

Some thirty scholars attend, and the branches taught are the elements of a common English school education. Besides, the Russian priests maintain a school. When the Russians were owners they had several efficient schools at this place, as the population then numbered about a thousand persons, and children from other parts of Alaska were sent here to be educated.

Just now the residents do not have their purses, only their patience taxed, the former is too limp and slender to stand it; the latter perforce elastic. Some time ago, nearly all of the present Russian and Creole population made a petition to their former government to be removed from Alaska since they are leading an undesirable and unprofitable existence in the country with its want of enterprise and administration of justice. Rumor now has it that a vessel will be chartered by the Consul at San Francisco, to convey those of their former subjects who may wish it from Alaska to Kamschatka or Siberia, where assistance will be furnished them to found new homes. This event is looked forward to with joyful anticipation by the dissatisfied Russians at Sitka, many of whom are not only destitute, but also claim that they have received maltreatment from the present authority.

In the upper part of the Town House is located the Masonic Lodge room. The mystic brothers have long since departed, and the billy goat on which, I presume, the candidates for admission were exercised, now roam the streets at large, butting unwary Indian boys.

Another notable edifice is the "Doubledecker," a two-story log house, tottering on its base, windows all broken, grimy, slimy, and dilapidated, in which nearly a hundred of the most wretched half-breeds of both sexes congregate making night hideous by their bawls, and day disgusting by their appearance, and both disagreeable by divers unqualified smells emanating from the unclean mass of filth in and about the house. It is the "Five Points" of the northern metropolis.

A waterpower sawmill, owned by the Russian-American (Ice) Company, turns out lumber, but as no competition encroaches on their field of labor, they charge \$20 per thousand, though Government formerly had lumber here furnished at \$9 30, currency.

After you have taken a stroll through the streets, which to the credit of the town, are pretty clean, partly provided with plank sidewalk, turn back and mount up to the Castle. It stands high on a bold rock projecting in the bay, where nearly eighty years ago the entrenched Indian gave successful battle to the assailing Russian and Aleut. This Castle, when built, was considered and doubtless was a very "knobby" edifice, inside splendidly equipped, the view from the crowning light-house tower magnificent, extending far out to the extinct volcano, Mount Edgecumbe, and beyond on the vast ocean, and over the town, the Indian village, the beautiful Silver Bay, with all the grandly timbered mountains surrounding town and bay. The governor of the Colony here used to hold high court, and the building was kept in fine trim, with surrounding terrace gardens. But the martial owners now, partly from the want of funds, and as is their prerogative, restricting and destroying rather than building up and encouraging, let the structure slowly decay.

Come down hence; we will go to the one local restaurant and inquire what the country affords. No beef-steaks, no veal, nor any mutton; none of that to be had. But venison, fish and fowl in abundance. A large deer if you very hungry, for a dollar and a half, a brace of ducks or geese for a

few cents, fish scarcely of any value, the largest salmon during the season selling for ten cents. Of vegetables, potatoes, cabbage, cauliflowers, turnips, onions and parsnips are raised and prosper; and this is about the sum total of agriculture resources, unless we add hay and berries. Cereals will not ripen oftener than once in three years, neither will peas; beans are out of the question; and though an enterprising resident, a Mr. Schmieg, has planted, experimentally, a few apple trees, and some tobacco, the success is not yet manifest.

Dinner over, the fragrant weed disappearing in curly wreaths of vapor; and being well fatigued after your voyage, retire. No bed bugs look over the hotel register for the number of your room, still they will find you all the same. It is too early in the season for mosquitos, and flees do not abide here. So sweetly slumber.

Hark! What now?

Aroused by a continuation of terrible yells, you wonder are the Indians excited to hostility and already sacking the town, slaying the invading pale face! Fear naught!

They have but their nightly recurring carousal, when their melodious strains rend the air far and wide. They have to-night brewed an extra supply of liquor, and are more than commonly "way up," so their exuberance finds an outlet in many an inspiring ditty sung by hundreds of voices, accompanied by bass drums and something that sounds like bones. At once a lull. Listen! The watchful sentry has raised his piercing voice.

"No. 1—Twelve o'clock—All's well." No. 2 repeats it. No. 3 echoes back the sound. Then No. 1 loudly proclaims: "All's well, all around;" and now slowly, in measured intervals, strikes his ponderous bell, twelve distinct times. The dying refrain is caught up by the bell of the second sentry, right over the Indian gate; and again twelve more strokes reverberate from the one on the hill at the magazine.

It is the midnight hour, and stillness now prevails, while the glittering Northstar high above seems motionless in wonderment. The Indians are all dead—drunk; their feast at an end, no longer will they disturb our repose, till renewed darkness gives the signal for another bout.

So, for this time, good night, and pleasant dreams.

CLIMATE AND DISEASES OF OREGON.

Owing to the physical conformation of the State, and the action of the thermal currents of the Japan sea, the climate of Oregon is *sui generis*. In fact it is a variety of climates, and at least two of the varieties are opposite. The western division has a mild, humid atmosphere and an equable temperature, while the eastern division from its altitude, and the presence of extensive ranges of mountains, has a dry but pleasant and variable climate. The first has really only two seasons, the wet and the dry; the latter has the four seasons of the Atlantic seaboard, only that the winters are shorter and milder, and the summers cooler and more equable. Snow seldom attains a depth sufficient to check travel even in the highest portions of Eastern Oregon, and the proprietors of the Boise Stage line assert that they have not missed a trip in several years by its accumulation. The winter commences late in December, and lasts from two to three months, generally the latter. The nights are often quite cold, owing to the dry, rare atmosphere, but they have not been known to cause any suffering by their severity. Work is carried on through

the winter in the larger portion of the mines, and ploughing is often done in February and generally in March. Snow frequently falls to a depth of twelve inches in the valleys, but the usual amount rarely exceeds one half this quantity. In the high mountainous region of Grant County, the snow fall reaches several feet some winters, but that is uninhabited except by a few miners who work there in the summer. It is no unusual occurrence to have the snow-fall limited to a slight covering, enough to alter the hue of the landscape, and very often, that remains on the ground only a few hours or days. There is a current peculiar to this region, called a Chinook wind, which clears away a heavy fall of snow in a few hours, and leaves not a vestige along its course, seemingly burning it up. This wind is a portion of the great south-easterly current which finds its way to the interior, and acts a most important part in the meteorological economy of the region. Its warm, moist character makes it an agreeable visitor, as it tempers the rarer and cooler atmosphere of the plateaus. Ice is formed every winter, but it does not attain a thickness exceeding a few inches. On rare occasions a severe winter is experienced; snow fall to a depth of twelve to eighteen inches, and covering the herbage, causes much suffering among cattle, as their owners never think of providing for them even in the coldest weather. During ordinary winters, cattle roam at large without any food than such as is furnished by artemisia and bunch grass; and without any shelter than that afforded by the lee of a hill or a copse, and they generally thrive well. The summer is usually dry, but little rain falling, and a rather limited quantity of dew. The cause of this is the absorption by the Cascade Range, which towers up from three to ten thousand feet, of the aqueous current from the ocean; which it dissolves into vapor around its crest, permitting a small portion only to spread over the rolling plateaus beneath. A heavy impenetrable mist may be seen on the slopes of the Cascades on a fine day in summer, yet not a perceptible vapor. This absence from any quantity of rain never causes a drought, so that crops planted are always sure. Were the pluvial fluid a little more abundant it would however do much good. The dry, sunny atmosphere and long summers of the eastern division, make it well adapted to the growth of maize, melons, sorghum and kindred products.

The autumn months are mellow and have a softness equal to those of Virginia. The garnering of the crops is a matter of no concern, for storms of any kind are unknown, hence farmers leave their products in the field until they are ready to attend to them, and this saves the building of granaries or storehouses.

Eastern Oregon has a cooler summer, and a warmer winter than those regions on the Atlantic coast having a more southerly location.—The heat in summer reaches 95 deg. occasionally, but owing to the rare atmosphere, it is never oppressively warm. No person has ever suffered from sunstroke, and that is in great contrast to the Atlantic States, where several deaths occur every year from its effects. We have no information relative to the rain-fall, but from the fact that copious showers descend in the spring, it may be safely inferred that from fifteen to twenty inches of rain fall annually. The quantity is governed by local causes, such as the presence of forests, mountains and altitude. The dry, fresh invigorating mountain air, peculiar to the region, is deemed the best on the coast for those suffering with consumption and

pneumonia, if the diseases are not chronic.

Snow falls occasionally, but it is a very rare occurrence to receive enough for sleighing. Its tarry is generally brief, and a few hours or at the utmost a few days witness its departure. These latter remarks are pertinent only to the Willamette Valley, for we have not heard of snow falling to any extent worth mentioning in the more southern region. Ice is formed some winters in the northern part of the Valley so as to be cut for use, but such has not been the case since 1870. The mildness of the winters is expressed by the number of snowy days in 1871, which was only eleven; and the snow-fall, nine inches in the aggregate. In 1872, there were but seven snowy days, and the snow-fall amounted to only two inches and eight-tenths. The prevalent idea that rain falls in excessive quantities in this State is erroneous, as a glance at the table of meteorology will prove. In 1871, the number of rainy days in the Willamette Valley, reached one hundred and fifty, and the rain-fall to nearly fifty inches, which would make the total of both rain and snow, about fifty-nine inches. In 1872 there were one hundred and forty-six rainy days; the rain-fall was forty-six and a half inches; the snow fall nearly three inches, which would make an aggregate of forty-nine inches and a half. This number includes showery days, or days in which some rain fell. During the winter of 1872, when the greatest suffering was caused in the Atlantic States by the rigorous cold, there was not half an inch of ice formed in Western Oregon, and pansies, jasmine and other varieties of flowers bloomed in the City of Portland, which is situated in the northerly and therefore coldest part of the Willamette Valley.

Heavy storms of any kind are unknown. The wind rarely attains a velocity of twenty miles an hour, indeed its mean for the day may be estimated at forty miles, or less than two miles an hour. One cause of this exemption is the mountain ranges which traverse the State, and break the force of a storm should it come from the ocean. The winds which prevail are confined to two general directions, one is the heated current of the winter, which blows from the southeast, and the other is the summer or northwest wind. A striking peculiarity of the climate, is its absence from destructive storms of hail or thunder.

The climate is deemed by physicians to be the most healthy in the world. A glance at the mortality report of the United States, will prove the correctness of the generally conceded healthfulness of the State. There are of course some diseases here as elsewhere, but they are as a whole very mild as compared to other countries. The only disease that might be termed indigenous, is a species of intermittent fever, peculiar to the low bottoms along some of the water courses, in the western portion of the State. Some persons suffer from rheumatism, but it is of a mild character and limited. For consumption physicians assert that the climate cannot be excelled.

In its climate, then, Oregon is peculiarly blessed, for destructive storms of hail, rain, snow or wind are unknown; droughts are never experienced; crops never fail; the winters are warm and pleasant; the summers cool and agreeable; herbage keeps green throughout the year, affording cattle an abundance of nutritious food; and finally, the State is the most healthy in the Union; advantages which should be appreciated by the inhabitants of Oregon.

The first number of an Arab newspaper has just been issued in Paris. It is intended for the instruction of the Arabs in Algeria.