

Happenings in and About Tacoma

THE TACOMA FIREBOAT MATTER.

After the usual amount of delay and figuring on a fireboat Tacoma is about as far away as ever when it comes to a fireboat, and is more distant than before when it comes to service from the tug Fearless, of the Tacoma Tug & Barge Company's fleet, which, only in exceptional cases, will be sent to fires. This is due to the fact that some weeks ago this company sent a bill to the city amounting to \$2,000 for service rendered by this boat in protecting the water front while the boat was in port. After several weeks of investigating Councilman Giblett states that the company has been paid for the services by owners of the different properties, and that the city will not stand for the bill. The time the Fearless has been in service amounts to eight years.

Probably the Tacoma Tug & Barge Company have been compensated by some of the firms, but it can be said that there is a bunch of them and some that "holered" loudest when their plants were going up, or in danger, that did not even thank the company for sending the boat to them, though they managed to remember the phone number of the tug boat office when the boat was wanted.

But the city should now get down to business and let the councilman who chased up accounts paid the Tacoma Tug & Barge Company look up the local builders and get them started on a boat. A movement is on foot by one of the concerns to get out a boat, and it will be a good one. While the plans presented may be for a wooden craft, it will be the best that can be built.

Also forget Ballin, of Portland, and the Portland boat. A little investigation of this boat shows a few things that the committee sent by Tacoma did not find out. These are a weak hull, so tender that it had to be reinforced within a few weeks after the boat went in commission; so much vibration that the boilers have to be extra fastened. This is largely due to the arrangement of discharge pipes; colored glass and filigree around the trunk of the house; forward nozzle that cannot be trained below a horizontal line; a Ballin patent water tower that when last used blew off and almost killed one of the crew; no tow bits for handling a vessel should this be desired. These are but a few of the weaknesses of the Portland boat.

TO BE A BIG FACTOR IN TRANS-PACIFIC TRADE.

The trans-pacific service of the Osaka Shosen Kaisha S. S. company was inaugurated recently when the Tacoma Maru cleared from Hongkong on her way to Tacoma. The Tacoma Maru will call at Keelung, Shanghai, Moji, Kobe, Yokkaichi, Shimidzu, and Yokohama on her way to the Sound. The line is being established in connection with the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad. She is carrying a large amount of Chinese cargo, larger than has been carried by any vessel since the general boycott was declared on the Japanese merchant marine by Chinese merchants.

The Osaka Shosen Kaisha operates one of the principal lines of steamers between Hongkong and Formosa, and officials of the company say that had it not been for subsidies the boycott would have led to discontinuance of this service several months ago. Inasmuch as Chinese merchants are anxious to promote trade relations with the

United States, American shippers express a belief that the Osaka Shosen Kaisha's new American line will not come under the ban as severely as would be the case with a new line of Japanese steamers plying between Oriental ports exclusively.

On her first voyage west present indications are that the cargo of the Tacoma Maru will be one of the largest to leave Puget Sound since the interstate commerce commission required transcontinental carriers to publish the inland proportion of their through rates. Included in the cargo will be a large amount of machinery built by the Allis-Chalmers company of Milwaukee, specially for new Japanese factories, considerable railroad material and equipment.

The Chicago, Milwaukee & Puget Sound railroad's new Ocean dock will be practically completed in time to berth the Tacoma Maru at Tacoma and the Oriental cargo collected by the Milwaukee railroad system has begun to arrive in Tacoma for transshipment.

CAPT. BURLEY DISCUSSES HORSES AND BUZZ BUGGIES.

As to a choice between a horse and an automobile, according to Capt. Sid. Burley, the well-known pilot, there is only one guess. Any one who has ever seen Capt. Burley and his nag knows which way the skipper guesses.

"The trouble is," says Capt. Burley, "that automobiles have too many lay days. Just look at the bunch we have here in front of the office. Here is a whole fleet of them. A man can take his choice and find about all there is built in the way of machines and find them out of whack here. It keeps a man guessing whether it is a total constructive loss, or a mere question of average, and a bit of damaged cargo. You bet! I got out of those machines in time. The farthest I got was one of those motor cycles. The government still has a claim against me for running into that Puyallup Indian tepee here during hop picking, and that put me wise to these gas machines.

"Now I can take my old copper painted horse and work along the channel at a fair speed. These fellows can beat me maybe for two ports but no more. Then I get mine. Here you will meet them along the beach. One has a monkey wrench and another a crow bar and all of them cussing. No sir! Give me my little air cooled horse, with his sack of oats, and I'll stick the best automobile that ever had seven men tinker with it."

NEW PILE DRIVING CO. FOR TACOMA.

One of the new Tacoma building concerns ready for business is the Tacoma Pile Driving & Construction Company, Inc., with offices in the Pacific Cold Storage building.

This company has just completed a new pile driver and with its other interests in this line is prepared to handle all classes of work. The driver will be in charge of Ernest Little, who has been engaged in this line of work for many years.

The business men interested in the new concern are Thomas Burley, President; Robert McCullough, Treasurer, and Ernest Little, Secretary. The firm has a line up on a great deal of work and the concern promises to be soon branching out on big contracts.