

Rec'd Feb. 25/913



CUSHMAN HOUSE

W. T. PUTNAM, PROPRIETOR.

Feb. 16

LAKE CUSHMAN, WN.

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My dear Mr. Drane:-

"Chinook". If you look this word up in the Cyclopaedia you will doubtless find that it is the name of a tribe of Indians on the Pacific Coast, but to us who live here it means the first mormon of the unborn spring.

Many & many a time have I gone to bed with the snow deep & crusty and the mercury in the twenties, to be warmed later by a slamming door & hear the rush of wind outside, and I never fail to jump from bed, throw open the door into the wood shed and find the thermometer 40° 45° & sometimes even 50°.

From far out on the Pacific come these warm, moisture laden winds which sweep over our mountains and lie up the snow as nothing else can. It has a strange perfume and the earth seems to lift its head from its covering of snow to breathe it.

And then comes the rain, not the furious down pour which you get in your eastern storms but a steady easy going stream which is the very multiplication of effect without mention, the great snow caps which top the big steep waves & disappear the snow vanishes & the rivers begin to boom, the railroads ~~begin~~ look to their bridges and the farmers get ready to drive the stock to the high ground.

Ever since the first of June. we have been under snow & the temperature has varied from 20° at night to 40-45° at noon & ~~now~~ the snow has only settled, not melted. But now the rain has come & after two days of light warm winds, and alternate showers and sunshine the real thing is here and the snow is going fast.

To the east of us across the lake & 2 miles or so away there have been 200 men lying idle in the camps with the timber on the ground & all bucked up into logs & the snow so deep that the highest logs ~~are~~ ^{were} mostly slight straight long ~~and~~ elevations from the dizzying white covering. Down on the salt water the mills were all out of logs and the boats filled with orders & hardly a wheel turning any where. About two weeks ago our camps were swamped & with 4 ft more of snow the men dug out the logs, burrowed under them to look on the lines, only perhaps 5 feet when the log was hauled out by the derrick that they had been working on some worthless windfall. The Dept. told us yesterday that the first Chinook blew 4 hours and took off 16 in. of snow.

Twice I have made the trip out, once wading through it 10 miles & packing a big 1500* horse with 2.10 gal cans of cream. 200 lbs. Today I made the last trip but I rode a second horse & made it more comfortable, coming back yesterday.

East of us, across the Sound, the situation is full of possibilities. The G.N. the N.P. & the Milwaukee have been struggling with the snow for 6 weeks, trains have been stopped from the trains by slides, stalled in gorges, division points full of held up cars. Though for some time past conditions have been better, but if a long continued warm wind & rain occurs, bridges will go out &



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191

damage & loss of all kinds more. With us situated on the east & leeward side of the coast range the danger is not so great & I have never seen a big freshet as late as this but once, but then I'd risk much to be rid of the snow of which we still have some 18 or 20 inches.

In November we had a party of 5 surveyors from Seattle here platting out their storage basin which according to the figures will have ~~some~~ a shoreline when full of some 2 3 miles. For the past month there has been another party of 3 measuring the flow of the river. As I said the weather has been cold & with more snow than ordinary in the mountains the cold has held it back & the flow has been only about the normal for August. What Seattle will do in the matter is still undecided, it has reached the limit of its indebtedness, and such was a few days ago brought against the assessor to compel him to assess property at its full value instead of about 60% as at present, with the avowed purpose of allowing the city to issue more bonds. There is surely a warning coming to the people some of these days. There seems to be great inefficiency in the departments of the city government & more than a suspicion of crookedness in many cases.

Still a prominent attorney wrote me only a few days ago that the people undoubtedly will vote for all bonds on the ticket. Here at Austin cities, S. is full of people who have little or no property at stake ~~and~~ who will vote for anything which promises an expenditure of public money.

I enjoyed your Christmas letter & "The Trunks with a Louney" greatly. What a beautifully easy style Thomson possessed. We had beautifully open weather at Lewis but a few days after the snow began & it kept us very busy shovelling roofs & keeping paths open. Yesterday saw pussy willows in bloom brought on by the reflection from the snow - before the snow is all gone the trilliums will be in bloom, & the yellow violets will carpet the ~~the~~ woods. The alders & hazels have their catkins almost ready to burst now. I long to see them out. Our work at present is sawing the year's wood, of which it takes about 150 cords. 4x8 & 20 inches long. & some fire place wood 3 ft long. Write me when the spirit moves you. All join me in best wishes for the new year & with thanks for your remembrance I am

Very sincerely yours.

H. J. Putnam



Putnam, William T. 1913. "Putnam, William T. Feb. 16, 1913." *Walter Deane correspondence*

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