

Daily Astorian.

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All communications intended for publication should be directed to the editor. Business communications of all kinds and remittances must be addressed to The Astorian.

CHILDISH THREATS.

Mr. Scott has decided to abandon the old "You're another" argument in connection with the river improvement controversy and has concluded to get off a few threats, just to show the immense power he has up his sleeve for future use, if necessary. He makes his young men of the Evening Telegram say in yesterday's issue of that little afternoon appendage:

"Prematurity of expression antagonistic to Portland seems to be a common weakness of the persons who are pushing the Astoria-Globe railroad project. Clark of Missouri howled too soon, and the bray of the Astorian's editor is decidedly too premature. Such hair-trigger work savors more of valet than of prudence. Before provoking Portland to substitute opposition for its aid to the road it would be discreet to wait until trains are running."

And again, just to illustrate his meaning a little more clearly:

"Ordinary discretion should restrain the people and press of Astoria from antagonizing the people and press of Portland just at this time. If Portland were as vindictive as Astoria is astute, the work of constructing that railroad from Globe might be considerably delayed."

We really feel very sorry that we have provoked this dire warning, and are most anxious to do anything in our power to avert the impending catastrophe. If the editor of the Oregonian will refrain from putting a stop to the building of the Astoria-Globe railroad, we will pledge ourselves to refrain from going beyond this city or benefitting in any way the enormous landed interests of Congressman Clark down at Flavel. In order to make things doubly secure Astorians should waste no time in forwarding a tearful petition to the Oregonian, embodying the above clauses, and begging the editor, in his mercy, to let the railroad come, just this once, and we will never do it any more. But we feel that it is hardly a wise thing for that individual, after his recent sickening professions of friendship for Astoria, to be led by baffled rage into a confession of his true desire—the degradation of every surrounding center of population into a sort of tributary village to the great and only city of Portland, and the resultant supremacy of the powerful organ whose destinies he wields so honorably and so well.

OPINIONS IN EASTERN ASIA.

The statement that an agent of the Japanese government will visit the United States and Great Britain this year, to make large contracts for warships and arms, is confirmed. Evidently it means business. Japan realizes that the war is not ended. The first part of it, with China, may be. The second and more serious part, with Russia, has not yet begun. It may begin at any time, and Japan proposes to get ready for it, just as rapidly as possible. She is keeping her army up to its full strength and ready to take the field at short notice. Her fortresses are being enlarged and strengthened. Her ships, including those taken from China, are being repaired and put in perfect trim. New ships are being pushed to completion in British yards. And now, with the \$30,000,000 received from China—or from Russia—as the first payment of the war indemnity, she proposes to secure more ships and arms, sufficient to make her a match for her great antagonist, at least at sea.

In the mean time the Russian fleet lies at Ono Foo in full fighting trim. It is somewhat stronger than any with which Japan could at present oppose it. It comprises no less than five great ironclad battleships, while Japan has only one such, the Chen Yuen, which she captured from the Chinese. Japan is the stronger, however, in cruisers and gunboats, and when she gets her new ironclads from England, she is able to cope with that of Russia. The new ships for which she intends to make contracts this fall, will comprise four first-class ironclad battleships, six first-class and twelve second-class cruisers of a very high speed and heavy armament, and a whole fleet of gunboats, torpedo boats and torpedo-boat destroyers. These, added to her present navy, will make Japan a truly formidable sea power.

As has before been stated, neither Japan nor Russia is ready for war. Japan wants to get her new ships, and Russia to finish her railroad across Siberia. At the same time each is anxious to strike before the other is ready for the blow. An unexpected incident may at any time bring on the crisis. Should Russia demand the evacuation of Korea, Japan would fully refuse. Should Russia attempt to enter that country, Japan would fight. The popular feeling in Japan is extremely warlike, and extremely bitter against Russia, and could not be restrained if a moment should Russia attempt any

Further aggression. At the same time Japanese relations with England are growing more and more intimate, and may presently amount to something much like an alliance. The most serious danger to the peace of Europe is now to be found, not in Europe itself, but on the eastern coast of Asia.

The state department at Washington has been informed by our consul at Victoria, British Columbia, that the Canadian sealing vessels for that port have returned empty-handed from Bering Sea. They found practically no seals. The animals have been exterminated (as was the buffalo) by the unrestrained killing. This result was long ago predicted by those familiar with the subject and the contention has often been urged that the most stringent protection to seal life was needed to prevent its entire destruction in Alaskan waters. This lamentable outcome is the logical consequence of the work of the tribunal of arbitration in Paris in 1881. Its decision prohibited pelagic sealing by American citizens or British subjects within a zone 60 miles of the Pribylof islands beyond this zone, and in any part of the Pacific ocean or Bering sea, north of the thirty-fourth parallel, and east of Russian water boundaries. American citizens and British subjects were not to be permitted to kill or take seals in the months of May, June and July of every year. This decision did not prevent the poachers from setting out in vessels under the flags of any power other than the United States or Great Britain and destroying seals. Thus the decision practically left the matter as it had been before the arbitrators met. The seals were not protected in the breeding season.

It might naturally be supposed that school instruction as to physiology and hygiene, combined with the reformatory efforts of a considerable percentage of the American people, would result in diminishing the consumption of tobacco, but federal statistics indicate that the habits of smoking and chewing must be steadily extending, for the quantity of tobacco manufactured into cigars, cigarettes, or put up for sale in various other forms annually becomes greater. During the month of July there were manufactured in the United States 35,738,677 cigars, 36,159,369 cigarettes, 2,607,418 pounds of tobacco, and more than one million pounds of snuff. During the same period last year the number of cigars manufactured was two million less than the total given; and cigarettes there were not so many last year as this by quite half a million; of tobacco, the output in July, 1894, was smaller by 1,500,000 pounds than in July, 1895. The figures are interesting, and will doubtless attract attention. It is difficult to believe that the evident increase has taken place in the regular course of trade; there may be some special demand which has resulted in this extremely extensive output in July of this year.

The recovery of the bodies lost during the late regatta has brought into prominence a question that should be dealt with at once by the authorities. The undertaking rooms of the county coroner, situated as they are in the heart of the city, are no fit receptacle for corpses that have been exposed to the action of water for several days, and in a seaport like Astoria, where bodies in this condition are often recovered, the county should provide a morgue removed at a reasonable distance from the inhabited parts of the city and if possible fronting on the river. If such a building were erected the dangerous and unpleasant proximity of badly decomposed matter could be entirely avoided.

A special report prepared by Bradstreet's shows that the gross earnings of 30 railroads for the first six months of 1895 were \$39,997,773, a gain of 2.6 per cent over the gross earnings for the first six months of 1894. The promise of large crops and a heavy export trade is an earnest of increased earnings for the last half of the year.

A BAD YEAR FOR THE RAILROADS. The railroad statistics of 1894, given in the advance sheets of Poor's Manual, show what a hard year it was for the roads, and since when they suffer more or other interests suffer likewise—what a hard year it was for the whole country. As compared with 1893 the number of miles of road operated increased 1,000, but the gross earnings fell off \$142,000,000. The roads were as economical as they possibly could be. They bought nothing they could do without. They mended the repairs which were not absolutely necessary. And yet their net earnings fell off \$22,000,000, or nearly 12 per cent. They carried \$2,000,000 loss (not of freight, but of make matters worse they got for what they did carry a trifle less per ton per mile than in 1893. For the hard times did not check that lowering tendency in rates which has reduced them nearly one-third since 1882. While the number of tons carried last year fell off nearly 14 per cent, the freight earnings were over 12 per cent less.

The passenger business suffered also. The number of persons carried was over forty-five million less than in the preceding year. The total number of passengers was 653 millions, and the passenger earnings were 75 millions. This seems a large sum, but the earnings were 35 millions in excess of the total sum in 1894. The net earnings of the roads and their receipts from other sources—borrowed money for instance—made up a total of \$19 millions. On the other hand the fixed charges amounted to \$35 millions for interest and a hundred millions for rentals, taxes, and miscellaneous expenses. That leaves the dividend at the bottom of the list 15 millions. This means that interest and rentals were not paid in full. Eighty-five million dollars is a large sum, but it does not go far towards paying a satisfactory dividend on capital stock the full value of which is 1,000 millions of dollars. As a matter of fact the owners of 65 per cent of the railroad share capital of the country, received no return whatever on their investments. This is the largest per centage of unprofitable stock in any year on record.

It is true that a great deal of this stock is pure water. It represents nothing. It should pay no dividends. But those who hold it have sometimes received dividends in the past and they wish to in the future. In 1882 the average rate of dividends was 2.31 per cent. Last year it was only 1.81. These figures serve to explain why such a determined effort was made last winter to force through congress the bill to legalize pooling. That measure had behind it the holders of 1,500 millions in capital stock, 65 per cent of which paid nothing, and of 8,500 millions of funded debt, a large percentage of which paid nothing. These holders wanted pooling legalized so as to put an effective end to the downward ten-

deney of rates due partly to improvements in methods of transportation and partly to keen competition. They wanted legislation which would make it possible to put the rates up to a point where their worthless stocks would become dividend-paying and marketable. They were defeated at the last session, but an interest representing 1,500 millions of dollars is not discouraged by one defeat. When congress meets this winter a bill will be introduced to legalize pooling and a determined effort will be made to push through the Republic the measure as it was put through the Democratic house last year. Then it slipped through. Nobody was paying much attention to the bill, and the business world is the subjects which were in men's minds. When the pooling bill next comes up it should be met at the threshold and beaten there.

SILVER TWENTY YEARS AGO.

Interesting "Experience in the Profits of Mining Changing.

Monte Cristo Mountaineer. Twenty years ago this summer Custer, Keogh and the greater part of the Seventh Cavalry were on the trail of the "Red" down to death on the field" at Little Big Horn. Rain-in-the-face, Gall and Sitting Bull, with the Ute, Cheyenne, Sioux and Northern Cheyennes, had doubled on the "incausal" north of the Canadian line. The daily papers were wild to get the latest press reports from the far north, and the writer was situated in the city of the Omaha telegraph office when the message ticked in: "Will you take position of conductor Omaha to Ogden and return once a week at \$75 a month (Sincerely) Dullman, Pacific Co." We would and did take a train of five fast cars out the next noon. Shortly before the train started a pleasant old fellow, "We would kindly 'get her some silver.' We asked her 'how much she would like.' She took out her pocket book, handed us \$100 and pointing to the 'incausal' column of the Omaha Daily Bee lying on the seat beside her, said: 'Silver is \$1.01 here this morning. I wish to see my greenbacks for \$1.25 silver.' We never heard of her again. We 'settled our bills' but there was no time for explanations, so rushing into Jake Markey's and over to the emigrant restaurant, we bought \$100 in silver halves and quarters, paying therefor \$101 in greenbacks.

Upon handing her the \$100 in silver and remaining \$6 of her \$100 in greenbacks she asked us to buy her some silver. We reached the Fremont or Grand Island, Neb., eating houses and 'got rid of the remainder of her greenbacks at those places. We returned to Omaha and 'settling our bills' we found that she had 'settled our bills' and we had a silver coin and gold coin were interchangeable exactly at par from Ogden, Utah, westward, and that by buying her the \$100 in silver for \$101 we had actually made \$99 in profit. We carried the silver coin and gold coin until we arrived in a gold standard country and could exchange it for \$102.50 gold pieces and actually make profit of the difference between the price of silver, \$1.01, and the price of gold, \$1.25, or exactly \$15 in greenbacks, on her \$104 investment.

This reflection convinced us that every mile we traveled westward with greenbacks in our pocket made us poorer, but it required three round trips between Ogden and Omaha before we had the situation. Flood, Fair, O'Brien and Mackay were accumulating their vast fortunes, Hamlin & Tevis were a close second, and the Astoria-Bonanza City, the Hearst, old man Rice and a dozen others booming the Comstock mines to the top note. Everybody had money, and the Astoria-Bonanza City their silver coin freely at every eating place and the landlords would hoard it because it paid to do so.

On our return to Omaha we visited the two national banks, the state bank and Caldwell & Hamilton's, then over to Council Bluffs to Pusey & Co.'s and the two other banks in Omaha. We found the silver coin and gold coin in silver coin for \$1.01, gold coin, \$1.25; Sidney, Cheyenne and Laramie, silver coin, \$1.02; gold coin, \$1.25; Rock Creek, silver coin, \$1.01; gold coin, \$1.25; Omaha, silver coin, \$1.01; gold coin, \$1.25; Green River and Evanston, silver coin, \$1.18; gold coin, \$1.25; Ogden, silver coin, \$1.20; gold coin, \$1.30, or \$1.35, or \$1.40, or \$1.50, or \$1.60, or \$1.70, or \$1.80, or \$1.90, or \$2.00, or \$2.10, or \$2.20, or \$2.30, or \$2.40, or \$2.50, or \$2.60, or \$2.70, or \$2.80, or \$2.90, or \$3.00, or \$3.10, or \$3.20, or \$3.30, or \$3.40, or \$3.50, or \$3.60, or \$3.70, or \$3.80, or \$3.90, or \$4.00, or \$4.10, or \$4.20, or \$4.30, or \$4.40, or \$4.50, or \$4.60, or \$4.70, or \$4.80, or \$4.90, or \$5.00, or \$5.10, or \$5.20, or \$5.30, or \$5.40, or \$5.50, or \$5.60, or \$5.70, or \$5.80, or \$5.90, or \$6.00, or \$6.10, or \$6.20, or \$6.30, or \$6.40, or \$6.50, or \$6.60, or \$6.70, or \$6.80, or \$6.90, or 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