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The Dalles Daily Chronicle.

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FRIDAY - - - MARCH 30, 1900

AN ALMOST HOPELESS MUDDLE

It seems there is a clash between the Oregon and Washington and Idaho representatives over the project of improving the dalles of the Columbia. The Washington and Idaho representatives favor a portage road on the Oregon side of the river. Messrs. Tongue and Moody are opposed to a portage road, the former on principle, as being the opening wedge for government ownership of railways; the latter because he believes a portage road would not afford much relief on account of the cost of transferring freight and because it would tend to prevent the building of a canal or boat railway, which alone would permanently meet the demands of the tributary traffic. On the other hand Representative Cushman thinks a portage road would materially cut freight rates and, even if built and not operated, its very construction would accomplish the end desired. THE CHRONICLE agrees so far with Mr. Cushman. It remembers the service rendered the country tributary to The Dalles by the little portage at the Cascades. But is there any hope that the government would construct a portage road? There's the rub. And if not, would not the advocacy of such a measure, as Mr. Moody thinks, tend to defer the building of the canal? The boat railway we pass as visionary and impracticable. The cost of operation would be little less than that for breaking bulk on a portage. It was never better than a dream, of some crack-brained government engineer. The government will never construct the boat railway. A canal is the only permanent improvement the government is ever likely to undertake. A canal will be built sometime but, judging from experience, not in the lifetime of any man now living. And the people want relief now, not after they are dead. A right of way adapted to any of the improvements hitherto suggested has been procured by the government, but no river and harbor bill, we are told, will be passed at this session of congress. The whole business is in a hopeless muddle and the clash of arms among the delegates does not help it a bit. THE CHRONICLE is for anything that will give relief the soonest. A portage road would meet the demands of traffic till a more permanent improvement would be constructed. It might even be built by the government or by government aid as a necessary adjunct to the construction of a canal; but if the government will do nothing to give relief within a reasonable future THE CHRONICLE would urge, what it advocated years ago, the construction of a portage road by the

state. And why not? Our experience with the little state portage at the locks leads us to believe that the people of Oregon would get back, in the form of cheaper freights, the whole cost of construction within a year.

INVITED TO A BERMECIDE FEAST.

Whatever modifications of existing tariff laws may be demanded by present conditions the Republican party is not ready to have the whole American system tumble about our ears like a house of cards. Yet this is precisely one of the things indirectly involved in the Puerto Rican tariff bill. American producers have no dread of Puerto Rican competition. It is that of the Philippines they fear, and with good reason. If congress has no power to impose tariff restrictions on Puerto Rican products they can impose none on those of the Philippines. If they can impose no restrictions on Filipino products they can impose none anywhere, and the whole system of custom duties falls to the ground. This is no idle dream. Every intelligent free trader in the land knows it. Every well-informed Republican knows it, or ought to know it. Hence the bitterness of Democratic opposition. Hence the obstinacy of Republican persistence. Only a word is needed to place this matter in its true light. Under the treaty recently negotiated with Spain, that country is to enjoy in the Philippines for ten years the same trading privileges as the United States enjoys. If the constitution goes to an American territory before it is sent there by congress the constitution is already in the Philippines. If it is there it has carried with it the right to free trade with the United States. It follows, therefore, that if we can place no restrictions on our exports to the Philippines we can place none on Spanish exports to these islands. But the United States has treaties with all the great nations of the earth which guarantees to them, in all United States territory, trade privileges equal to those enjoyed by the most favored nation. If, therefore, Spain has the right to free trade with the Philippines all these nations have the same right, and if the Philippines have the right to free trade with the United States all the leading nations of the world have the right to free trade with the United States through the Philippines. As one has aptly said, "this is the Bermecide feast to which Republicans are invited. Who among us will accept the invitation?"

Amid all the froth and fury and falsehood and ignorance and rank and unjust partisan denunciation that have been poured out upon a long-suffering people over this discussion of the Puerto Rican tariff bill, no living soul has attempted to suggest any measure for raising the revenue needed for the conduct of the government of the island that approaches the government tariff bill in practicability, adaptation to existing conditions and generosity to the "storm-swept and starving" islanders.

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8 p. m.	FROM PORTLAND, Ocean Steamships, For San Francisco, December 3, 8, 13, 18, 23 and 28.	4 p. m.
8 p. m. Ex. Sunday Saturday 10 p. m.	Columbia Rv. Steamers To ASTORIA and Way Landings.	Ex. Sunday 4 p. m.
6 a. m. Ex. Sunday	WILLAMETTE RIVER, Oregon City, Newberg, Salem & Way Land's.	4:30 p. m. Ex. Sunday
7 a. m. Tues. Thurs. and Sat.	WILLAMETTE AND YAM-HILL RIVERS, Oregon City, Dayton, and Way-Landings.	3:30 p. m. Mon, Wed and Fri.
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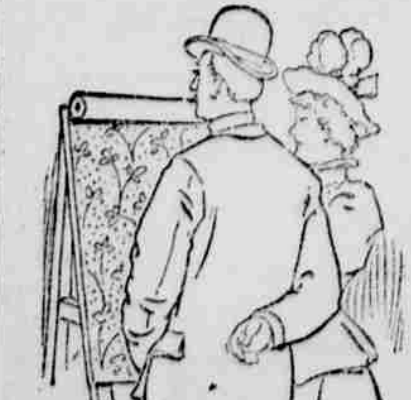
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