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# The Daily Astorian.

ASTORIA, OREGON:

SUNDAY.....NOV. 6, 1881

J. F. HALLORAN.....Editor.


## How it Looks to Ship Masters.

A LETTER signed by the captains of six vessels, four of whom are now lying at this port, has been sent to the Liverpool Mercury for publication. A copy of the letter has been furnished the Oregonian. We reproduce it from the columns of our contemporary:

PORTLAND, OR., NOV. 1, 1881.

*To the Editor of the Liverpool Mercury:*

For the future guidance of shipowners and masters coming to this port we request you will be kind enough to insert this letter in your paper.

Being interested in the shipping world, it behooves us to state that the exorbitant prices charged at this port surpasses any that have ever come before our notice. The freights, however, we will allow at the present time are very good. But to counteract this the danger connected with the bar, the pilotage and steam expenses on the river, are such that they literally swallow all the profits.

The nature of this port is such that vessels have been known to stand off and on the port for a period of four and five weeks before an entrance could be effected.

There are many charges, we regret to state, which are well known to the inhabitants of this town to be an imposition. One we will mention is a charge for wharfage while the vessel is loading at Astoria, the wharves belonging to the same company in this city who also do all the lightering with their own steamers. The jealousy that exists between Portland and Astoria is such that only small portions of cargo are sent down, and that at long intervals, to any vessel loading at Astoria.

Another very serious matter is that vessels consigned to Portland with only a very ordinary draught cannot completely load there, and even then are frequently stuck on the river banks, the steamer charges still continuing at the rate of eight dollars per hour for detention. We have known a case in which under these unjust rules a master had to pay $1740 for extra lighterage and detention. We may further say to strangers, opposition here in river towage seems to be very strong, but with a little personal observation it is not difficult to see how the two parties engaged in it join hand in hand. With regard to approaching Astoria bar there has been a great neglect on the part of the authorities in not making known to the shipping world the new lights that have been erected. We also think that the lifeboat authorities would do well to try and afford to keep more than one man. We have lately seen a case in which a whole ship's crew nearly perished, soldiers being the only volunteers of the lifeboat.

Vessels are frequently detained here for a length of time, owing to that unwarrantable practice of kidnapping the seamen immediately on the vessel's arrival.

THE ASTORIAN has already commented on nearly all the charges and complaints in the above. It will do no harm to give the letter as wide as wide a circulation as possible. As far however, as the "jealousy" is concerned, if any does exist, there certainly need be no reason for it. Astoria and Portland are mutually concerned in the matter, and as things are at present, what affects one affects the other.

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A MEXICAN antiquary announces some interesting discoveries among the ruins of Uxmal, in Yucatan, and believes that Chaldaic words from an inscription on a stone which appears to have belonged to a Masonic Lodge. It would not be surprising if, through the stone records of the Isthmus, the early civilization of America, now long extinct, were traced to the far East. At present all theories about the source of that civilization must be based on mere conjecture; but as the Mediterranean was full of ships and sailors in the days when the Chaldean language was in use in Egypt and Asia Minor, and as the legend, of Atlantis, the island in the Western ocean, seems to have existed at that time, it is not at all improbable that other navigators may have been as thoughtful and adventurous as Columbus.

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ONE of the most important parts of the voting to be done in various states on next Tuesday, is not connected with the choice of candidates, but with questions of state policy. Thus, Nebraska votes upon a proposed amendment to its constitution conferring upon women the right of suffrage; Wisconsin, upon amendments providing for biennial elections and sessions of the legislature; Maryland, upon an amendment to change the time of the election of Judges; Minnesota, upon three amendments providing for equal taxation, prohibiting special legislation and regulating the pay of its legislature; while Colorado will vote upon the question of fixing the location of the state capital.

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ST. PETERSBURG is not a nice place to keep a hotel in at the present time. Landlords and house porters are required to keep strict watch on the movements of their lodgers. They are to be always on duty. They must never sleep, never go on errands, never allow anybody to stick bills on the walls, or throw explosive substances through the windows. They must know everybody's business who comes in or goes out; they must carry all the information they can to the police. They are thus made government spies, and are becoming as odius as Fouche's brigade war in France. Lodgers have to fee them, or be denounced as suspicious characters.

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A SINGULAR religious frenzy has broken out in Nicaragua. The people affected believe themselves the recipients of divine communications. Whenever a person feels the inspiration of a "communication" he rushes to the church and rings the bell, when the whole population assemble to hear the message from on high.

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THE notion still prevails extensively in China and Japan that Grant is the Emperor of America. The diplomatic correspondence received at the State Department is said to have recently shown "singular and amusing traces" of this delusion.

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