

The Daily Astorian. ASTORIA, OREGON. SATURDAY... SEPTEMBER 20, 1882. J. F. HALLORAN, Editor.

Recent Ship-Building Data. One of the most suggestive articles on American shipping and ship-building, is contributed by Henry Hall to the September number of the International Review. The writer starts out with the declaration that ship-owners become rich in good times. Forty years ago says the Bulletin, in comment, that declaration was true enough. It is true now in a limited sense. The guild of ship-owners was a very powerful one. That interest was usually joined to a mercantile one. The owner of ships was usually a merchant as well. He bought in remote markets and sold at home. He was able to buy by the cargo. There was no ocean telegraph. He obtained the first news because he had the facilities for getting it through correspondents. He knew the state of the remotest markets. His exclusive news enabled him to make successful ventures. He built ships annually. They were good ships constructed of oak; good carriers and fair sailers. When they were partly worn out he could always sell them for whalers, or for some other business in which he was not interested. The whaling companies of New London, New Bedford, Nantucket and other places were always on the lookout for ships which had been in the packet service and were to be withdrawn for new and larger ones. These ships were sold at a moderate valuation. They were bargains for the whalemen.

Then came the clipper ships of '49, most of which went into the California trade. The writer says the Sovereign of the Seas, built by Donald McKay, earned \$200,000 in eleven months. The clippers in the California trade before the war made all their owners rich. At the present day according to this authority, good-sized ships in the wheat trade from California to Liverpool earn from \$40,000 to \$50,000 for outward trips on a single freight. The single-deck ship Olympus, built on Puget Sound, for \$80,000, earned \$45,000 in the lumber trade before she was a year old. The Atlantic steamers are making money rapidly. The expenses of a steamer from New York to Liverpool range from \$20,000 to \$35,000, and they earn from \$60,000 to \$75,000 in a single trip. Yet the carrying business has been for more than twenty years slipping away from American ship-owners. Not over 100,000 tons of shipping are now built annually in the United States, while England has nearly a million tons on the stocks. "The number of trades that thrive by the building of vessels is about forty—perhaps a dozen more by the sailing and handling of them. Imagine the many and interesting processes through which from \$7,000 to \$12,000 worth of crude materials must go before they have been transformed into a \$90,000 sailing vessel and a \$400,000 respectively. The builders can find in the fields and mines all that they need for the construction of their ships and outfits for those small sums of money. That which changes their original value is the labor put upon them. And this labor is mostly performed by artisans of the highest grade, who receive the very best of current prices for their services. Ship-yard men are among the most sober, steady, upright, intelligent citizens we have."

The writer goes on to say that the art of ship-building for the trade is dying out. A few years ago ten thousand men went to work daily in the shipyards of New York. Now only a few hundred in all are seen in the yards. The industry has now no vigor in any of the large Atlantic cities. But in some of the small coast towns of Maine there is considerable activity. But all the timber, or

nearly all, is imported from places nearly or quite a thousand miles away. This statement will arrest attention:

Yet in no other part of the United States can wooden vessels be built so cheaply and so well as in the enterprising state of Maine. They are bright, smart, skillful men in Maine, and their position in regard to shipping is a credit to their vigor and ability. Another region which possesses great natural advantages for carrying on this industry is that bordering on Puget Sound and the north Pacific coast where the fir forests grow. The lumber for a large vessel can be bought in that region at a saving of \$20,000 over eastern prices. The timber is tough, long and strong. It makes a good ship. Every effort has been made to attract eastern capital to the shipyards of that region, yet Maine still serves the country best, and builds and sails the largest, finest and cheapest wooden vessels built on any of the coasts of the United States. It will not do, therefore, to say that, with the natural advantages such as America possesses, the art of ship-building can never decay among us. Natural advantages have nothing to do with the matter. So far as wooden ships are concerned, the art is decaying almost everywhere, and, as far as iron ones are concerned, that art is at least stationary.

Many of the towns along the Atlantic coast eastward from New York, including the north shore of Long Island sound, depended largely for their prosperity on the ship-building industry. They are now in decadence. The yards are deserted, and the expert mechanics have gone into other business. Iron ship-building is the only branch of the business which is not in decadence. But as yet it has made very little progress in this country, especially in relation to iron sailing vessels.

The ships which take business away from those of the Americans are the iron clippers of England. Yet it is not on account of their cheaper cost, for, while first-class vessels of oak and pine have been built in the United States for years from \$45 to \$50 a ton, the cost of iron vessels in England has ranged from \$80 to \$100 a ton, and still is as high as \$70 and \$75. It cannot possibly be an advantage in first cost, therefore, which enables Englishmen to put 1,275 sailing vessels into the American trade, when Americans can employ only 840.

It was once the custom to build wooden ships of live oak, on the theory that the best ships put afloat was constructed of that material. But when it was found that a spruce ship would carry 120 tons more cargo than one of the same dimensions built of live oak, the latter material lost favor. The iron ship is a still better carrier for the tonnage, and the steel ship has been found to be better still.

Is it a difference in the material of which the ships are built? Does Norwegian fir, or Canadian spruce, or English iron, or anything, make a better sailing vessel than American oak and pine? In reply, it may be stated, in the first place, that the iron does rank the highest with the insurance companies. It is held that the cargoes of one hundred iron ships will be delivered with less damage from sea-water and other elements than the cargoes of one hundred wooden vessels. The ships are tight and strong. They are also proof against fire, and to that extent are safer risks than wooden vessels. The cargo of an iron sailer, oil laden, has been known to burn eleven months at sea, and the ship afterward to be towed into port, repaired and put into the trade again sound and tight as ever. The iron ship requires a smaller annual expenditure for maintenance and repairs, an advantage so obvious as to require no comment. These are all points in favor of iron tonnage, and they do aid the owners of it greatly in bidding for business. The facts should be frankly conceded, although America does not build iron sailing ships.

In the year 1880-81, the wood on vessels engaged in the wheat carrying trade between this coast and European ports, carried a little more for each registered ton than did the iron vessel. All these facts fall a little short of a perfect demonstration that the wooden ship will immediately give way to the iron one. Americans invented, so to speak, the clipper ship. The English invented a class of steam-

ers and iron sailing vessels which thrust the clipper ship into the background. In what way will our countrymen recover the carrying trade which they have lost? Not long ago an inquiry was directed by certain men to a member of congress from this coast who is chairman of the committee on commerce, as to what congress has done for the shipping interest. It might be answered, in a general way, that it has made a substantial forward movement. It has modified the tonnage tax by a new system of measurement which conforms nearly to the English system. It has also set on foot inquiries as to the condition of the shipping interest and the cause of its decline. Such inquiries must always precede any great advance in the way of restoration. Data must be collected which must be the foundation of any forward movement. In short, congress has proceeded in the matter precisely as the British parliament is wont to proceed when it has to deal with any great question of this kind. The lost ground will be slowly recovered, although the particular means to be employed are not yet settled beyond a doubt. The ship of the future will have auxiliary steam, whether of wood, steel or iron. It is not so certain that it will be the full powered steamer, except for the shorter work. The carrying trade of the Pacific coast is still in its infancy. That is the trade which will do more than any other to stimulate a ship-building interest on the Pacific coast. What would be now in the line of future success is the invention of an American ship better suited to the demands of modern commerce than any which has yet been put afloat.

NEW TO-DAY.

To Whom It May Concern. THIS IS TO GIVE NOTICE THAT MY wife, having left my bed and board, I will not be responsible for any debts that she may contract. P. WALKER. STARKS POINT, W. T., Sept. 29th, 1882. 1w

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Summons. JUSTICE'S COURT, PRECINCT OF ASTORIA, Clatsop county, State of Oregon: P. H. FOX, Justice of the Peace, vs. J. W. Case, Plaintiff, vs. H. C. Holcomb, Defendant.

To H. C. Holcomb: In the name of the State of Oregon, greeting: ss. Unless you appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled court and action, on the 21st day of October, 1882, at 9 o'clock A. M., plaintiff therein will take judgment against you for the sum of Sixty and no cents.

This summons is published in the DAILY ASTORIAN, by order of said court, made this 15th day of September, 1882. P. H. FOX, Justice said Court.

J. Q. A. BOWLEY, Attorney for Plaintiff. d-65-6t

Stockholders' Meeting. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE annual meeting of the stockholders of the Occident Packing Co. will be held at their office in Astoria, Oregon, October 4th, 1882, for the purpose of electing a board of directors for the ensuing year, and of transacting such other business as may come before the board.

By order of the President, ERIC MAUNULA, Sec'y

BIDS WILL BE RECEIVED BY THE UNDERSIGNED up to noon Sept. 20, 1882, for the renting of the first floor of the brick building now in process of erection; separate bids for each room; and time of lease three years from about January 1, 1883. Bids to state the kind of business the lessee proposes to carry on. For further particulars enquire of the Directors. The right to reject any and all bids is reserved.

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