

The Daily Astorian.

Vol. IX.

Astoria, Oregon, Tuesday Morning, June 3, 1879.

No. 29.

ASTORIA.

The Railroad to Winnemucca and the Harbor of Refuge Discussed.

ANOTHER LETTER FROM UNCLE DAVID NEWSOME—CONCLUSIONS OF "THE ASTORIAN" SUSTAINED.

[Written for THE ASTORIAN.]

The meeting of citizens and business men of Astoria, on last Saturday evening in the Court-house, to take into consideration immediate action for building the first section of the above road, beginning at Astoria and going eastward to Forest Grove, gave encouragement to the friends of the work. Discouragement has succeeded discouragement in this worthy enterprise. It has been the common opinion in the Wallamet valley and somewhat elsewhere, that the country from Forest Grove to Astoria was a collection of towering mountains, unfit for settlement; and that it would require millions of dollars to build that road. And also, that the Wallamet river would answer all purposes for an outlet for all the commerce of the valley. And there were other strong motives at work to discourage the building of this road. There was an immense capital invested in Portland, and there were good facilities there for transacting a large, commercial business at that place. But the outlet must be on the Wallamet river, and down the Columbia river. Large appropriations of money have been expended in dredging and improving the Wallamet river by congress, but the sand washes in and fills up, more or less, the ship channel below Portland; so that large, sea-going vessels cannot carry out full cargoes to sea from that point. And again there are times when ice obstructs the navigation below Portland for a considerable time in winter. And this distance by water to Astoria from Portland is 110 miles, while the distance from Forest Grove to Astoria by the railroad route is only 65 miles. The entire route on this line, and on each side of it, is rich, rolling land, well watered, healthy; and abounding in stone coal in places, and immense quantities of as good cedar, hemlock, spruce, fir, ash, etc., as can be found in any country in the world. And the whole route is of that character, that a railroad can be made along it at no greater expense beyond other hilly routes. The great Nahalem valley would be pierced by this road, and for richness and excellence for settlements cannot well be excelled. In fact, nearly all the country through which this road would pass, is excellent for settlements, and would be rapidly filled up by men of families, and others who might wish new homes. But the great and essential interests in the construction of this road are, that it will be in connection with a continuous line of railroad to Winnemucca, at which place it will tap the great Central railroad. This whole line would be less exposed to heavy snows, than any other route, south of the Columbia river.

The immediate benefit to Astoria of this road to the Wallamet valley, would be almost incalculable. From specimens of stone coal exhibited at the meeting, there is but little doubt that endless quantities of that valuable mineral lies beneath the surface on this line towards Forest Grove. The stone coal used on ships and in factories is, as I learn, brought here from Puget-sound and principally from Australia. This coal lies on a level wherever found. By leveling from the vein of coal on this line of proposed road, and the same vein can be found all along the country on the slopes of the hills, to the right and left.

And the timber that can be utilized and brought into active commerce on this route upon this railroad; and the farm products, the tan bark and coal, may be counted by millions of dollars. And the vast commerce upon the whole line and the passenger custom would add to the aggregate wealth and growth of Astoria millions of dollars. No ice ever obstructs navigation on the Columbia bay below Tongue point, just above upper Astoria. If congress had appropriated even a tithe of money towards improving the Columbia river navigation for 25 miles inland from its mouth, as has been expended on the Mississippi river, and Kanawha and the Atlantic sea board, there would have been fewer shipwrecks here than at any of those other points, which have been so costly improved. Come what will; whether the harbor of refuge be located at Coos bay, Foulweather, Fort Stevens or Fort Canby, the great Columbia will remain the outlet for an empire of farming, stock and mining country.

The cloud that has long hung over

Astoria, and the most of the country inland, north and south of this lower section is breaking away. "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." Facts speak here, and they are stubborn things. Astoria must, and will become a great commercial emporium for a large proportion of the country on the Columbia valley, and on those valleys of its tributaries. And the great impulse to making known this vast commercial mart and the country around it, is the immediate construction of this line of railroad from Astoria to Forest Grove. The property holders in and around Astoria, and up and down, and across the bay would make money by giving one-half of their present wealth towards this road. If they hold back and are tardy in this case, foreign capitalists are likely to be tardy also. If this measure be let sleep and slumber, the Northern Pacific railroad company will build up a great emporium of trade on Puget Sound, to the overshadowing of Astoria.

The distance from Forest Grove to Astoria via Portland, is 136 miles; and tonnage must be handled six times from the wagons at Forest Grove before it passes away from Astoria to the world's markets. From the wagons at Forest Grove until the tonnage would pass from this city would be only twice handled. No wonder then that the farmers in the Wallamet and Umpqua valleys complain that they are bottled up, and obtain so little profit upon their products for market. There is deliverance at hand for them. The extra exactions upon them for less than five years on their wheat for export trade, over and above what it would cost them at this point, would more than build this road from Forest Grove to Astoria.

The building of this road would furnish to Oregon what she now lacks—a great commercial city, where wheat and other products in store and afloat would be, on a par with like products in store and afloat at San Francisco; and would attract the merchants of the world, where the commodities of other climes would be brought and exchanged here for our products; thus building up a great commercial city, whose benefits and blessings would be felt on this entire coast. Let the maps be consulted, and we can perceive that the ship trade from Hongkong to Astoria, 12 miles up the bay from the bar, and thence by rail to New York, is less than on any other route north by several hundred miles, and safe navigation. Let not my fellow citizens of Oregon suppose that I wish to build up one section to the injury of another. I only ask public investigations on all these suggestions of mine.

DAVID NEWSOME.

Baby carriages of the best styles, and at low prices, at Loeb's.

Best Salem flour is sold in this city at \$5 50 per barrel by Warren & McGuire.

Boat sponges, wholesale and retail at Dements drug store, Astoria. Five thousand just received.

T. F. VOSS,
BRICK LAYER.
Cement, Plasterer and Builder of any kind of Brick Furnaces.

Please leave orders at Wilson & Fisher's store, Chenamus street, Astoria.

G. H. BAIN & CO.

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BLINDS, TRANSOMS:

And all kinds of hard wood at very low rates.

Asks an examination of their prices and large lot of goods which will be sold low for CASH.

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Contracts for draying made and satisfaction guaranteed. Orders left at the Occident hotel or office by mail promptly filled.

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—18—

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—AND—

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Net Cash received for Fire Premiums in 1877.....\$335,511.04

Assets, Jan. 1, 1878.....\$578,065.85

Liquidations—

Losses unpaid.....\$3,638.37

Dividends.....1,927.00

Surplus for Proprietary Holders.....5,595.37

Losses paid in Oregon in six years.....\$572,470.47

Interest.....\$114,516.72

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