

The West Shore.

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RAMBLING NOTES ON OLDEN TIMES.

BY W. L. ADAMS, M. D., A. M., J. L. D.

Many of us in younger days read an account of the expedition of Lewis and Clark across the Continent in 1803, with the most intense interest. We can even now, almost see their camp fires, all along up the Missouri River, feel the intensely bitter frosts that sent their spirit thermometers down to thirty degrees below Fahrenheit zero, and follow them wending their way among savages till they drank on the same day waters that ran into both oceans. Our interest in the narrative was increased as they descended the hitherto unexplored wilds that lined the banks of the Columbia, and became doubly so as they neared the end of their journey, and gradually drew back the curtain that had as yet concealed from Christendom the cream perhaps of the New World—a land where for aught we know, would yet be realized by some of us, the fond anticipation of Queen Isabella and her protegee, who saw towards the setting sun a land of plenty—rivers of crystal purity, mountains white with perennial snows, rich in golden ore, and washed at their base by an ocean of peace.

Their rapid journey down the Columbia, their gloomy winter among the fogs and storms near Astoria, and their hazy trip homewards by the same route in the Spring; were unsatisfactory to us who desired a more extended look at the country; Tom Jefferson had sent them so far to reveal, nevertheless, we believe the country was there. We spent hours in gazing at that part of North America as laid down on the map, wondered what kind of a country it was, believed in it, fancied we might some day see it, and felt positive that an empire in population, another New England would ere long rest on the Columbia and its tributaries. We saw it imaged on the brain, in the dim distance, far beyond the western cloud banks, just under the brilliant colors that shot up from the setting sun, with no path leading to it, save a narrow trail through almost impenetrable forests bristling with scalping knives, across roaring rivers, and through rocky defiles, that none but savages and daring adventurers would ever essay to pass.

Long years afterwards our trip across the Continent embracing six months of ox team travel changed our views of the route, but more than realized our fondest anticipations of the country. How well we remember halting our team near thirty years ago on the head waters of the Colorado, and after gazing back along the road behind us, leading through narrow defiles, and over countless rugged mountain spurs we exclaimed: "the man who thinks a railroad can ever be built through this country is a fool."

Time has shown that scientific engineering was able to open up ways that we who followed Indian trails knew not of. The Willamette Valley, was then but sparsely settled, but the cordial welcome extended to new comers, the anxiety manifested by all that we should settle in their immediate neighborhood, the unlimited range for our skeleton cattle, over grass covered prairies, the fertile character of the soil, the exhaustless forests everywhere adjacent to the valleys, the purity of the brooks and rivers, fed by mountain springs, its mild and healthy climate, and its beautiful scenery, made us all

feel as though we were more than paid for the hardships of the trip. We realized the wish of him who, tired, and disgusted with the hollow pageantry, selfish avarice, and fawning sycophancy of a society where deception, falsehood, trickery and dishonor, were fast becoming respectable as a part of legitimate "business"—cried out

"Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness."

We never expected to live to see a railroad, and didn't care much if we didn't. We hardly dared to hope ever to see a steamboat, but rather wished we could, even if it were no faster than the one Fulton first propelled about as fast as a man could walk, to the astonishment of all the engineers of the world.

To see our rivers lined with steamboats,

tear up the old "punchoon" and lay down a lumber floor, to have a good gristmill in the neighborhood, with an honest miller to live on a piece of land with a title to it, to know that the products of our labor on it were our own—and then hungry and wearied with toil to sit down to a smoking hot dinner, prepared on a cook stove with puddings and coffee, with sugar on the table. We said Good Lord give us but these and we'll ask for no more, for our cup of bliss will surely be full.

This we hoped for some day but were not sanguine about seeing it, unless we happened to live to a good old age which, of course, we came here to do. The greatest need of that time seemed to be tobacco, which we loved passionately, but

into a coal black cone, and pinned together with wooden pegs, which the merchant sold by the yard. We soon filled our pocket with tea, and exhausted our funds paying for a yard of trail rope, which we deposited in the other pocket, and started for home thinking that Oregon was coming out, and that Portland was its commercial emporium. We now saw plainly why Oregon City was jealous of her rival twelve miles below. Coming events rapidly cast their shadows before after this, for it was not long till standing one day on the banks of the Yamhill near where Dayton now is, we saw a man gliding up the river in a skiff with a cook stove, or, what had been one, for the burnt, broken, and distorted fragments were patched together so

as to enable a close observer, to see what the thing had been before it was worn out and thrown away, to be picked up by some dayman, who having several tons of similar old iron stowed away in his stable in New York, shipped it as ballast, worked his passage round the Horn, and set up in Oregon City as a hardware merchant. The stove cost nine dollars and the lucky owner of it immediately took rank among us common folks, who hadn't nine dollars, as an aristocrat, outranking us in society as much as the hardware merchant and his family in Oregon City outranked mechanics and common merchants who only had a few rusty augers and Sandwich Island salt, dirt and lime mixed, to sell by the bushel measured. That stove put the devil's jealousy into the whole neighborhood. Let some snob who has money build a fifty thousand dollar house, and all flunkydrom feels an inferiority in his presence. Mrs. Jones with a five hundred dollar shawl drives devotion from the hearts of a



A VIEW NEAR DAYTON, W. T.

to ride on a railroad in Oregon, to pass through the locks at "Tum Chuck," to witness a city spring up on the banks of the Willamette River, daily papers filled with dispatches every morning from New York and London, a first class illustrated monthly, and wholesale stores crammed with all kinds of machinery, fancy articles and yankee notions, with even a decent wagon road leading to it, was more than we expected to see.

To be sure we expected that posterity would see all this and more; but the most we dared to ask for in our daily prayers was to be able to exchange our tin dishes for earthen, to swap off our ox team for a pair of horses and set of harness, to sling our old wooden mould board plow into the fence corner and hitch to a steel plow; to hear the hum of a threshing machine in harvest, to exchange our moccasins for a pair of cowhide boots, to see wheat worth fifty cents a bushel instead of thirty, to get our mail once a month instead of once a year across the plains, or, around Cape Horn, to have a post office nearer than thirty-five miles distant; to

some how, conscience or something else, made us ashamed to include the thing in our prayers. We trusted the women who started for that, as they generally raised a little and kept a "few hands" hanging up in the smoke house, which, woman like, they were always willing to "divide," as long as it lasted. It was in the Spring of '49 that the kind matron on whom we most depended told us as she tore open a twist and gave us a liberal half, it was the last "hand" she had on hand. It was green and mouldy but precious. It wasn't over three days afterwards, that we started to hunt a cabin thirty-five miles distant, surrounded by fir trees on the west bank of the Willamette, which they called a "Portland Shore." We found the trail that led through the woods, and footed it through the timber leaving pieces of an old ragged green blanket coat with a huge pocket on either side on the bushes through which we crawled. We found a shanty which though rather uninviting on the outside was magnificent within, for there our gladdened eyes saw several boxes of black tea and a coil of "trail rope" to acco wound

majority of women in church, and fills them with envy and a burning desire to have a five hundred dollar shawl too. We despise such weakness while we perhaps have symptoms of the same disorder—or, had then at least for we concluded to take a load of wheat to Oregon City, and by some great purchase become an aristocrat too. The result of our trip was a pair of heavy corduroy pants, which we bought at Dr. McLoughlin's store. The pants were all of one size—a good fit for a six-footer, weighing two hundred and twenty-five pounds. As we weighed just a hundred pounds less we cut a sorry figure in those corduroys as an aristocrat, at a select party, for the women all laughed, and said we had got on Dr. McLoughlin's breeches. We stoutly denied the soft impeachment and honestly narrated the purchase at the store. "Well," they said, "the doctor had all his clothes made in England and sent back his own pattern to make by." The *stium tum dignitate* we hoped for in society we didn't exactly find. So we donned the corduroys the next morning and repaired to the potato patch

through a dreary rain, which lasted all day, and carried barrels of water down our humbled back, and made us feel that at last we had seen the ocean come in diggin' a taty. If we had been weighed at night, as we dragged our weary feet homewards, we would no doubt have weighed, breeches, water, mud and what would be aristocracy there was inside of the corduroy's fully two hundred and twenty-five pounds.

AN OREGON WINTER.—The Roseburg (Douglas County) Plaindealer of January 15th, says:

Oats headed out, peas in bloom, raspberry and blackberry bushes blossoming and bearing, young potatoes on the vines, and the green grass growing all around, are a few things that Douglas county can boast of just at the present time; and we might add, a foot or more, of as good sticky black mud as any teamster could wish to cart through.

Clams in the shell are being barreled at Seattle and shipped to San Francisco.



BISHOP SCOTT GRAMMAR AND DIVINITY SCHOOL, PORTLAND.