

Island from the main land; and not being aware that an English trader, named Dixon, had in the previous year discovered and named the passage and the island formed by it, had called the latter Washington's Island, a name which it continued to bear in conjunction with its English name until within the last thirty years.

After the meeting of the vessels and the exchange of captains, the *Columbia* proceeded to Canton, where she arrived on the 6th of December, 1799. Capt. Gray there exchanged his cargo of furs for one of tea, and sailed again for Boston, by the Cape of Good Hope, arriving home in August, 1799, "having carried the American flag for the first time around the world."

Meanwhile, Capt. Kendrick, his imagination excited by Gray's account of his explorations, proceeded through the Strait of Fuca, determined to find its outlet or its connection with some inland sea. In this search he sailed entirely through the passage back of Vancouver's Island, and beheld with wonder the numerous channels and islands that make an archipelago of that portion of the Northwest coast. His discoveries were afterwards made use of by Meares to establish the "probable existence of the Northwest passage." "The *Washington*," he says, "entered the Straits of Juan de Fuca, the knowledge of which she received from us, and penetrating up them entered into an extensive sea, where she steered to the northwest and eastward, and had communication with the various tribes who inhabit the shores of the numerous islands that are situated at the back of Nootka Sound, and speak, with some little variation, the language of the Nootkan people. The track of the vessel is marked on the map (Meares' chart), and is of great moment, as it is now completely ascertained that Nootka Sound and the parts adjacent are islands, and comprehended within the great northern archipelago." In other places Meares speaks of the *Washington* having "sailed through a sea extending upwards of eight degrees of latitude"—all of which was written in support of a theory that the whole of Northwest America was a collection of islands.

On his "Observations" being attacked with ridicule by Dixon, before mentioned, Mr. Meares made the following explanation: "Mr. Neville, a gentleman of the most reputable character, who came home in the *Chesterfield*, a ship in the service of the East India Company, made that communication to me which I have made to the public. Mr. Kendrick, who commanded the *Washington*, arrived at China with a very valuable cargo of furs, previous to the departure of the *Chesterfield*; and Mr. Neville, who was continually with him during that interval, and received the particulars of the track from him, was so obliging as to state it to me."

As appears by this extract, Captain Kendrick took a valuable cargo of furs to China. After disposing of them, he employed himself for some time gathering up a cargo of sandal-wood among the islands of the Pacific; and was at last accidentally killed at Karakakooa Bay, in Owyhee, by a ball fired by mistake from an English vessel saluting

him. But for the publicity which Mr. Meares, in support of his own theories, gave to his discoveries, they might never have been known.

In the next chapter we will meet once more with Capt. Gray.

#### FROM MINNESOTA.

The following interesting letter is worth reading by all, but especially by such discontents who are enjoying but hardly appreciating the magnificent climate and endless natural resources of the Pacific Northwest:

CHESTERFIELD, Fillmore Co., Minn.,  
January 7, 1878.

MR. EDITOR: I have recently made the acquaintance of your paper in the office of the *Democrat*, published at this place. From boyhood, Oregon has always been invested with an uncommon degree of interest for me, which maturer years has not diminished. I have been pleased with your descriptions of its climate, soil and productions, the pictures of its varied scenery and its public and private buildings.

And while perusing the columns of the *WEST SHORE*, it has occurred to me that your Oregon readers might be

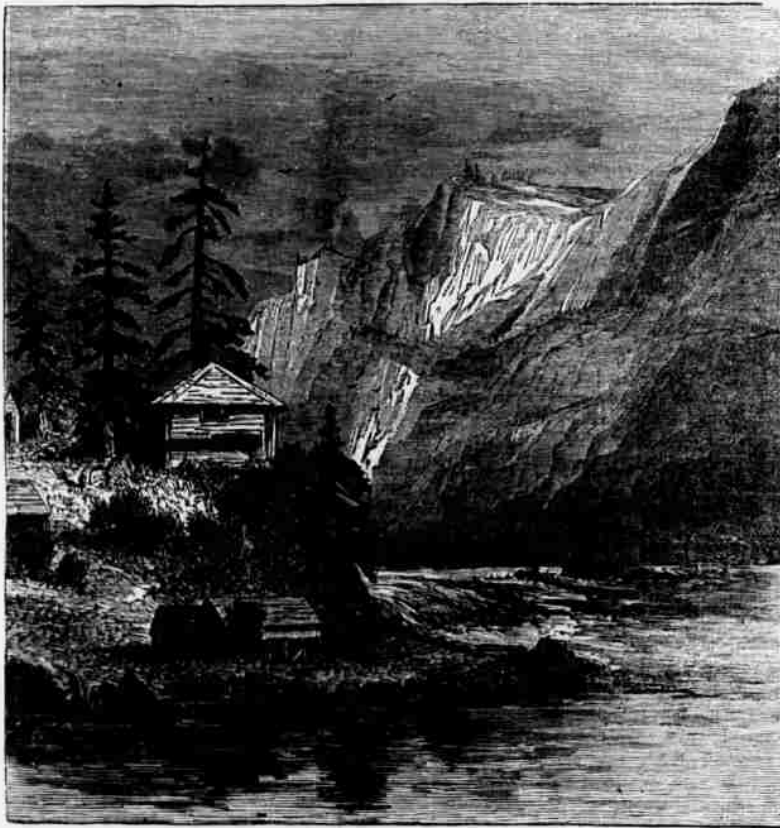
sunshine and fiercest storm. Our pleasant weather, of which we have a goodly share during the summer months, is unsurpassed by that of any portion of the United States, and the same may be said of the fury of our winter storms. Literal miles of grain fields, grass and flowers greet the view during the growing season, and blinding, driving snow in winter sometimes shut out of sight all objects however near, and buries the bewildered and frozen traveler in the same wintry winding-sheet that covers alike prairie and forest. The variations of temperature here are extreme, though by no means of daily occurrence; the mercury sometimes rising as high as 108 degrees in the warm season, while 40 degrees below zero, and even more, are amongst the possibilities of our winter weather—giving us the wide range of 148 degrees for the year.

In addition to the small grains peculiar to our northern temperate regions, corn matures excellently and most of the garden vegetables grow to great perfection; but we have pretty hard winter for five months in the year. I have seen the mercury down as low as 24 degrees below zero in the month of November; and eighty consecutive days have been recorded when the

year in the future. Since then winter has returned and 17 degrees below zero reached without much apparent effort, with a good prospect of still colder weather. There is yet ample time for us to get winter to our hearts' content before the season for it is over, and while the hills and valleys of Oregon are becoming green with the newly-grown grass and grain, we may look out through our frosted panes on the drifting snow, and wait, as patiently as we may, for the warmer sunshine and the tardy spring. RETLAW.

THE earliest patent for sewing machines was granted in England, in 1775, to C. F. Weisenthal. The first complete and practical machine for general purposes was patented in 1846, by Elias Howe, Jr., of Cambridge, Mass.

HISTORICAL ADVENTURES ON THE PACIFIC COAST.—The opening chapters of these interesting papers started in the July number of *THE WEST SHORE*. We will send a complete set up to January for 50 cents to any one who will subscribe for 1878.



THE MIDDLE BLOCK HOUSE—COLUMBIA RIVER.

#### MIDDLE BLOCK HOUSE.

The engraving shown on this page is of a historical spot located between the Lower and Upper Cascades on the Columbia river, and is known as the Middle Block House, built in 1855 by Capt. Wallen of the U. S. A., for the protection of settlers then living in the vicinity. Mr. Seymour, now of this city, then kept a store there in the cabin shown to the left a little below the Block House, and Mr. Griswold resided in the house shown to the left of the Block House and in a direct line with it. It was here that, in 1856, Mr. Griswold was shot by Indians whilst fleeing from his house to the block fort which was then in command of Capt. McPheely. Slowly but surely the resistless waves of time are wiping all these landmarks away. Both Mr. Griswold's house and Mr. Seymour's store have long since disappeared and the old fort serves only as an abiding place for bats and owls.

interested in a few lines from your more easterly sister of our great confederation of States. Some of your people have had a long personal acquaintance with Minnesota; most of them know her only as a new State in a distant part of our country, which has recently become prominent among the great wheat-supplying districts of the nation. But our state differs widely from Oregon in its natural features and climatic peculiarities. The greater part of its area is either level or a moderately-rolling prairie, broken occasionally into abrupt bluffs, with broad valleys between, and, in the vicinity of some of the streams, into craggy and perpendicular precipices. It has none of the mountains or magnificent trees of the west shore. There are a few respectable forests of deciduous trees, but few of pine or any other of the conifer family.

But a beautiful land is Minnesota in her summer dress, dreary and forbidding when the breath of the Frost King has sealed her lakes and rivers and wrapped her broad prairies in a shroud of gloom. Nowhere is there a greater contrast in the change of the season; nowhere does vegetation spring into life more rapidly under the warmth of summer, nor fall more suddenly before the autumn cold. It is a land of torrid heat and polar cold, of fairest

water did not drip from the eaves of the buildings, so intense and steady was the cold. Though free to say that such extremes of temperature very materially lessen the comfort of living in a variety of ways, the condition of our population does not argue that our climate as a whole is prejudicial to health. Our elevated position and inland situation gives us a dry, pure atmosphere thought by eminent medical men to be highly beneficial to persons with pulmonary diseases. But a knowledge of the severity of our winters does not appear to prevent a steady influx of population from all parts of the country.

Winter began this season in good earnest early in November. On the morning of the 6th (election day) the thermometer stood at 6 degrees below zero. We had a dash of sleighing, and the boys had a week or two of skating; but the mild weather that has prevailed throughout the country came along, and snow and ice disappeared. For a month we had open fields, and plowing and out-door work went on daily, not interrupted by rains; and we have witnessed the unusual sight of wild flowers blooming in December, in the open air of Minnesota. A few farmers finished their plowing New Year's day—a circumstance unknown in the previous history of our State, and one which may not be repeated for many a

ANOTHER candidate for public favor, and a good-looking one at that, reaches us from Salem, named *The Salem Weekly Record*. It is newsy, and, like its editor, E. O. Norton, sharp and sparkling. In politics it favors the Greenback party. Price per year, \$2.

THE *Salem Mercury* has been purchased by Messrs. Moss & Cornell, and as both are practical printers, and Moss a first-class newspaper drummer, we shall expect to see the *Mercury* roll up a large subscription list. Success to you, gentlemen!

The average weight of a baby at birth is 6½ pounds; boys being heavier than girls. At the age of 12 the weight of both sexes is alike; at full development, both male and female weigh exactly twenty times as much as at birth.

THE heart is six inches in length and four in diameter, beats 70 times per minute and forces out 2½ ounces of blood at each beat, or 201,344 tons and 125 pounds in a lifetime of 70 years. Is it any wonder, then, that the human machinery eventually wears out?