

# The Daily Astorian

VOL. XXX, NO. 80.

ASTORIA, OREGON, TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 1888.

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**THIS PAPER** is on file in Philadelphia at the Newspaper Advancing Agency of Messrs. H. W. AYER & SON, our authorized agents.

## AN OPEN RIVER.

Without It, Slow Development of the Columbia River Basin.

An Opinion that Two Railroads are Inadequate for the Needs of the Country—Branch Roads to the River.

Anent the discussion of various questions indissolubly connected with the joint lease of the Oregon Railway & Navigation property, Major A. F. Sears yesterday, in conversation with an Oregonian reporter made a point well worth consideration. He had been asked to give his opinion as to the relative cost of hauling grain over the Cascade mountains and along the Columbia river route (published elsewhere in this issue). Having complied with the request, he added that the prosperity of the great Columbia river basin did not depend upon the policy of the competing lines of railway. The hope for the full development of the agricultural resources of that region lay in an open river; not only in the reasonable freight rates that an open river will guarantee to the producer, but for the necessary transportation facilities which an open river alone will afford. The great desideratum of the agriculturist, next to reasonable rates of transportation, is promptness in getting his products to market. No two lines of single track railway will be capable of moving the surplus grain of the inland empire with any degree of promptness, say two or three years hence. Maj. Sears gave it as his opinion that if only one-half of the agricultural land of the Columbia river were placed under cultivation five lines of railway would not have capacity to haul the products to tidewater within, say, six months after harvest. The carrying capacity of a railroad is limited; of a large river unlimited.

Furthermore, said Maj. Sears, the agricultural development of the inland empire will not come until there is an open river. The problem of transportation by water is easy of solution. The government may be expected to complete the locks at the Cascades. Oregon and Washington must build a boat railway around the dalles of the Columbia. Nature has furnished a better and more substantial foundation for such a railway than human hands can build. The railway once built, the principal investment will be for barges. The heavy traffic is down stream. One good steamboat can haul several loaded barges to tidewater, and bring them back empty. The capital invested in a line of steamboats and barges is small as compared with the amount required to build a railway through a mountainous country. Operating expenses, of course, are small in like proportion.

An open river itself would avail little in the full development of the inland empire, for the reason that only a small part of the agricultural region is within easy hauling distance of the river. But the certain promise of low rate by water will stimulate the building of railway lines from the interior to the river. Dr. Baker's road from Walla Walla to Wallula is a fair sample of a score of roads that will be built. "From my knowledge of the topography of the country," said Major Sears, "I am well satisfied that many of the roads can be built at a cost of \$1000 to \$5000 a mile, and the residents of the country will build them without the aid of outside capital, and the profits of the enterprises will remain in the region that produces the grain. Assume, if you wish, that the Northern Pacific and the O. R. & N. this day are inclined to make rates on grain as low as an open river would afford—a very wild assumption—and that they are willing to give a perpetual guarantee for such low rates; you would then have only a partial development of the Columbia river basin, equal to the carrying capacity of the two roads. With an open river the construction of branch lines will not hang upon the caprice of an eastern board of directors, nor upon the financial circumstances of far-away corporations. The people of Oregon and Washington will build them, and they cannot be forced to sell out. Besides, an open river will compel existing lines and those which shall be built in future to charge

no more for hauling freight than the low river rates. The hope of Portland and of the Columbia river basin lies not in the abrogation of the joint lease, nor in a continued war of rates between the O. R. & N. and the Northern Pacific, but in an open river."—Oregonian, 31.

Missouri and Oregon.

A rancher near Lexington, Umattilla Co., kept a Missouri land-hunter over night. The caller wanted to know what advantages this country had over his, and the rancher, with considerable truth, barring his reference to Pike having prettier girls than we have, said:

"Well, Missouri beats this country for mud, ducks, geese, niggers, mules, hogs, corn, chills and fever, hard work, watermelons, pretty girls, persimmons, paw-paws, and possums. I think this country beats Missouri for wheat, oats, barley, Irish potatoes, good health, bunchgrass, jack rabbits, coyotes, horse thieves, gamblers, bad whiskey and lazy men."—Welcome.

Delicate persons, and all whose systems have become debilitated, should bear in mind that Simmons' Liver Regulator is not a drastic, purging medicine, does not weaken or deplete the system as other purgatives do, but acts gently. It will invigorate like a glass of wine, but is no intoxicating beverage to lead to intemperance; will promote digestion, dissipate headache, and generally tone up the system. Hon. Alex. H. Stephens, of Ga. says: "Simmons' Liver Regulator is mild suits me better than more active remedies."

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