

WRITES OF RAILWAY TO NEHALEM VALLEY

Long Beach, Wash., Aug. 30, 1908.
To the Editor of The Astorian:

On my way from Los Angeles at the end of last month, I was much surprised to learn that many small capitalists in Astoria were buying wild fruit lands in Southern Oregon at fancy prices. Knowing that country since 1874, and the Nehalem Valley before it was first settled, and watched its slow development simply for lack of railroads I concluded before I reached Portland to re-investigate Southern Oregon. Passing through it overland by stage seven times to San Francisco since 1874, it is true that since Southern Oregon's development with rail connection to Portland and to California has been great through fruit raising but it is true also that its wild lands, well suited as they are for growing fruit contrasted with those of the Nehalem are far too high, while Nehalem lands again cost today (outside the timber acreage), one-tenth of the prices asked for similar lands unproductive in Southern Oregon with what greater advantages you ask? None I can see. On the contrary I predict that ten years hence the value of his orchard and profits annually to accrue to the proprietor of a Nehalem orchard if set off in fruit trees in the years of 1909 and 1910 will be five times greater than in Southern Oregon for the following reasons: First, the cost price of the naked fruit lands to begin with is a tenth of the price charged in Southern Oregon today for the same lands. Second, the cost of real transportation to Astoria, an average distance of 35 to 36 miles will be only a fifth of what is now charged by the Southern Pacific (South Oregon), a distance of 345 miles, either to San Francisco or Portland, that is if the fruit raised in the Nehalem is all consumed either at Astoria or Portland, although to the latter city will be (local rates, I mean), high because the average rail haul from Nehalem will be to Portland, 65 miles as against 38 to Astoria. And while on this point I may add this discrepancy applies on lumber, dairy produce, coal and iron from the Nehalem in favor of Astoria in local rates and will always exist; while in transcontinental rates the freights will be the same at either Astoria or Portland in commodities going into the Nehalem or shipped therefrom. Has Astoria this advantage today, and can it without a railway from the Nehalem ever be a trading center or shipping point by ocean? Even for the produce, fruits, hay, etc., TO BE RAISED HERE-AFTER IN ASTORIA'S OWN COUNTY (CLATSOP)? Why then do the people of Astoria allow certain of its resident land owners, to impede and postpone construction of law suits and opposition to rights of way desired through the courts by the Portland Oregon Seacoast Railway Company? Would it not be more advantageous for Astoria's interests that its people get together (as the people of the seaside have already done, in giving that company rights of way for four miles into Seaside, subject only to the condition that the mayor of that town holds ALL the rights of way undelivered to the railroad company, until its line is actually built. Nothing could be more advantageous to both Astoria and the P. O. & S. R. R. And that course had been accepted by a committee of the Astoria chamber a year ago, instead of adding a further condition that the bond-holders of the railway company should give the City of Astoria surety bonds of a bank or guarantee company for \$200,000 that the road should reach the Nehalem river before the end of next year (an unprecedented condition in American railroad construction) when the state circuit court at Astoria for condemnation proceedings was open to the P. O. & S. Ry. Co. without any bond and under the law it had five years to complete construction through the lands condemned in court, where now rest under frivolous demurers to the railway suits from land owners either made purposely to gain time or exorbitant damages, we don't know which. But I am diverting from the object of this letter, namely the development of fruit-growing in the Nehalem and shall proceed.

Third reason, when an orchard has been set out and planted the fruits there will yield a higher income to the owner than in Southern Oregon. The short rail transportation to Astoria thence by sea to ALL ports of the Pacific Ocean including the Orient and by ocean steamers, Astoria to Great Britain and Europe via Panama Canal, a 30 days' voyage (after six years), will give all Nehalem fruits, hops, produce, etc. access to the markets of all Europe at THROUGH RATES of freight and be half less

(combined) what the local rates alone from Southern Oregon will be by rail to either Portland or San Francisco. It is impossible to deny this fact as the ocean steamer rates to Europe on freight via Panama Canal will be the same from Astoria, Portland or San Francisco.

Fourth—The quality of all fruits grown in the Nehalem even from a poor class of young trees is admitted equal to Southern Oregon even after 15 years' growth. So with vegetables, potatoes and wool crops. An inspecting engineer of bond-holders took with him to London large samples of all these and of fruits, apples, cherries, hops, butter and cheese, even hay. All were pronounced there equal to any similar product ever imported into Great Britain, while the lumber samples of Nehalem taken to Glasgow by a partner of the larger Scotch timber merchants of Europe while here six months ago, stated with the Panama Canal the export of same in the manufactured state with sash, doors, etc., would be a valuable income to Astoria exporters. Nehalem coal as a rule is declared valueless on account of the preponderance of sulphur 4 per cent. But in our surveys a coal expert from England now in the State of Washington, took one to a place where a coal bed of four miles existed from which on the spot he made in my presence 200 pounds of as fine cooking coal as I ever saw with only one per cent sulphur, all of which would go over the P. O. & S. Ry. Co. to Astoria.

Fifth—The extent of Nehalem is much greater than the Hood River country and like the latter equally diversified. I have spent three months with our surveyors continuously in the Nehalem and traveled through it all between the seaside and Washington country with a dozen or more special trips in addition since and hence as a fruit growing country I am able to make the comparison of the Nehalem with that of the Hood River region, and the altitudes of the various portions of each region where fruit can be grown profitably in each region where fruit can be grown profitably in each.

Hood River country has three districts or subdivisions—the west between Hood River and the mountains lies east of that river; the second district goes south for a distance of 10 miles from the Columbia; the third district is south of the two first and extends for 10 or 12 miles. It is the upper valley. The whole of Hood county has an east or west slope. Its orchards nearer the Columbia average elevation, 250 feet above the sea; the main valley is 600 feet, rising in the Willow Flat district to an average of 1250 feet. The Mount Hood district and the middle valley varies from 1350 to 2000 feet, with a good exposure as to light and air drainage. The apple predominates. The first tree was planted 25 years ago and now 347,435 trees, divided between yellow Newtons, 60 per cent of all, and the Spitzenberg, 40 per cent, or divided into 174,000 trees Newtons and 151,000 Spitzenbergs; others of inferior qualities. Strawberries occupy 756 acres and planted extensively in the young apple tree orchards, allowed to remain there until the apple trees come into bearing, thus furnishing an income for sometime while the apple trees are growing, 533 acres out of 756 acres are grown alone in strawberries among the apple orchards.

The only berry grown in Hood Valley is Clark's Seedling which has sold for \$3.35 a crate, 173 crates being considered a very good crop in Hood River districts. There are growing 9152 pear trees, 4527 cherry trees, 7180 peach trees. It is astonishing to note that 85 per cent of the WHOLE 350,000 apple trees or 297,000 apple trees have been in Hood River ONLY within the last SIX years. It is found by experience that the less irrigation applied to the trees yield best results, consequently in the Nehalem the fruit grower will surely depend upon the rainfall, which is more than ample with natural drainage slopes. All this shows the advantages of the Nehalem and its future for fruit growing. In extent it is double that of Hood River, being 50 miles in length from the east slope of Saddle Mountain, which looks into Nehalem River. Along the Nehalem country for 50 miles the P. O. & S. Railway Company's line will run of which 40 miles are almost continuously due east from the summit which is 1200 feet above the sea level, falling to 500 feet thence rising to 940 feet and again falling to 665 feet above the sea on eight miles sheltered between two mountain ranges all the way whose summits average 2500 feet with a scoop or draw 36 miles long from the sea at Nehalem Bay.

Headaches

are brain signals that your system is in some way disorganized and unless the cause of the trouble is removed they will become more and more frequent, and gradually increase both in duration and intensity. The sympathetic nerves are weakened by the repeated attacks, and the malady finds an easy lodgment whenever the bodily and mental conditions favor its return.

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ALL THE LOCAL COUNTRY EXCLUSIVELY above described will necessarily go to Astoria, including the various saw mills and logging camps within that sphere to be erected hereafter where H. Hawgood, the P. O. & S. Ry. Company's engineer-in-chief, estimates in his official report to that company's European bond-holders that it will take a train of 40 heavy logging cars daily for 42 years continuously to haul the timber now growing therein whether to Astoria or to Portland is for Astoria people to decide. Yet in the face of these reliable reports confirmed by reports of the U. S. Forestry division, now in our bond-holders' possession, I deeply regret to say that Astoria people, through ignorance, I presume, of the facts above narrated, permit many wealthy and grasping citizens of Astoria to oppose by misrepresentation of others the progress and development of your own city and consequently the building of the railway into the Nehalem, the lost traffic of which, just as sure as the sun rises and sets, will go direct to Portland, if a line therefrom is first built thereto. Nothing more certainly demonstrates this than the building of the A. & C. R. R. to Goble. Does Astoria get the LOCAL traffic on these 60 miles for which it paid \$1,000,000 as a subsidy in Astoria and suburban lands. True it may be answered there is no LOCAL country between Astoria and Goble. What there is however nearly all goes to Portland either over the A. & C. R. R. or O. R. & N. Co.'s steamers, and those of Jacob Kamm. If so, what did Astoria pay that million dollar land subsidy for when the Nehalem River was within 11 miles of the place, of which the grade is stopped now? However, it's no use crying over spilt milk. Does Astoria want a railway to Nehalem NOW without paying a dollar of subsidy for it? If so, why does it not unite as one man, and get all of those rights of way suits of P. O. & S. Ry. Company taken out of Judge McBride's court; for if one land owner keeps opposing, the bond holders will not continue longer their previous plan to start from the Astoria end, but within 60 days commence work of construction from the main line of the Southern Pacific in Washington county or from the Northern Pacific at the foot of Cornelius Gap, 111 miles from the Union Depot, Portland. It is Hobson's choice to which the P. O. & S. Ry. Co. and its bond-holders in London and Paris are driven to. By whom? The inaction or delay may care policy of certain men of Astoria who either wish extraordinary land damages or desire "to hold up" the construction of any line FROM ASTORIA into the Nehalem country and yet will not build themselves. In these circumstances let the people of Astoria as a unite decide.

Here are the facts: There are 24 miles to build in Seaside City and Saddle Mountain from Lewis and Clark navigable river to which the P. O. & S. Ry. Co. are under contract with their Paris bond-holders to have built and passenger cars thereon within 18 months, the bonds are all sold therefor, or for the first 30 miles from the Southern Pacific lines in Washington county or from the Northern Pacific Railroad in Multnomah county, that is to say if the Astoria people cannot furnish rights of way at the Lewis and Clark end, the bonds all sold of the 24 miles, are to be underwritten by independent Paris underwriters payable on each 10 miles completed. It will cost for the first 24 miles on the Portland end one-half to build what it would cost

24 miles on the Astoria end to build. The P. O. & S. Ry. Co. has out of these 24 miles on the Astoria end secured absolutely 14 miles of the right of way subject to completion of the railway to the summit of Saddle Mountain within 18 months when such 14 miles of right of way expire. Ten miles remain without rights of way, unguaranteed, the most of which are in Judge McBride's court for jury trials. But demurers are filed in court which must be disposed of first by the court before the jury trials take place. This means next Spring (1909). Now the question arises, are Astoria people so anxious for the railroad to the Nehalem built from their side of the Pacific Ocean instead of from the Portland side that they will give the P. O. & S. Ry. Co. free rights of way for the remaining 10 miles desired, most of which are now in court? and that these 10 miles if procured and guaranteed by the Astoria people will be obtained so that construction can be commenced thereupon by October this year, subject to the condition that the deeds to these 10 miles are to be taken to and in name of the trustees for the Astoria Chamber of Commerce, subject to the special condition that such rights of way, deeds for the ten miles desired and to Saddle Mountain shall not be delivered to the Portland Oregon & Seacoast Railway has its railway completed and equipped with passenger cars running thereon, on or before 18 months from the time the last of such deeds are obtained by the name of the Astoria trustees, it being specially conditioned that those rights of way suits now in Judge McBride's court shall be part and portion of these 10 miles rights of way deeds to be taken prima loca in name of Astoria trustees.

Pardon me saying if some assurance within 25 days cannot be obtained of these 10 miles right of way being taken to in the name of Astoria trustees on above conditions the right of way suits will still be continued in court, but construction from the Portland end of the line will assuredly be commenced within this year to the Nehalem country separately.

WILLIAM REED.

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