

(Continued from 1st page.)

Let my record speak for itself. When the improvement of the cascade locks had got fairly under way, with the prospect of liberal treatment from future Congresses, I turned my attention to the obstructions to navigation at the dalles of the Columbia. Major Jones had proposed a boat-railway as a means of overcoming the obstructions at this point. The boat-railway scheme was new to me and I offered in the Senate a resolution directing the Secretary of War to cause the obstructions at the dalles to be examined and to report a plan of improvement. I saw the chief of engineers concerning the matter and learned that there was no fund out of which the survey and examination could be made, and that such examination could not be made without an appropriation for that purpose. I therefore dropped the resolution and proceeded to examine the question with care, and elaborately presented the subject to the Senate in a speech which I entitled, "An Obstructed River." In the next River and Harbor bill, fearing that the scheme of a boat-railway might prove impracticable and not being willing to entrust the matter of recommending a plan for the improvement, as is ordinarily done, alone to the engineers in charge, we secured a provision for the appointment of a board of three Army Engineers to make a survey and report a plan for an improvement to overcome the obstructions at the dalles, with an appropriation of \$10,000 to defray the expenses.

This board was appointed, consisting of three eminent Army Engineers, who spent 14 months in examining the question, during which time they visited similar works in Europe. They reported in favor of a boat-railway as the most effective and economical method of overcoming the obstructions.

Mr. Mitchell, being chairman of the Committee on Transportation Routes to the Seaboard, upon the receipt of the report to Congress, introduced a bill to provide for the construction of a boat-railway, which he had referred to his committee and which in due time favorably reported it, and by our united efforts it was passed through the Senate. We believed that there was a chance to secure the passage of this bill through the House and asked for and were promised a hearing before the House Committee on Rivers and Harbors and were surprised at the action of that committee in reporting the bill to the House with a substitute providing for an ordinary portage road. I immediately investigated the matter, to see if there was a prospect of securing the passage of the substitute through the House, and was then assured, and I have recently been assured by the chairman and members of that committee, that the report was made under an agreement that the bill should not be called up in the House, and to get rid of impotunity concerning it, that no member of the committee was committed to the project, and that the committee was not prepared to, and would not make the new departure of entering upon the construction of ordinary railroads, a work upon which any citizen might enter.

At the last session of congress Senator Mitchell again introduced his bill, which was again referred to the senate committee on transportation routes to the seaboard, reported from that committee, passed through the senate, and sent to the democratic house to sleep the sleep of death.

In the meantime, knowing that a separate bill providing for the prosecution of this work under the contract system would not pass the house, I was working up my proposition to incorporate in the river and harbor bill a provision for the work. While doing so, the Seattle canal project was brought before the senate committee on commerce and pressed with great energy and perseverance by the Washington senators. I felt compelled to oppose this measure, on the ground that it was not in the interest of general commerce and because I knew that the proposition to expend so large a sum for this canal would necessarily interfere with and prevent me from securing an appropriation for the improvement at the dalles. By my presentation of the importance of the proposition for the removal of the obstructions at the dalles, as compared with the Seattle canal, an improvement which I considered of vastly more importance to the people of Washington than the canal, I became embarrassed with the Washington senators and was put in the position by the public press of complaining of them. The appropriation for the Washington canal prevailed in the committee without my support and it was only by a great effort that I secured a provision in the bill making an appropriation for the commencement of the boat-railway and for its construction under the contract system. Then the real fight commenced.

The opposition to the work which had been going on all the session appeared at once on the surface. Paul Mohr and the lobbyists in the interest put in an appearance. The Washington canal and

the boat-railway were straightway connected together. Mr. Blanchard, chairman of the house committee on rivers and harbors and the house conferees, assailed the boat-railway project most bitterly and quoted Gov. Penney's letters and read in the conference committee extracts from democratic newspapers in Oregon opposing a boat-railway. With his, (Mr. Blanchard's,) approval, if not at his instance, a paper was circulated in the house and quite numerous signed by members threatening to defeat the river and harbor bill unless the Washington canal and the boat-railway project were eliminated.

I knew nothing of Paul Mohr's scheme prior to the adoption of my amendment. I supposed his project was still upon paper only. He wrote a letter to Senator Squire, which was turned over to the committee, in which he stated that his company had already expended \$420,000 upon his project, that it had three miles of track and were ready to proceed with the work. I knew this was an exaggeration; but when Mr. Mohr came to see me about the matter, I told him that I did not desire to interfere with any improvement of the Columbia river and would have my proposition amended so as to do him and his company as little harm as possible; that I would have the secretary of war authorized to agree with his company for a right of way over the right of way secured for the boat-railway or for a right to use the tracks of the government road. He said that would reduce their damages compensation, for loss of business on the Columbia by reason of the construction of a boat-railway. I told him that such a claim was preposterous. He said he would go to New York and consult other parties interested with him, about my proposition but he never reported.

In his letter to Senator Squire he claimed that his company had purchased the work done upon the north side of the river by the Northern Pacific Railway Company, and had become the successor of all the rights of the Washington Railroad Co.—I think that was the name of the company—an organization created and maintained by the old O. S. N. Co., and the Oregon Railway and Navigation Co., to hold the right of way at the dalles upon the north side of the river.

I concluded, and I leave it to you to say whether the conclusion was just, that Mr. Mohr could never have secured those interests for the purpose of the construction of a railroad and that his scheme was simply in the interest of those who desired to prevent the opening of the river, and I probably said so to the conference committee. Some member of the committee told him this and he sent me a letter threatening me with his indignation, which I read in the senate and said in my public speech that if he had anything to say about me he could say it on the house-tops.

In violation of the rules of the senate, the morning the report of the disagreement of the conference committee was to be considered in the senate, he placed upon the desks of senators and representatives a document full of falsehoods and misrepresentations and it became my duty to answer it. This brought out the malicious and scurrilous letter circulated among senators and representatives, which he tried to have published in eastern papers without success and which was published in a paper in this city. This was the penalty I paid for my fidelity to the interests of the people.

Mr. Blanchard, urged on by Governor Penney, succeeded in defeating the measure. It was constantly asserted in the committee that the project would defeat the bill in the house and that further delay would defeat the bill. I held on to the measure until I began to fear myself that there was danger of the defeat of the river and harbor bill and until I could not ask my colleagues longer to stand by the measure.

I then, in order to remove all possible objection to the plan for this improvement at another congress, secured a provision for the appointment of a new board to consist of seven engineers, three to be taken from civil life, in order to overcome my prejudice against army engineers, to examine and report a location and plan for the improvement, with an appropriation of \$15,000 for the payment of the expenses of the board. What more could any one have done?

I will examine very briefly the grounds of attack against me. First, it is said that a boat-railway is impracticable and will result in keeping the river closed. The answer to this is that a board of eminent engineers from the army have reported that a boat-railway is not only practicable but the most economical and efficient improvement; that I did not trust a single army engineer to pass upon the question but had the survey and examination made by a board; that I had nothing more to do than any of you with the determination of the character of the improvement; and that congress will not authorize an improvement of any other character until the plan is changed by the engineers.

Again, it is said that I selected the north side of the river so as to destroy the property of Paul Mohr's company and not to hurt the Union Pacific Company. It is sufficient to say that I had nothing to do with the location of the boat-railway, which was a matter wholly for the Board of Engineers, and that Paul Mohr's company was not in existence when the location was made.

Lastly, it is asserted that I am the attorney of the O. R. & N. Co. and therefore I must be working in their interest. Every one knows that when I entered the Senate I severed all connection, not only with the O. R. & N. Co. but with

all corporations and other clients. My brother's firm, with whom I never had any connection, some years ago gave up the business of the O. R. & N. Co. and the Union Pacific Company as lessee of its road.

Paul Mohr claims that I appeared in a suit to prevent the government from getting a right of way for a canal and locks, and so attempted to defeat the project. Every one knows that the suit to condemn a right of way over the lands of the O. S. N. Co. was brought many years ago, before I had any connection with the O. R. & N. Co. and while Judge Strong was counsel for the O. S. N. Co. The suit referred to by Mr. Mohr was brought to condemn additional land which was desired for the canal and locks while I was a member of the firm of Dolph, Bronaugh, Dolph and Simon and before I entered the Senate, and was never tried. It was settled upon my advice to Mr. Prescott to take the amount offered by the government, to show that the company was making no factions opposition to the improvement, although neither he nor I believed the amount offered was the value of the land.

But I did once figure in a suit for a right of way over the lands of the O. S. N. Co., now owned by the O. R. & N. at the cascades. I appeared with Col. W. W. Chapman in the suit of The Dalles and Salt Lake Railway Co. vs. the O. S. N. Co., to secure a right of way at the dalles, and spent nearly a week in the trial of the case without compensation or hope of reward, my services being a free gift to the enterprise for the benefit of the people of the state.

Another charge is that I have represented the O. R. and N. Co. in the supreme court in some litigation. Although other senators take suits in the supreme court for land grant railroad companies, I have always refused them. I have not sought legal business, preferring to devote my time to the business of the people of Oregon. I was vice president of the O. R. & N. Co. when it leased the narrow gauge railroad lines of the Oregonian Railway Co. The lease was executed under the direction of the president and executive committee of the company in New York by the Portland board with much hesitation. We believed it to be imprudent. When Mr. Villard failed, and the management of the road changed, and the execution of this lease was the cause of great complaint against the Oregon board, the other members of the board acted largely under my advice. I defended them in correspondence with the officers of the company, and informed the company that in any controversy with the Oregon directors I should defend them for all acts done while I was connected with the company. I gave an opinion that the lease was void, and the company repudiated it. The Oregonian Railway Co. brought suit for the semi-annual installments of rent, and the litigation was carried to the supreme court. In the first suit in the supreme court, Sidney Bartlett, the great Massachusetts lawyer, and Mr. Carter, the leading lawyer of New York, were employed. The company desired me to file a brief, setting forth my views of the validity of the lease; and having, as you will see, more than a pecuniary interest in the litigation, on account of the part I had taken in the execution of the lease, I did so. The fact of my employment and the decision in the case was telegraphed to Oregon and no one thought I had committed any great iniquity until Paul Mohr undertook to make a mountain out of a mole-hill. This one case settled the question involved. No other suit for rent was ever argued; no opinion was written in any other case. Being on the ground, as a matter of accommodation, as the subsequent cases were reached, I filed copies of my brief in the first case in the supreme court.

I think I should ask pardon for taking so much time upon so trivial a matter; but I felt that some statement was due to my friends concerning the attacks made upon me.

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Dated July 7th, 1892.
L. RORDEN,
Treas. Dalles City.

County Treasurer's Notice.
All county warrants registered prior to March 13, 1892, will be paid if presented at my office, corner Third and Washington streets. Interest ceases on and after this date.
The Dalles, July 16, 1892.
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