

A Defense of the Railroads.

THE ASTORIAN has always been a friend of railroads, and reaching Chicago, under the most adverse circumstances, on Sunday the 6th the editor became incensed at the foolish fault-finding of such "stupid" as W. F. Storey, and men of like ilk, who assume to be Editors, and writes as follows, having just crossed three of the best railroads in America, the Central Pacific, Union Pacific, and Chicago and Northwestern, passing through all the rigors of winter: "Judicious readers of certain newspapers and uncertain alleged ditto must have been greatly annoyed during the last several weeks of extreme-cold weather, by daily diatribes against the management of railroads on account of delays in the arrival of trains. These senseless complaints are conceived in the pettiest spirit and expressed in the most frivolous manner. 'Three hours late!' exclaims one so-called editor, day after day, referring to the mails, we have heard that expression before somewhere. And the lightsome genius waxes quite witty as he cheerfully proceeds to demonish the whole railway and postal service of the country. 'Actually,' he remarks, with crushing sarcasm, 'actually, a boy who came into the editorial room not long since and reported the mails on time was kindly told to go home, take something hot, go to bed, and try to break up a threatening fever.'"

"Actually" this silly sophomoric satire is gravely printed in the large type reserved for the leading editorials of a once-dignified daily! And the same feather-brained writer is actually allowed to urge congress to abolish the "fast mail" and to demand the infliction of severe penalties upon the railway managers for failures to make time, in this unusually inclement season, as if they did not have trouble and anxiety enough in so running the trains as to avoid the occurrence of frightful accidents!

The brains of the alleged newspaper from which we have thus quoted are to be found somewhere below its head, if one must judge by its treatment of the railways in this emergency. In the local department we find the fact stated that "last night was the coldest of the season." One of its reporters has sense enough to see that "the present extreme cold weather is having its usual effect of cracking car-wheels," and candid enough to admit that "fortunately these accidents have been discovered in time to prevent any serious results."

The humble reporter is also fair-minded enough to suggest that, "considering the danger from this source, the traveling public can forgive the roads for making such poor time," and discretion enough to remind impatient passengers that "slow and safe travel is infinitely better than rapid and dangerous transit." But the adulated so-called editor, regardless of these circumstances and as if to sharpen the contrast between his subordinate's sober judgment and his own utter lack of it, in the same issue repeats the parrot-like editorial scolding about the unavoidable delay. "The fast mail from New York now runs regularly—three hours late," shrieks the nominal editor; and then, with withering irony, he allows that "it is a great advantage to be able to tell from day to day just how many hours behind time a fast mail is sure to be."

The Rochester Union puts forth a very sensible and timely remonstrance against all this unjust and thoughtless fault-finding. "It is very easy to sit in a cosy corner," it says pointedly, "with the thermometer indicating zero outside, and thus criticize the running of trains; but it is quite another thing to run them." The Union probab-

ly has in mind sundry conceited contemporaries who assume an ability to lay down the law upon all matters of possible human acquirement, when it says:

It probably never occurred to these critics that there is a difference between the temperature and temper of the metal that ferries rails, and wheels, etc., when the mercury indicates 100 and when it shows down to 0; that the snows and storms of midwinter are unknown in midsummer; and that while in July the ground is elastic and gives to the pressure of the gliding train, thus contributing to its safety, in January it is as solid and unyielding as a rock, rendering liable the breaking of a rail or wheel by undue strain, and so endangering life and property. Railroad speed is very desirable, but safety should always go before it. The railroad managers generally understand their business better than even the wisest of newspaper critics, and they should be encouraged rather than discouraged in making safety the first condition of running their trains during this trying weather.

Very true and just are these seasonable observations, as every candid and intelligent traveler must acknowledge. Railway superintendents, engineers, and conductors are harassed almost to death with the continued strain of a fearful responsibility, especially during protracted periods of exceptionally cold and boisterous weather such as we have had already in this long and dreary winter. All hands prefer to run on time, when it is reasonably safe to do so, if only for their own ease and comfort. Delays add castly to their labors and sorrows, which do not soon pass away. They are painfully aware of the constant deadly peril which must be incurred as the price of a high rate of speed when frost and snow and sleet and tempest combine to thwart all efforts to make regular time and unbroken connections. They do their best to fulfil the company's obligations in carrying passengers and the mails, without taking those dreadful hazards which are involved in the fastest possible running. The safe arrival of every train lifts a heavy load from their minds. If accidents occur owing to any apparent recklessness on their part the press is swift to condemn them, unheard and without mercy. Railway managers should always be held to the strictest accountability for injuries to persons and property; but this heedless and idiotic editorial howling for fast time, in spite of all obstructions and dangers caused by the unparalleled severity of this weather, is exasperating to the last degree, and must be suppressed by some means or other. If the force of public derision is not sufficient, the fool-killer must be called in. D. C. I.

About 5000 stars are visible to the naked eye. There are 18,000,000 stars in the Milky Way. Even the stars that we call fixed are in constant motion. Arcturus moves through space three times as fast as the earth, but it takes a hundred years to move the eighth part of the diameter of the moon. There is no indication of air or water on the moon. It has twenty eight mountains higher than Mount Blanc, that monarch of mountains in Europe. The moons day is twenty nine and a one-half times as long as ours. The sun shines continually for fifteen days, making a temperature like boiling water.

A lady who has raised a large number of hens says that, after vainly trying the recommended remedies for lice, she has hit upon the plan of giving them once or twice a week a large loaf made of Graham flour, in which a handful of sulphur has been mixed. The hens like it and are freed from lice and kept healthy through the season.

Some say that it is no use for them to advertise, that they have been in the place in business all their lives, and everybody knows them. Such people seem to forget to take in consideration that our country is increasing in population nearly 30 per cent. every ten years, and no matter how old the place may be, there are constant changes taking place; some move to other parts, and strangers fill their places. In this age of the world, unless the name of a business firm is kept constantly before the public, some new firm may start up, and by liberal advertising, in a very short time take the place of the older ones, and the latter rust out, as it were, and be forgotten. No man ever lost money by judicious advertising.

THE COLUMBIA BAR.

SOON TO BECOME THE LEADING GATEWAY OF THE WORLD.

A New and Speedy Method of Improving the Bar.

Engineer's Report Submitted by the Secretary of War to the Senate.

By a dispatch from Washington we are assured that the channels of the Columbia river bar are gradually working back to a depth which they attained many years ago, and that there is a prospect of the bar affording vessels of the largest class and deepest draft to arrive and depart with perfect safety. Following is the dispatch: WASHINGTON, Feb. 22.—The senate to-day received from the secretary of war in response to Slater's resolution, a copy of the report of Col. Gillespie upon the proposed improvement of the bar at the mouth of the Columbia river, together with the conclusions of a board of engineers headed by General Newton, to whom this report was referred. The board reports adversely to Col. Gillespie's report, which contemplates an ultimate expenditure of several millions of dollars for the purpose indicated. They are of the opinion, after examining all available data from the year 1798 down to the present time that the channels at the mouth of the Columbia are working back to their normal condition, and that any effort to aid this process of nature would be unnecessary if not detrimental.

The channels are gradually working back to their normal condition, it is true; this fact has been shown by experienced men who have taken an active interest in the matter the past few years. The report refers to the condition of the bar in the year 1798, nearly a century ago. To let the process of nature accomplish the desired result would probably take another century. However, we would suggest that something might be done to aid in bringing this project to completion as speedily as possible. To accomplish this, would it not be as well to ask congress for a small appropriation, say not exceeding \$1,000, to be expended in the renowned Hamburg tea and placed in the river on a strong ebb tide. This would probably force a passage through and clean out all obstructions, immediately forming a channel that would admit the largest vessels to enter with perfect safety. It is now over a century ago that a liberal distribution of tea on the troubled waters of Boston harbor saved the country from an enormous taxation, and this might save the people of Oregon from a heavy tax for improvement of the bar, which would ultimately be the result.

All subscribers to THE ASTORIAN are very respectfully invited to act as agents for the paper. We know that there must be many people who would take the paper "at sight," if asked by some friend to do so. We need your assistance, and will cheerfully pay for it. We will send the paper one full year to any six persons you may name for the sum of \$10.00. Thus you can act as agent for us and make a profit for yourself.

Canmerymen would gain much by leaving us their orders for incidental printing now, to be done leisurely during the winter months—saving time and money, and avoiding the risks of a spring rush of work.

NEW TO-DAY.

Notice.

ALL PARTIES ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED NOT to credit any parties ordering in the name of the steamer Quikstep, unless accompanied by an order from the undersigned. All accounts due steamer Quikstep must be paid to Geo. W. Hume for to me, as no other parties are authorized to collect said bills. J. G. HUSTLER, Clerk.

Last Call.

THE TAXPAYERS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 1: You are hereby notified that the Tax list will remain in my hands until the 7th of March. All unpaid taxes on that day will be returned to the County Clerk, as delinquent, and costs will accrue. By order of the Board of Directors, J. G. HUSTLER, Clerk.

Annual School Meeting Notice.

AN ANNUAL MEETING OF THE legal No. 18, Clatsop County, Oregon, will be held at the school house on Main street, in Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon, on Monday evening, March 7, 1881, at 7 o'clock P. M., for the purpose of electing one Director for three years and one Clerk for one year. Also to levy a tax to support a school for the ensuing year in said district, and also a tax to pay interest and incidental expenses of said district, and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting. By order of the Board of Directors, J. G. HUSTLER, Clerk.

School Taxes.

ALL TAXES DUE SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 18, Clatsop County, (the new district) must be paid before February 25th, to avoid expense. A. C. SPEARHART, Clerk District No. 18.

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PROVISIONS, LUMBER.

ETC., ETC., ETC.

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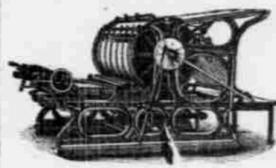
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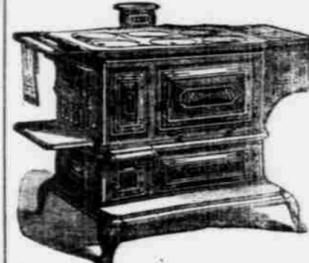
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