

Oswego Weekly Commercial Advertiser.

VOL. VII, NO. 13.

OSWEGO, WEDNESDAY MORNING JUNE 21, 1871.

1.50 PER YEAR

Railroad Convention.

Pursuant to call, the convention to consider the project of a railroad from Boston to Oswego, assembled in the Court House in this city at 12 noon on Wednesday.

The convention was called to order by Hon. D. G. Fort, of Oswego, on whose motion G. S. BACHELLER, of Saratoga, was elected temporary chairman.

Messrs. Hastings, of Oswego, and Hill, of Rome, were appointed a committee to conduct Gen. Bachehler to the chair.

On taking the chair, Gen. Bachehler thanked the convention for the honor conferred, and hoped the action of the convention would be such as to unite the efforts of all interested in the great enterprise which it had assembled to consider. He referred to the beautiful Lake Ontario, and the port of Oswego in which was concentrated the commerce of the great chain of lakes. On the other hand was Boston seeking a connection by railroad. Located as he was, he felt a deep interest in the location of the proposed road, but local considerations should not stand in the way of the friends of this enterprise. The first object was to connect the Atlantic and the lake coasts, upon the most favorable grades. On the completion of the Hoosac tunnel, and the construction of this road upon the most favorable line, Boston via Oswego would be as near to Chicago and the Western lake cities as New York, and perhaps nearer. When these contemplated enterprises shall be completed, the old time commercial supremacy of Boston not only might be restored, but it would be the inauguration of a new era of prosperity. The completion of that enterprise was fraught with an abundance of prosperity to Boston, Oswego, and all points upon its line.

Gen. Bachehler's remarks were in most excellent taste and spirit, and were received with much applause by the Convention.

On motion of G. Mollison, of Oswego, H. L. Davis, of Oswego, and B. M. Hough, of Lewis County, were elected temporary secretaries.

On motion of D. G. Fort a committee of five was appointed by the Chair to report a permanent organization, as follows: Daniel G. Fort, Oswego, D. Udey, Rome, G. P. White, Westfield, Mr. Crockett, Boston, M. B. Hough, West Leyden.

(On motion of Mr. C. Ames, of Oswego, E. H. Derby, of Boston, G. S. Bachehler, of Saratoga, C. Comstock, of Rome, G. B. Anderson, of Boonville, and Gerrit Smith of Peterboro, were appointed a committee to draw up resolutions for the consideration of the Convention.

On motion of Mr. Comstock, Hon. C. Ames was added to the Committee.

Mr. Fort stated that the local committee of arrangements had arranged that at four o'clock p. m., carriages would be provided to take the delegates of the convention to points of interests in the city, giving them a view of the harbor from the land side, etc., that at 9 o'clock to-morrow morning, a steamer had been placed at the service of the committee by Mr. C. Allison, agent of the Northern Transportation Company, and that the delegates would be given an excursion upon the lake, that a view of the city and harbor might be had from the lake side.

Gilbert Mollison Esq., President of the Lake Ontario Shore Railroad, was called out. In reply he stated briefly the prospects of that important enterprise. Fifty miles of the road would be put under contract immediately. When completed it would form an important link in the great through route which this convention had assembled to consider.

It reminded the Convention that at present one-third of all the commerce of the lakes passes over Lake Ontario. On the enlargement of the Welland Canal, which was soon to take place, this would be reversed, and Lake Ontario would command two-thirds of the lake commerce. He referred to the great commercial importance of Oswego, which has more foreign trade than any other port upon the chain of lakes, and in point of foreign trade was the sixth port of the Union. With a direct connection with Boston this and the western trade would be greatly increased.

It stated that the D. L. & Western coal depot in this city was laying down a thousand tons of coal per day in this city. The Delaware and Hudson Company via the Midland, would lay down an equal amount, while the Southern Central, when it had a connection with Oswego, would give an equal amount of coal business. All this would bring a market over the lake, and would bring commerce to Oswego in return. The D. L. & W. was at this time laying down large quantities of iron to find transit over the lake. All this class of business will furnish freight to vessels which bring westward products to Oswego to find shipment eastward over the roads, touching the lake here. There was no limit to the prospective increase of the business of Oswego, and all her citizens were ready to extend the hand of welcome to the city of Boston. Mr. Mollison's remarks were received with applause by the Convention.

Hon. G. I. Post, one of the directors of the Lake Shore road, was called out and briefly confirmed the remarks of President Mollison.

On motion of Hon. B. Doollittle, the Convention took a recess until 2 o'clock, and it was decided to hold an evening session.

The Convention was called to order by Gen. Bachehler the temporary Chairman.

Hon. D. G. Fort, Chairman of the Committee on permanent organization reported as follows:

For President, Hon. E. H. DERBY, of Boston.

Vice Presidents, Hon. A. S. Page, Oswego, B. J. Jervis, Rome, Wm. Lewis, Steuben, Henry W. Bentley, Boonville, Secretaries, Henry L. Davis and H. C. Tauner, Oswego.

Hon. John Stryker of Rome, and A. Bronson of Oswego, were appointed a Committee to conduct Mr. Derby to the chair.

On taking the chair, Mr. Derby addressed the Convention at considerable length. He felt honored by being called upon to preside over so intelligent a body of gentlemen having under consideration so important an enterprise; and he was happy that Boston was to be at one end of the line and Oswego at the other. The coupling of Boston and Oswego was an auspicious omen for an early celebration of the nuptials of the two Massachusetts was a little State upon the map, but it was sometimes found that a person of small size had the grit of a full-grown man.

Maine was a child of Massachusetts, and she was desirous of stepping over her parent and grasping the hand of the bride of the parent.

The speaker then humorously alluded to the peculiar configuration of Massachusetts, and suggested that the Cape Cod Peninsula was the finger of the State pointing outward, as an indication that its commerce was in that direction. Massachusetts seeks a connection with the Lakes, to secure its share of the commerce of the West. Massachusetts is a land of Rock and water. It was a great consuming State. Nature has given Massachusetts rock and water, and designed to give it coal and iron. But the coal and iron had got into Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and somehow these provinces had become separated from Massachusetts, to whom they rightfully belonged. Massachusetts had twice taken their provinces from the French, and had foolishly given them up to Great Britain.

We have the water and the rocks. With the rocks they construct dams across streams of water for manufacturing purposes. There were a great many cold water mills in Massachusetts, and water was put to an astonishing number of uses. They begin by using it in cups; then upon their turbine water-wheels; then in the boilers of her steam-engines; then to float their massive vessels to all parts of the world.

Boston does not export to gather manna from her fields like the children of Israel of old. Her manna fields are in the west, and she hopes to reach them by the way of Oswego. She is looking for great trains laden with the produce of the west, to be deposited in her storehouses for consumption and distribution, and Boston is looking to Oswego for the realization of her hopes.

Massachusetts is the mother of men—men who know their duties well, and knowing dare perform them. Massachusetts is one great industry. It produced over eight hundred million yards of cloth and twelve hundred thousand cases of boot and shoes.

The speaker alluded to the situation of Oswego and its river, and said he did not know what Massachusetts would do if it had not every New York grain field, but if he had control of the Oswego water-power he would take it to Massachusetts and make his fortune.

He then spoke of the enterprise of Massachusetts, and its position as to wealth and business among the States of the Union. The West should be connected through Oswego with the Hub. The State had a debt of \$20,000,000 at the close of the Revolution, and its estimated valuation at the time was \$20,000,000. Its present vast wealth was the creation of its industry.

He then described the great wealth of Boston and its capacity for business. Its population now reaches three fourths of a million, with a wealth of one thousand millions, and paid the Government taxes in one thousand millions of dollars in goods. In commercial importance it was next to New York, and in business and wealth was the second city of the Union. It was the second commercial route of this great country. The Savings Banks of Massachusetts increased their deposits at the rate of one million dollars per month. Boston is in Oswego to-day to speak for herself. Boston was designed for New York. The Mohawk river was designed by nature to flow to Boston, but it had been deflected by the Green Mountains, and turned out of its course to New York. And with the advantage of the Hudson, New York was still out of the way. The route to Europe was by the way of Boston. He then described the great trade of Boston with Europe and the British Provinces. Much has been said of the harbor of Portland. The speaker then described the extent and advantages of the Boston harbor, which he pronounced the best upon the coast. It was completely land locked, and protected from storms. It had two entrances, one of shallow depths, through which small vessels could pass with convenience, but no vessels of war. The other was so narrow that but two vessels could pass at once, and was completely defended by forts. It was stronger than Sebastopol, and an enemy could not enter the port of Boston with thirty-four feet of water. It had a length of fifteen or sixteen miles, with an average width of one mile. It was competent to hold all the shipping of the world, and the seaboard combined. It was such a harbor that Boston offers to Oswego. Send us your grain, flour and

umber, and we will take care of it. The speaker then alluded to the excess of the consumption of grain in Massachusetts over the produce, and estimated it to be over seventy million of bushels, which it was looking to Oswego to furnish. He alluded to the English consumption of American grain, which he estimates to be annually about 160 million bushels, which could be best supplied by Boston, from the West via Oswego.

To accomplish this the railroad is necessary. The canals are a thing of the past they make no improvement. We must hereafter depend upon the railroads to meet the great wants of the public.

We have heard of the "beef-eaters of England." England wants vast quantities of our meats. Cannot we furnish it? The west has four hundred millions of corn. Cannot the corn be exported to Europe? We doubt our exports? He then spoke of the condition of England as the mother of this country, and thought we should rejoice to receive her children, and feed the mother in her old age.

The speaker then greeted the Hon. Alvin Bronson as the pioneer of the Lake Ontario commerce, and spoke of the rapid increase in value of the commerce of Oswego, which was three millions of dollars in 1851, thirteen millions in 1860, and doubtless fifteen millions now per annum.

Who can doubt that at the end of the next twenty years it will reach seventy-five millions of dollars? It will require all of the railroads and all of the canals to accommodate it. This shows something of the obligations which rest upon the men of this day.

The speaker in a masterly manner described the growth of railroads in the United States, and in Massachusetts, and their agency in causing the growth of towns, villages and cities. But we have not the space to follow him minutely.

He then proceeded to show the enterprise of Massachusetts in opening up avenues of commerce, in the absence of water communications, such as nature had provided for New York, and the effect it had upon its prosperity.

He described the great engineering difficulties of the western road leading from Boston to Albany. Its earnings at the time of construction had been estimated at \$100,000 annually. They now reach \$8,000,000 annually. Boston had connection with the lakes by the way of Rouse's point and Ogdensburg. It had also the Albany road.

But it was not satisfied. It sought the lakes at Oswego, which would by a line much shorter. Sixty thousand bushels of grain are now under way, and one hundred and fifty thousand bushels are under contract to transport existing routes. But Boston is not satisfied. She must have a better route by the way of Oswego.

Thirty years ago he left the western line for the Fitchburg line, which was a part of the plan to reach the lakes by the way of the Hoosac Tunnel, because Boston wanted a better line. He then described the great success of the Fitchburg road, and said that the Fitchburg road is now the moving lever which prompted the tunnel route, and holding out its arms towards Oswego.

He then described the various routes already contemplated, which netted to a great connection between Boston and Oswego, and showed that only about ninety or one hundred miles, if existing lines were used, remained unfinished to complete this important route. The Fitchburg company was the naturally ally of Oswego. He described the Hoosac Mountain, and the effect Massachusetts had made to penetrate it, which would be complete in two years, by which time the connection ought to be made. He also spoke of the rival routes through this State, and thought the ninety or one hundred miles of uncompleted road, by the way of Rome, could be built for \$30,000 per mile.

He alluded to the various ports upon Lake Ontario claiming the terminus of this route, but said Oswego presented attractions which could not be neglected. He alluded to Mr. Mollison's statements in relation to coal and iron, and said that Boston must have a terminus which could give return freight to vessels. This Mexico Bay, Sackett Harbor and Henderson would not give. He spoke also of the Midland and its connection with New York.

He would make Oswego the terminus of the Boston Road on that account. He again spoke of the water-power of Oswego, and said Boston would seek this point on that account, as it was important that its terminus should be at a live city. Other points presented attractions, but all things considered, Oswego must be the objective point.

He concluded by saying that Oswego and the State of New York must do its share towards building the road. They must organize the company and take the initiatory steps and commence the work.

Mr. Derby's remarks were listened to with deep interest, and he took his seat amid the applause of the Committee.

Hon. Alvin Bronson, of Oswego, was then introduced, who read a most interesting paper upon "The Commerce and Improvements of New England and the Lakes."

The object of this Convention, as indicated by the call of a Committee, is, by discussion, deliberation and interchange of opinions, to prompt future action in the field for commerce between New England and the Lakes, and particularly between Boston, the commercial capital of New England and Oswego, at the foot of the lakes, and the seaboard combined. It was such a harbor that Boston offers to Oswego. Send us your grain, flour and

origin commerce of New England sixty-seven years ago, and was driven from the sea board to the lakes by the lawless acts and violations of neutral rights by European belligerents, England and France, which it was looking to Oswego to furnish. He alluded to the English consumption of American grain, which he estimates to be annually about 160 million bushels, which could be best supplied by Boston, from the West via Oswego.

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England or Eastern U. States is far greater than the export trade, and the question arises, can this trade be attracted to the St. Lawrence through Lake Champlain? The course and destination of this trade will depend as much, perhaps more, on the skill, enterprise, capital and credit of its competitors, as on natural facilities.

The railroad, the canal, (ship and large) the river and steam engine, are elements in this competition. In a former paper, on a kindred subject, I said, "The Railroad, the great improvement of the age, is limited in power and efficiency only by carefully balancing cost against utility."

The railroad holds signal advantages over most other means of transport. By celerity of movement it monopolizes the rapid travel and the valuable commodities demanding safety and dispatch. It seeks commerce inaccessible to lakes, rivers and canals, and prosecutes it with vigor and success when these are closed.

Engineer Johnson, in his essay on the navigation and improvements of the lakes and their connection with the ocean, gives us a ship canal from Ontario, at Oswego, and from Champlain at White Hall, to the Hudson at Albany, but gives no opinion of their utility. I am of opinion that a ship canal will not improve their channels, and that the barge, probably aided by the tug boat, will give the best facilities to the three water lines. Even on the St. Lawrence I should doubt the utility of a ship canal, if great progress and a large expenditure had not already been made on this project.

With the numerous projects for improvements in the broad West, and their rapid progress to completion, with a \$600,000 appropriation for the Welland Canal, now at the disposal of the engineer or contractor; we may have a flood of trade upon us before we have prepared our best channels for its disposition, and find the Hoosac Tunnel and its connections are none too early.

The interesting and important problem now demanding attention, is, who shall have the Trunk Road, uniting New England and the Atlantic with the lakes.

Massachusetts and Boston, her capital, have by an early movement and bold enterprise established a strong claim to precedence. Her large population, accumulated wealth, high credit and extended commercial dealings, seem to enable her to give better effort and larger remuneration to these worthy structures than any other locality. With ample means, controlled by will and precedence, may we not hope and expect to soon see the Boston, Hoosac & Oswego Trunk Road completed, and taking rank with the great enterprises of the day.

At 6 o'clock the convention adjourned until evening.

Evening Session.

The Convention was called to order by the President. He stated that it had been suggested that the friends of the different routes be heard from.

Mr. Comstock of Rome addressed the Convention. He had listened with great interest to the remarks of the President. He had not undertaken the importance of the proposed line connecting Boston with Oswego. Within the past few days he had given a route from North Bay, on the Midland to some point on the Boston & Troy road near Eagle Bridge, about 125 miles. From Eagle Bridge to the tunnel, the road was already completed. From the tunnel to Boston it was in operation. From North Bay to Oswego it is forty-seven miles. He had been from North Bay to Gloverville. From North Bay, Rome is on a water level, and an air-line. Nothing more need be said on that portion of the route. From Rome to Gloverville he found the line presenting but few engineering difficulties and the grades favorable, and the route entirely feasible. The greatest engineering difficulties would be found east of East Canada Creek. But these difficulties, whatever they may be, are common to every line talked of, because they all pass over the same range of hills. The most favorable route would not go far from Gloverville, a flourishing business village of about six thousand inhabitants. He had not been over the route east of Gloverville, but he understood that whether the route went by Saratoga or Ballston, the grade was favorable. Coming from the east the proposed route would adopt a common line until it reaches the Norway Hills. The Rome route would go south of those hills, while the Boonville route would go north of them. The speaker described the fertility and flourishing condition of the country. The Rome route would pass through a vast region of valuable forest of hemlock and spruce not now utilized. The country would furnish much business for the road. A road from Rome to Ballston or Saratoga would pay as a local road.

The President called upon some one to speak for the Wertenerville route. No one responded.

The President then called upon Mr. Hough to speak for the Boonville route. He had been over the route. From Oswego the line was over a level route to the Salmon River, to cross that river wherever agreed upon. It then followed up that river to the town of Lewis, in Lewis Co. crossed the Mohawk in Lewis County. Descends towards the Black River to Boonville. From Boonville it passes up the Black River to Benson. Crosses the West Canada Creek, goes up the valley of Black Creek. From that point by an easy grade to that point in the town of Salisbury where it intersects the Rome line. From Oswego for nearly 40 miles through a cultivated country, then it passes

through 15 or 20 miles of ... valuable, but just coming into market. That region extends to within ten miles of Boonville. There it comes into a beautiful and rich country. It has been pronounced by engineers a favorable railroad route. Its friends desired that it should be examined and allowed to stand upon its merits.

In reply to a question from the Chair, Mr. Hough said that going east the grade would not be more than 50 feet to the mile.

Mr. Tyler spoke for the Henderson line. They had a harbor at Henderson worth to Massachusetts \$2,000,000. He had supposed that Boston would build the road to the best harbor on Lake Ontario. But it looked here to-day as though Oswego has got the thing fixed. Mr. Tyler was loudly cheered. He went on to say that Henderson had the best harbor upon the lake, and would get the road, yet, in defiance of the Convention. Mr. Tyler spoke very emphatically and was greeted with cheers and laughter.

Mr. Stevens, of Watertown, spoke for his locality. He had no statistics, but spoke from general knowledge.

The Boonville route to Henderson had this advantage. It would not bleed Uncle Sam's pocket. He spoke of the valuable harbors at the foot of Lake Ontario. He supposed Boston's object was to secure a freight route without regard to passengers.

A thought the object could be secured by a route branching at Boonville, to the several ports. A road built to Boonville strikes a road already built to Carthage, which will soon be built to Watertown and Sackett's Harbor.

The best plan was to run to Boonville and thence to branch to the different harbors. He further alluded to the value of the water power of the Black River which he pronounced practically inexhaustible, as yet with only one rail-road to bring it into market.

Gen. Bachehler of Saratoga, was then called upon by the Chairman. From the convention in Saratoga in 1869, he had been a firm friend of the Boston and Oswego route. Boston had spent vast sums to complete the Hoosac Tunnel and the question now is what aid would the people touch by the road give.

The laws of engineering and the laws of trade must govern the selection of the road. He discussed the various routes very intelligently, and advocated the route pointed out by Mr. Comstock of Rome as the most practicable and feasible, presenting fewer engineering difficulties, and with no grades, either way of over 40 feet to the mile. All other things considered the best route from Boston to Oswego, was the one known as the Rome route. He discussed in a very intelligent manner the location of the road in his own locality and showed very clearly that the route by Saratoga was the most practicable and desirable. Gen. Bachehler is President of the Saratoga and Hoosac Tunnel Railroad Company and is perfectly familiar with the topography of that portion of the State. His remarks were listened to with much interest by the Convention. He spoke very eloquently in behalf of Oswego and the advantages it offers, and regarded the question of the termination settled. The road was to be from Boston to Oswego.

Mr. Bentley, of Boonville, was called out. He was in favor of a great through route from the Atlantic to the Lakes. He eloquently advocated the Boonville route. He denied the organization of a company, and the matter of location to depend upon the reports of the engineers.

Hon. Gerrit Smith, was called out. He was in the city two years ago, to exchange thoughts with the Portland people. He now was here for the purpose of exchanging thoughts with the Boston people. He would be glad to have Oswego married to Boston and Portland. Then so would have but three husbands, not a great number in these days of free love and Mormonism. Boston would promise to love Boston, the best of all her husbands provided she could get the most money out of Boston. Mr. Smith's remarks on this point were quite facetious.

New York, Montreal, Portland, and Boston will wage a sharp competition for the greatest commercial prize in the world—the grain trade of the west. The great surplus of this trade will find its way to the port of Lake Ontario. The largest portion of it will come by water.

Horace Grosley had been visiting out west, where a town had been named after him. After witnessing the operation of irrigation, he remarked that rain was a blunder; some had looked upon Lakes Ontario and Erie as a blunder. He did not. He thought there would be better connection between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

The important point was to consider where this surplus product of the west will be gathered. Will it be Little Sioux? Will it be Henderson? In these days wharfare will be cheap. I think it will be in Oswego. The distance from Boston will be about the same. Oswego is forty miles nearer the great west than Henderson. Oswego, although artificial, has a great and safe harbor. The government is building it. The Midland Railroad will build another. We shall not lack harbors.

There is here an important city. Here will be in a few years from fifty to a hundred thousand people. If Boston and Portland will make Oswego their terminus there will be a city here of 200,000 inhabitants. Boston needs the impetus which the competition of a great city never fails to give.

Oswego has a good water-power. Here collects the coal and iron for return freights, which are not to be found at

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