believes that reasons for from four to seven vessels arrived and departed from Portland should be ascertained, and if there are no good reasons for this discrimination, then the commercial bodies of the city and state should immediately go to work to bring about a change that will give the Columbia river district the share of shipping to which it is justly entitled, or if any good reasons exist, then they should be remedied.

That there is something radically wrong with Portland as a shipping port must be apparent to every citizen of Oregon. "Puget sound has six lines of steamers regularly operating to the orient, by which from four to seven vessels arrive and depart each week, besides lines to Australia, west coast of South America, Germany, England and the Hawaiian Islands. Most of these vessels carry cargoes averaging from 4000 to 12,000 tons, and one of them left the other day with 24,000 tons of freight. Portland occasionally has a steamer for the orient which arrives and departs by the way of sound ports.

Cereal Exports.

A very large percentage of the cereal exports from Puget sound ports is controlled by local exporting firms, who are compelled to route their products through the northern ports to China, Japan and other Asiatic ports, for the reason that steamship companies refuse to establish terminals or lines to Portland on account of unfavorable conditions and labor discriminations against visiting steamships.

Notwithstanding that the government has, and is appropriating large sums of money to build jetties at the mouth of the river, the state of Oregon by a special taxation through the Port of Portland commission is spending large sums of money to improve the waterways to the sea and make Portland an attractive port for seeking tonnage. It seems that the more work and general good done for the river by

the commission is more than offset by other agencies that operate to the serious disadvantage of the port besides creating in the minds of steamship operators through reports made by their captains a certain prejudice occasioned by heavy port expenses and slow dispatch.

There Is Remedy.

Whether these complaints are justified or not, there is no denying the fact that some steamship companies for some reason or other are keeping clear of this port. Occasionally vessel operators stop in the city and look over the situation, study the conditions and pass on to other cities and open offices for business.

There is no denying this proposition, and it is patent to every shipping man and waterfront operator in Portland. There is a remedy for the conditions, if they are true, and if they are not true, then it is up to the commercial and labor interests to make a thorough and impartial investigation, remedy such abuses as exist, and place the true facts and conditions before owners who are seeking deep-sea trade from this coast. Something must be done quickly if Portland is to take advantage of the trade coming up from the Panama canal in a couple of years. Seattle has in guaranteed prospect something like \$10,000,000 to be expended within five years on waterfront property and promotion of oceanic trade. Other ports are equally as active.

If Portland is suffering from unjust discriminations on the part of labor along the waterfront an investigation participated in by all parties concerned would discover and remedy the abuse.

Investigating Problem.

To reach this point of investigation it would seem that it would be proper for your respective organizations to appoint committees and invite the executives of the state and city and the presiding officer of the trades council to select similar representatives and jointly make an exhaustive investigation into waterfront conditions, suggest ways and means for improvement and make such recommendations to the public as would have a tendency to remove objectionable conditions and create an attractive port for commerce. There could be no politics in a movement of this character. If conditions warranted a change in labor or customs of the port there is no doubt but that organized labor would gladly follow the suggestions of the committee on which it was represented and cooperate with the commercial interests to remove the prejudice now entertained by shipping interests against Portland.

The development of Oregon's commerce is of vital importance to every citizen, regardless of whether he be a laborer or longshoreman, merchant or warehouse truckman, and the issue is of such importance as to invite the utmost consideration and joint cooperation of every laboring, professional and working man in the city of Portland. A few months' delay may result in other ports permanently securing deep-water shipping connections as to preclude Oregon's obtaining her just proportion.

Two Factors in Case.

The two factors calculated to develop and promote sea traffic are generally recognized by (a) improvements of waterways and approaches to the port, and (b) facilities and conditions for handling cargoes.

The first proposition is being worked out by the Port of Portland commission and the national government by the expenditures of large sums of money and much energy in deepening

and widening the channel to the coast. Whether the work of the commission is being carried on in the proper manner would be a question for the consideration of the joint committee, and there is no doubt if the investigation disclosed any methods for improvement, the commission would gladly take advantage of the suggestions.

The most important question for consideration and which is the cause and objection on the part of steamship companies in operating their lines to the Columbia river is the condition along the waterfront. Ship masters in reporting their voyages to the head offices state in many instances that the impositions practiced in Portland are unbearable. Reviewing in a general way the tenor of complaints and causes for dissatisfaction it is well to invite your attention to some of the many objections made to waterfront conditions and customs prevalent in this port.

Pay Higher Wages.

Ship masters, especially steam schooner captains, and there is hardly an exception, aver that they pay the highest wage on the coast and receive therefor the least amount of service. It is customary in all parts of the world for masters and their officers to supervise the loading and discharging of their respective cargoes. Captains complain, and they have the support of many witnesses who reside in this city, that if they attempt to exercise any direction as to the handling of the cargo through their officers or the stevedore foremen they are insulted and ignored and no attention is paid to their orders.

Longshoremen have frequently threatened to tie up the work if the master was not satisfied with the working conditions.

Most vessels are operated at an expense of from \$150 to \$300 per day and every hour lost necessarily means a loss of from \$6 to \$12. Dispatch being an essential element in commerce, captains were compelled to submit to the impositions. The average day's work in handling grain in Portland is 12 men in 11,000 sacks of grain and they are each paid 55 cents an hour. In Tacoma from nine to 11 men in the same time load from 12,000 to 14,000 sacks and the wage is 50 cents. The wages are 10 per cent higher and the volume of work is 30 per cent lower in Portland. By way of comparison vessels occupy about one day longer loading on the river than at Tacoma or Seattle. Steam schooner operators report about a 20 per cent difference in dispatch at Grays Harbor and other ports along the coast, but the scale of wages is about the same, except for overtime. In some ports vessels are loaded with lumber on the river at a cost of about 20 per cent less in handling.

Table Is Submitted.

That the discriminations are not directed entirely against all shipping coming to Portland, and to show that there is certain favoritism shown in certain vessels, the following table will more aptly illustrate:

Class of Vessels.	Portland Straight Time.	Puget Sound Over Straight Time.	Portland Straight Time.	Puget Sound Over Straight Time.
(a) Built on Atlantic coast and owned in the east, engaged in the Pacific coast trade, regular traders.	\$0.50	\$0.75	\$0.40	\$0.50
(b) Built and owned on Pacific coast, operated in coastwise trade, regular traders, chartered by the month by an eastern firm.	55	82 1/2	40	50
(c) Vessels built on Pacific coast and operated in Pacific coast trade exclusively, chartered by the month by Pacific coast firm.	55	1.00	40	50
(d) Foreign owned vessels engaged in the Portland and oriental trade, grain and flour.	55	1.00	50	75
(e) Foreign owned vessels chartered by foreign firms, engaged in Portland and European trade.	55	1.00	70	75

Longshoremen insist upon doing all of the trucking on the wharves, that is to say, taking cargo from any point in the warehouse to the vessel's side, or delivering same, compelling the vessel to pay a wage of 55 cents an hour on vessels mentioned in clauses (b), (c) and (d), while the vessels for the same work pay only 40 cents an hour for the same class of work. Vessels in class (a) pay only 50 cents an hour for work on the wharf. To more fully appreciate the rank discrimination against shipping, it is only necessary to state that the vessel charterers, the customs of the ports in all parts of the world, provide for the shipper or consignee to take delivery of and deliver to alongside of the vessel free of any expense to the ship. This character of work imposes a severe tax on shipping.

In Favor of Sound.

The Warehouse steamers for wharf work in Portland, based on a wage scale of 55 cents an hour, pay 35 cents per ton for trucking cargo on the wharf, and in Seattle, where the scale paid by all wharves and warehouse, including the United States Quartermaster's department, is 40 cents, the warehouse trucking costs 25 cents, a difference of about 40 per cent. In other instances, by way of comparison in the above schedule, the differences in favor of the sound is \$3 1-3 per cent.

On Puget sound, Grays Harbor, Eureka, and San Pedro in particular, and to some extent in San Francisco, skill and industry gives an employer the preference in employing men. In Portland the engineers' union, indorsed and supported by the officers of the longshoremen's union, have just put into effect a rule that engineers, regardless of their ability or experience in waterfront work, that both winchmen and engineers must be employed by turns. As a result, the winchman has the most responsible position aboard of a vessel. He is hoisting or lowering cargo and lives and property of the ship depends upon his skill. Instances have been noted where drunken, incompetent and inexperienced men have been forced upon vessel operators by the actions of a drunken engineer. An accident resulted that nearly resulted in several men being killed or wounded. The matter was reported to the union, but no reply was made. At another time, through wanton carelessness, or from some other cause, an engineer at Linton threw live coals and amber against a building, which later caught fire, and it was only through the vigilance of the night watchman that the building and warehouse, and perhaps the vessel itself upon which the men were working, was not wholly destroyed. The union took no action so far as is known in the premises.

Numerous Instances.

Numerous instances could be cited to show further impositions. When engineers are changed and the work stopped to await the arrival of another man, which sometimes requires three or four hours, the longshoremen, who forced the ship to employ the very man who through drunkenness, inability or incompetency, delayed or stopped the work, demand full pay for the time lost in waiting for another engineer or

winchman to show. The vessel pays for all of these delays and expenses. They have no such experience at other ports on the coast with employees.

The principal points complained of by ship masters and vessel operators in a general through out specific manner are about as follows:

First—Longshoremen arbitrarily and without just cause impose different wage scales and conditions upon practically the same class of vessels, which is different and contrary to the custom at other ports on the coast.

Second—That longshoremen, contrary to the practice at any other coastwise port, insist upon handling cargo to and from vessel's side to within the warehouse, when, according to the general way of charter the vessel is under no obligations to perform that service; and furthermore, the longshoremen exact from the vessel 1 1/2 per cent more for such service than is the regular scale of union warehouse trucker's scale.

Third—That unions insist upon men being employed in skillful and responsible positions, such as engineers and others, who are in some instances incompetent, incapable or intoxicated. That such men are a menace to life and property. That if an accident occurs the ship or contracting firm is responsible and the court holds that the employer should not employ an incompetent or intoxicated man in such responsible position, and by so doing is liable for heavy damages to the very employe, perhaps, who forced the employment of the man guilty of the accident.

Fourth—That men guilty of intoxication or carelessness are continued in membership of the union and forced time and again upon vessels and contracting firms. That if any reprimand is given it is not made public and the appearance is made that the offense has been condoned.

Fifth—That neither longshoremen or engineers or winchmen show the proper respect for the ship's officers or their orders and directions for handling of cargo. That in many instances account of utter disregard for handling cargo damage results and the vessel is compelled to pay the losses.

Sixth—That the wage scale is about 10 per cent higher in Portland for handling grain and flour and the volume of work performed is 10 per cent less than on Puget sound. The same remarks apply to general cargoes.

Soon It'll Be Too Late.

It is easy to show by comparison that the cost of handling vessels on the Columbia river is from \$150 to \$160 higher than on Puget sound, all of which if handled in an intelligent and impartial manner could be eliminated, and the result would be of more lasting benefit to the port than the expenditures of large sums of money by local taxation. To emphasize this point, you will note that employers' industrial insurance on Puget sound is 2 per cent. In Portland it was advanced last year from 1 1/4 per cent to 2 1/2 per cent. The pay roll to longshoremen and truckers

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in Portland amounts to over \$250,000 per year.

That this matter merits your most careful consideration you will appreciate that during March the deep sea arrivals in Seattle were 175 and in Portland 80; departures, Seattle 168 and Portland 81. This does not include any of the other sound ports.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I have endeavored in a general way to call your attention to facts well known along Portland's waterfront and suggested what in my opinion is the proper procedure to adopt to eliminate some if not all of the abuses suffered by this port which causes it to be discriminated against by vessel owners generally. You all know that the leading merchants and commercial bodies are endeavoring to get a direct line from Portland to the orient and the chances of its accomplishment is very remote, notwithstanding that other neighboring ports have half a dozen in operation. This seems strange, too, when it is known that some of our exporters contribute a very large portion of the cereal cargoes for points in the orient. Some action should be taken, and taken quickly, too, for the reason that other ports are busy along similar lines. In a few months at the most, it will be too late to accomplish very much good for Portland's commercial advantages. Very truly yours, "W. J. JONES."

BISHOP OF OREGON SETS FORTH PRAYERS

The bishop of Oregon has set forth prayers to be said daily and in private and at the services in all Episcopal churches on Sunday. The prayers follow:

O merciful God and Heavenly Father, who alone spreadest out the heavens and rulest the raging of the sea, and who hast taught us in Thy holy word that thou dost not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men; look with pity, we beseech Thee, upon the sorrows of Thy servants, for whom our prayers are desired. In Thy wisdom Thou hast seen fit to visit them with trouble, and to bring distress upon them. Remember them, O Lord, in mercy; sanctify Thy fatherly correction to them; endure their souls with patience under their affliction, and with resignation to Thy blessed will; comfort them with a sense of Thy goodness; lift up Thy countenance upon them, and give them peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, whose days are without end, and whose mercies cannot be numbered; make us, we beseech Thee, deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life, and let Thy Holy Spirit lead us through this vale of misery, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives; that, when we shall have served Thee in our generation, we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of the holy Catholic church, in the confidence of a certain

faith; in the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope; in favor with Thine our God, and in perfect charity with the world. All whom we seek through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dr. Josiah Case Continued.
(Closed from Last Week.)
San Francisco, April 20.—The case of Dr. Otto C. Josiah, charged with the betrayal of Miss Ethel Williams, the

former Seattle "sassy girl" was continued today until April 27.
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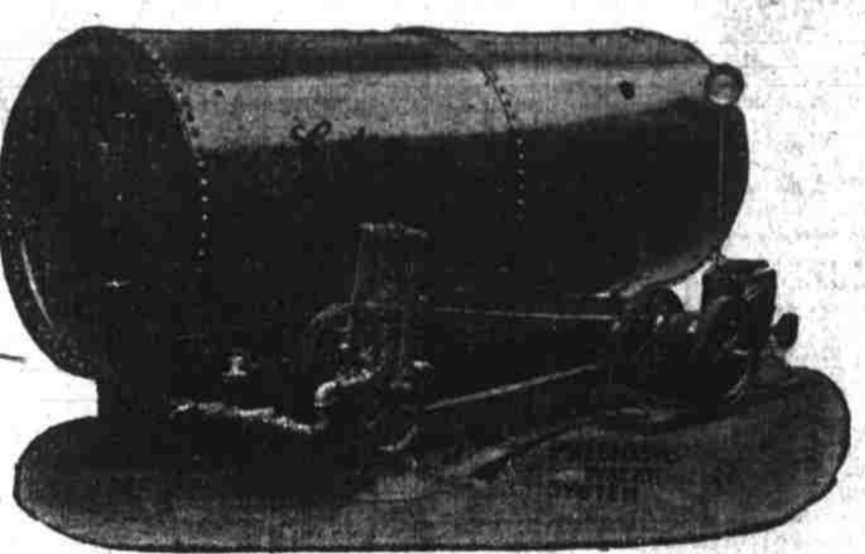
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