The Daily Astorian

ASTORIA OREGON:

SATURDAY ..... MAY 21 1881

VOL. ..... No. 340

The New Tide in Commerce.

The Mississippi river route for grain, since the improvement of the stream by the Eads jetty system, supplemented by an effective system of dredging, has lifted New Orleans out of the mire of commercial inactivity in which she had been sitting for twenty years, and promises to give her shipping rank second only to New York, at least as an exporter. What the Crescent city gains in this respect, Chicago must chiefly lose. The best customers of the river route are Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota and Illinois. These six states produce nearly one-half of the wheat and corn, pork and provisions, that are exported yearly from the country east of the rocky mountains; and the great city at the southern extremity of lake Michigan has so far enjoyed the next thing to a monopoly of this trade. It has been her bonanza. It is the secret of her unequaled growth; for, although her manufactures are large and increasing, in the main they depend on her inland shipping, and are of a kind into which grain, pork, beef and feed enter extensively as the raw material. The Chronicle aptly says:

Take away from Chicago half of this vast inland trade, and a third or a fourth of the means of her future prosperity will disappear and center in New Orleans. If ships and ocean steamers of twenty-six feet draft can come and go through the mouth of the Mississippi without impediment, it is certain that grain elevators, cattle yards, packing houses and all the essentials of quick and cheap modern methods of transportation will be called into existence at the southern commercial emporium, and every new growth there will subtract something from the importance of the emporium on the lake. Moreover, it will also cut in upon the trade of New York and the railway system that connects her with these six great western states, for the operations of a single year have demonstrated that the river route is the cheapest and that railways cannot successfully compete with it in the transportation of grain and breadstuffs.

Inspired by this threatening situation, the business men of Chicago and New York have called a northwestern convention, to meet at Davenport, Iowa, on the 25th of this month, for the purpose of devisin gmeans for the cutting of a canal from a point on the Mississippi, near Rock island, to Hennepin, on the Illinois river, where it is to connect with a canal already in operation, giving a continuous water route from Hennepin to Chicago, and when the new canal is made, from Rock island to Chicago. This, to quote from an editorial in the New York Tribune:

Would practically extend the great northern line of water transit between New York and the west, formed by the Hudson river, the Erie canal and the lakes so that it would reach St. Paul.

There is already a water route from Rock-island to Chicago, but it goes a roundabout way, which makes it six times as long as the route across the state of Illinois by rail, and therefore not as cheap as the railway route. The proposed route for the new canal has been carefully surveyed, and is shorter than the shortest line of railway. The cost of the work is variously estimated. One estimate is as high as $4,500,000, and then as low as $3,900,000. This is for a canal six feet deep, sixty feet wide at the top, with locks 150 feet long, which the Tribune says will allow the use of boats as large as the largest size employed on the Erie canal. The total distance by this all-water route from the upper Mississippi to Chicago is stated at 180 miles, but the new canal required will be only sixty-five miles. The New York paper expects of it that it will bring all the towns on the Mississippi in direct all-water communication with New York, and that will check the tendency of the products of Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota and western Wisconsin to New Orleans by the river route. Perhaps it may. It will do something in that line if the canal is made as free as the river, and in that case it would become a sure check on the railways as long as the water lines are free from ice, which is only about seven months annually.

Flashes from the Wires.

BY MAIL AND TELEGRAPH

Conkling as usual.

Mrs. Garfield continues to improve.

Le Duc has passed in his parchment, and Hon. Geo. B. Loring will take charge of the agricultural portfolio, tea farm and flower pots, after June 30th.

An amicable agreement has been reached between opposing interests in the Northern Pacific. Two directors representing the Villard interest, Mr. T. F. Oakes and Mr. A. H. Holmes are admitted to the board. Suits are all to be withdrawn.

Commissioner French gave it as his opinion, in Seattle a day or two since, that Mr. Villard will not gain control of the Northern Pacific Railroad company. Very likely; having had control for about three months passively, now actively. Com. French was apparently astride the off horse.

Damaged Fish.

London Grocer, April 23d.

At auction to-day 15,500 cases and a quantity of loose tinned salmon, saved from the cargo of the T. F. Whiton, from Vancouver island, wrecked off Penzance, all more or less wetted with sea-water, were offered and disposed of with a fair competition, at the following prices, viz., 19s to 21s per case, each case supposed to contain 4 dozen 1. lb tins, with one lot sturgeon at 4s per case. The loose tins of salmon about 3700, were taken at 3s 9d to 4s 6d per dozen tins. One of the conditions under which the goods were sold were as follows:

The brokers do not guarantee brands, quality, condition or contents, and as no claim will be entertained in respect thereof, buyers are urged to thoroughly examine the various bulks, to do which every facility will be given by the ware-house keeper in charge.

Canal stock will go out of sight when it becomes generally known that a ship can cross the south American continent without the aid of such expensive devices. The ship John T. Berry, from Philadelphia for San Francisco, is reported as spoken in 9 south 64 west, which is somewhere in the interior of Brazil. Unless the report is wrong the captain must have struck a very heavy dew to bring him over by that route.

—Ladies accept of no taffy at the hands of the gentlemen except such as is good to eat, and is made fresh every day at the Astoria candy factory, opposite the bell tower.

—Carl Adler will sell his entire stock of wall-pockets, brackets and picture frames at a great sacrifice as he has determined to close out and quit that line of trade.