The Daily Astorian.

ASTORIA, OREGON:

WEDNESDAY.....MARCH. 22, 1882

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

Examination of Young's, Lewis and Clarke's, and Skipanon Rivers, Entering into Young's Bay, Near Mouth of Columbia River, Oregon.

U. S. ENGINEER OFFICE,
Portland, Or., Jan. 7, 1882.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report upon the examination of the Young's, Lewis and Clarke's, and Skipanon rivers, Oregon, with estimate of cost of improvements proper.

The examination was made in August last by Mr. R. A. Habersham, assistant engineer. A chart of the rivers, prepared by him, is transmitted herewith.

The three rivers under consideration are in Clatsop county, in the northwest part of Oregon; they rise in the coast range, flow in a northerly direction, and empty into Young's bay, an arm of the Columbia river, near its mouth. The rivers have the same characteristics; the upper sections are mountain streams not adapted to improvements proper for navigation; the lower sections are tidal sloughs already navigable, and subject to extension of navigation by improvement; the usual rise of the tide is a little over 6 feet; tides of 8 and 9 feet frequently occur.

Young's river is the largest; its two sections are separated by a fall, nearly vertical, of 69 feet. Above the fall the stream is from to 3 feet deep and from 30 to 40 feet wide, with a rough, rocky bed of considerable slope.

The tidal section of Young's river is 12 miles in navigable length, inclusive of 3 miles on its tributary, the Klaskanine. Below the Klaskanine the length is 7 miles. The width at the head of this part is about 300 feet, and at the mouth one-fourth of a mile. The available depths are from 6 to 15 feet at low-tide. An occasional snag exists.

Above the Klaskanine the streams are more narrow and tortuous, with depths from 5 to 10 feet at low-tide, which are reduced in availability to 2 and 3 feet, and the navigation rendered dangerous by drift, snags and sunken logs.

The valley of the tidal section of Young's river is from one-fourth to one mile wide. It consists of excellent bottom lands, partly subject to overflow, but easily reclaimable by diking. The foothills are generally well timbered. No extensive attempt has been made to clear them for agricultural purposes. There are thirty farms along the river, where hay and small farm products are grown. Fire-wood and saw-logs are also shipped out of the valley by the river. A river steamer occasionally ascends to the head of tide on the Klaskanine for business.

Three miles to the westward of the Young's river is the Lewis and Clarke's. It has a navigable length of 8 miles. The least depth of low channel is 4 feet at low-tide, and is found at 5½ miles from its mouth; above, the depths are 2 feet greater; and below, they are from 8 to 20 feet at low-tide. Outside of the mouth there is a bar with 6½ feet of water at low-tide. For two miles below the head of the channel there are many snag obstructions. The lower 6 miles are comparatively clear. The landing of the O. R. & N. Co. is 2 miles above the mouth. Their regular boats on the Portland-Astoria route extend trips in summer to this landing once, and sometimes twice, a week, to carry passengers to and from Clatsop Beach.

The valley contains twenty farms. It is flanked by low hills covered with fir and spruce; the average width is half a mile. The productions are similar to those of the Young's river country.

The Skipanon, some three miles to the west of the Lewis and Clarke's, has a tidal section 3¾ miles long, 1000 feet wide at its mouth, and 50 feet at its head. The boat-landing is 2 miles above the mouth. The local and coast mail is brought here each week-day from Astoria by a little steam craft of 5 tons burden. One mile further up stream is a fixed bridge on the county road.

Two thousand feet off the mouth of the Skipanon there is a bar with only 1 foot of water at very low tides. Inside the water is of sufficient depth for ordinary steamboating, but three sharp bends make the channel too tortuous for the longer steamers. The stern-wheel boat Welcome, whose dimensions, over all, are about 32 feet by 145 feet, has followed the channel through two of the beds without any difficulty. She is shorter and steers better than the average steamer. If necessary, a canal 500 feet long, of easy excavation, could be made, to cut off the bend where the channel is the most difficult in direction.

On the Skipanon and near its mouth are three fishing stations and one establishment for beef packing. During the salmon season freight belonging to the stations is transferred to and from steamers at an isolated pier built in the deep water of the bay outside the bar.

There are eight or ten small farms on the Skipanon, which are in the vicinity of the boat landing, where the ground near the bank is above overflow. On the opposite side of the river, and below on both sides, the ground is low, flat and marshy. Some little attempt has been made at diking.

Besides the daily mail on the Skipanon, a second small steam plunger finds ready business by plying on the rivers and bay.

The country above described contains a population, mostly agricultural, of about 350. Its products find a ready market at Astoria, where merchandise and other supplies are obtained. Astoria is 4½ to 5 miles, across a good navigable bay, from the mouths of the rivers. Land communication is exceedingly difficult; for any heavy traffic it is impracticable. In addition, the Skipanon is the outlet for settled regions to the west and south, known as Clatsop Plains and Clatsop Beach; the latter is a summer resort; the Plains is a thriving agricultural tract, consisting principally of dairy farms, and containing a population of some 300.

Astoria is the center of the salmon fishing and canning industry, and the point of distribution of its product. In 1866 the pack was 4,000 cases, and in 1881 it was 550,000, at $5 a case. Ten steam tenders, 1,400 boats and nets, and 7,500 employes are said to have been engaged in the salmon trade during the last season. There are three saw-mills at Astoria, which supply a local trade, 1 salmon-case factory, and 1 tannery. Considerable flour and wheat are stored here for transshipment or tranferred directly from river to sea craft.

Astoria is the port of entry for the including collection district. The value of the staples tin and salt for the calendar year 1881 is reported as $220,149. The value of the exports for the same period on salmon, flour, and wheat is given as $2,724,915. The nearest light-house and works of defense are at the mouth of the Columbia river.

The extension of navigation on the Young's, and Lewis and Clarke's rivers to give 6 feet at low-water to the head of the tide, which would add 7 miles and make the present length of 13 miles more easy, and the desirable removal of snags in the Skipanon after dredging, would require the work of a snag-boat for two months of each year. The running expenses for that period would be $2,000. The first cost of construction is estimated at $12,500, and for renewed construction, each ten years thereafter, $6,000.

The government has entered on a project for the improvement of the Cowlitz, an important tributary of the Lower Columbia, which requires the annual removal of snags and scraping of bars, at an estimated cost of $2,000. Two appropriations already made have paid the running expenses of the snag-boat Corvallis, belong on the Upper Willamette river, when engaged on the Cowlitz. A snag-boat is needed to patrol the Lower Willamette and Columbia, and for inspection and repair duty on dikes and revetments. The necessity for operations named occurs simultaneously for the different localities. The length of river and extent of operations are too great for one boat and crew. An appropriation of $14,500 can be profitably expended during the next year in the construction of a snag boat for the Lower Willamette and Columbia rivers and their branches, and for two month's service on the Young's, Lewis and Clarke's, and Skipanon rivers.

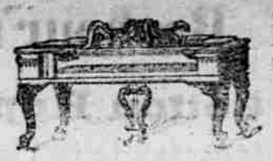
The excavation of a cut-off canal at the sharpest bend on the Skippanon would cost $5,000. The dredging of a canal through the bar at the mouth of the river to give six feet at low-water, so that crafts of that draught can cross at all times without delay, instead of timing their trips according to changes of tide, would require an annual expense of $1,000. That amount can be profitably expended during the next year for the purpose named.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant, CHAS. F. POWELL,
Captain of Engineers.
THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, U. S. A.

SOME time ago Pixley of the Argonaut, had the temerity to say that Bob Ingersoll was a good man; since then there has been four columns of answers in his paper from those who rush in where angels fear to tread. Had he said he was a bad Injun and a hard game generally, he would have an equal amount of bad grammar inflicted upon him from the other side of the house. The moral to this forms a frame for the picture and a setting for the stone.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Carl Adler's



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SEVEN CASES WOODEN WINDOW SASH, VARIOUS SIZES,
THREE JARS, 100 LBS. EACH, JAPAN TEA,
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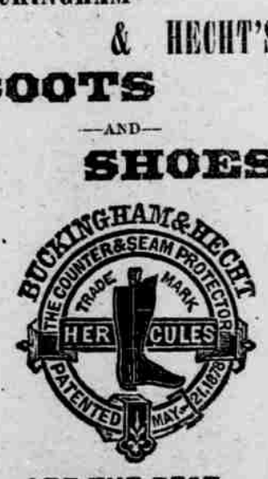

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Sheriff's Notice.

THE STATE, COUNTY, AND STATE School Taxes for the year 1881, are now due and can be paid at my office at the Court House.
A. M. TWOMBLY,
Sheriff and Tax Collector.
dawtf