

The Daily Reporter.

D. C. IRELAND & CO. PUBLISHERS,

McMinnville, Or. - Sept 13, 1888

FOREIGN INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS.

What a grand conception! Surely reform statesmen and unprogressive statesmen who stand with bated breath in the presence of and start with holy horror at a bill that proposes to appropriate \$18,000,000 for the improvement of rivers and harbors in this grand country of 3,501,509 square miles and of sixty million people must be scarce in Russia, otherwise these grand internal improvements by which great seas are connected by artificial canals and the producers of the interior brought in easy communication with seaports, would never have been inaugurated or pushed forward to completion. But they do go on, and we are told that when completed, as they will be at no distant day, the cost of transportation of wheat from the fertile plains of the Caspian and along the Volga to the Atlantic and Mediterranean ports will be reduced at least to the extent 8 to 10 cents per bushel. It is clearly evident the producers, shippers and consumers of this country, if they would guard their own interests and protect themselves against the rapacity of formidable combinations of aggregated capital, must look to the improvement of the great natural water ways of the country and the construction of artificial ship and steamboat canals and ship railways for relief from exorbitant transportation charges. To the present limited and easily enumerated thousand and now settled in the inland empire, and the great plain of the Columbia in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, or to the almost countless millions that will, ere another generation shall have passed away, find happy, prosperous homes in that fertile and extensive region, it matters but little whether it is Portland or Astoria, Vancouver, Kalama, Yaquina, Tacoma, Seattle, or some other point on Puget sound, or the Columbia river, or the Pacific ocean, that is to be the dumping point of trans-shipment from land to sea, for the untold millions of tons of cereals and other products that must in the future from year to year as the years roll on, find their way from this prolific field to the waiting and beckoning markets of the world. With them this is not such a material question, however important it may be to the different rival ports contesting for the golden treasures that must inevitably result to the one which is finally most successful in the grand and honorable competitive race for the control of the trade of an empire.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FOOTHILLS.

Perhaps a few lines from the hills would be acceptable to your readers; at any rate, I am sure if the editor of The Reporter and his staff, and others who are confined in heated offices and the narrow bounds of the dusty city, could for a while breathe the bracing air of the highlands, drink the pure water, and ramble among the shady groves and upon the sunny slopes of the hills, they would experience the same desire to speak their praises, which prompts me to pen these lines. The foothills; majestic stepping stones from the valley to the great mountain beyond; possess attractions which are not found elsewhere. Here are broad farms of rolling land, unexcelled by any for the production of grain and fruits, and possessing the advantage of natural drainage, the lack of which detracts so much from the value of some valley farms. The higher slopes and wooded summits afford excellent range, the natural grasses growing fresh and plentiful during all of winter spring, and till late in the summer. These tracts are partially wooded and well watered by living springs. It is the universal testimony that the land of the lower and gentler slopes, and bordering the streams which interperse the hills at intervals, is unsurpassed in richness and general fertility. But the foothills present other attractions. To one fond of the free, romantic scenes of nature, the hills afford special inducements. Here the variety of the scene stands out in sweet relief to the monotony of the valley. Go with me to the top of this grand old pile and look upon the scene before us. At our feet ripples a brooklet fresh from its mountain source. Arching the stream and outlining its course are thickets of willow. Opposite, nestled in the protecting embrace of massive hills, stands a farmers cottage and buildings, commanding a view of valley and snowy peaks beyond. His broad acres spread out before, and herds roam the wooded slopes behind. Westward, hills after hills with wooded crests, grassy valleys and sloping glades, presenting a scene of rare beauty. Beyond, the light green of oak clad hills blend into the darker shade of the evergreens, and the great, wild mountains rising in dark grandeur, furnish a background for the picture. Come to the hill, all ye seekers of good farms, pure air and water, pleasant homes, beautiful landscapes, and ye shall be satisfied. INCOO.

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