

The Dalles Daily Chronicle.

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The Chronicle is the Only Paper in The Dalles that Receives the Associated Press Dispatches.

POKED OFF THE FENCE.

The *Sun* has at last come down off the fence and, we regret to say, on the wrong side. In attempting a practical defense of the Union Pacific and M. A. Moody it has done itself more harm, we venture to predict, than anything that ever appeared in the columns of this journal. Its double-headed column in yesterday's issue fully justifies our charge of criminal silence when an issue vital to every interest of The Dalles and its vicinity is at stake. There is not a line in that column that does not bear the collar mark of the Union Pacific and M. A. Moody. If the article means anything it means to say: "The Union Pacific is attempting nothing detrimental to our interests; it is very wicked to say that Mr. Moody is allowing himself to be used as the company's agent for the destruction of the peoples' line of boats; Mr. Moody has a right to do this if he wants to, it is nobody's business and we don't care what he does. In God's name then what missions has the *Sun* in the field of journalism? Is it to draw money for quietly standing by and without a protest allow a powerful corporation to trample on the peoples' interests? Is it to watch the attempts of this corporation to drive us back to a system of freight rates the most exorbitant and extortionate that any people ever bore from a railroad on the Almighties footstool and then complacently say, as the *Sun* does: "It is of no consequence to this paper and it should not be to others." Is this the mission of a newspaper? Then as we have been a "failure" in everything, according to the successful editor of the *Sun*, we have failed to understand the mission of a newspaper. But, "It is not probable," says the *Sun*, "that the Union Pacific Company is engaged in the purchase of wheat on its own behalf or through the medium of other parties in this market." As an exact proposition this may be true or it may not. No one can tell but the parties concerned. This however is true wheat has been bought at Rockland for 84 1/2 cents a bushel when the extreme price in Portland for the same wheat was 88 cents and the company's rates, 10 2/5 cents, added to a reasonable cost for handling, ferriage and putting on the cars would make the same wheat cost the shipper, laid down in Portland, not less than 97 cents or a loss of 9 cents a bushel for every bushel so bought and shipped. Even with wheat bought at 82 1/2 cents, the common price, there would be a loss of seven cents a bushel, never speaking of a cent of wages for Mr. Moody's work. Who bears this loss? No sane man believes that Mr. Moody does. What then is the inevitable conclusion if it be not that the company carries this wheat for nothing so as to prevent the Regulator from getting it. And why too does wheat bring 4 1/2 cents a bushel more at Rockland where the Regulator can receive it with convenience than in The Dalles where she is not so situated? It is therefore plain as sunlight that the Union Pacific is using a man who has made every dollar he owns from the farmers and producers of this county, to crush the system that has been established for their relief and no amount of hard names and ungentlemanly allusions from one whose newspaper experience ought to have taught him better will change these facts or remove the odium of criminal silence regarding them or a not less criminal apology for their perpetrators.

The Chronicle has given space for the letter of "subscriber" simply in the spirit of fair play. The Chronicle was started to be the vehicle of public opinion for all who choose to deal in matters of public interest. At the same time it is free to say that it is in favor of a portage road on the Oregon side, first, last and all the time. Still, if we cannot get that and a road is built in Washington what are we that we should fight it? Such a road cannot possibly hurt The Dalles any more than a town and factories on the other side the river. If we cannot get the moon give us a good healthy star; still we would rather have the moon and will do everything in our power to get it.

THE DALLES PORTAGE.

A Citizen's Views as to Why It Should Be Built on the North Side.

Editor Chronicle:
DEAR SIR—Things are said to have been quiet on the Potomac at one time, so much so that it got to be a by-word. Here, in The Dalles, the situation is inverted and everything is noisy on the Columbia. We all know that our town originally achieved its importance from two cauces, the first one being that we were practically the head of navigation for many years, and the second that from this point a very large area of country, extending away into Idaho and into the remote parts of Oregon and Washington, was supplied by our merchants. With the completion of the Union Pacific railroad (O. R. & N. Co.) and the Northern Pacific railroad a considerable damage was done to the commercial interests of this point, because many points which were formerly reached by wagon roads from this place were brought nearer to railroad transportation than they were to The Dalles, and consequently the trade was lost. Of course the settling up of the country immediately around us, in a measure made up for the losses we sustained in more distant portions: our trade territory has, however, been growing smaller and smaller. To offset in a measure the steady decline of our trade we have organized a steamboat line to Portland, a thing which was made possible by the opening of the Cascades by means of a portage. The difficulty with this enterprise, however, is that there is very little traffic between here and Portland, and what business our steamboat line gets is practically confined to this city; the Union Pacific has reduced its rates from here to Portland, and will undoubtedly keep it up until our steamboats are possibly run off the route. All our eggs, unfortunately, are in one basket, and that basket is right here. If our boats had some connection with navigation east of the Dalles and along the Upper Snake and Columbia rivers, they would receive a traffic from points which are not reached by the Union Pacific railroad at all; a traffic sufficient to more than pay expenses and to help the navigation company through periods of hostility with the Union Pacific. It is all very well for us to kick against the opening of the Columbia river, simply because we cannot get the portage road on the south side of the river. If any of our citizens who are so shortsighted and so loud in their denunciation of a portage railroad on the north side of the river could take a trip east, or to some large city and discuss the situation with persons who have no bias and no local interests, they would find that no capitalist would invest his money in a portage road on the south side of the river, for the simple reason that the investment would become utterly void the moment anything was done on the north side of the river; this is because whatever developments are likely to be made, either by the United States government or by some large system of railway, will happen on the north side, a portage on that side would become a part of such a system, or would become necessary to the United States government and the investment will be safe. I will not enter at this time upon the question of the merits, from an engineering point, of either the five mile route, or of the scheme of paralleling the Union Pacific with the portage. To my mind it is immaterial, as a financial proposition, whether such schemes are practical or not. Now, as I see it, the benefit which would come to our people by the establishing of a terminus of a portage road here is very little, and would amount to nothing more than the wages of a few hands used in making the transfer from the portage to the steamers, which would amount to but a few hundred dollars per month, not enough to make any noise about; but let us see how it would effect this city if we had cheap transportation by some rival line, both from Portland here and again from here into the interior of Oregon and Washington. Assuming that our merchants have the capital, the industry and the qualifications to command the trade, (and they have), could they not by means of competitive roads extend their trade further than they are doing now, and if in connection with this we should be able to build a narrow-gauge road into the country, would it not be better to do that than to persist in fighting the opening of the Columbia river? Whether the Columbia River and Navigation company builds its portage road on the north side of the river or not, it is quite certain, that somebody will build it sooner or later, and if not a private corporation, the United States government. Of course some of our residents would prefer not to see the river opened at all, but even upon that basis can we stand in the way of the entire states of Washington and Oregon very long in this matter? Every one is entitled to fight for his interests, but can we, a handful of people, retard the business of the northwest, simply because it hurts us? I certainly think not, and I do not think that it will be long before every one will do as I do, that it is not even true that our interests would be interfered with by opening the Columbia river. Unless the people representing the Columbia Railway and Navigation company have less brains than I think they have, we could easily make arrangements by which they will locate their terminus opposite this town. We

could easily make an arrangement to have them make a traffic contract with our steamboats between here and Portland. The Dalles has a start now, it has capital and an industrious people, and I am willing to take my chances with any other place in this vicinity. The difference whether the terminus of a portage railroad was located here (assuming that we wanted a portage railroad) or whether that terminus was on the other side of the river, is trifling: it would amount to perhaps 25 cents a ton at the outside, and furthermore, what merchandise was distributed could be landed here by steamers just as well as on the other side of the river, while such merchandise as would need to be handled on the other side of the river could be handled by our merchants there as well as here. It is a question, as I see it, of the prosperity of our people, and not a question whether a warehouse is located at this, that or the other point. Portland merchants are at present establishing warehouses in Seattle and Tacoma and realizing a fair share of profit by so doing; they live in Portland all the same, the money is accumulated there and is placed in their banks. Suppose, for instance, that for some classes of heavy merchandise our merchants were obliged to establish warehouses on the other side of the river, they would still continue to live here and do their business here, and if by so doing they can increase their business, where would be the difference? Many towns are situated on both sides of the river, Portland is situated on both sides of a river, Spokane Falls is situated on both sides of a river, and hundreds of other places; if it is convenient for us to do part of our business on one side of the river and part on the other, why not do it? Would it not [be] better for our citizens to appoint a committee and make an alliance with the Columbia Railway and Navigation company to help them through with their enterprise, and get their help in return, or at least not put anything in their way and get a good share of the trade of the country north of us, the country on the upper Snake and Columbia rivers, than to sit here and try to hold on to the conditions which have been making us poorer and poorer from year to year? If we are so situated there by standing still, we must go backwards, for there is no such thing in the prosperity either of an individual or of a community as standing still, it is either progress or decay, and if a few cents per ton for ferriage across the river is the condition of our existence, then it would be high time to move somewhere else. Let our wealthy people get up and bestir themselves and aid in the progress of the country instead of putting obstacles in the way. I hope I have given something worth thinking about.

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