

THE TWO GREAT ESSENTIALS:

"Devoted to Literature, Science, Art, and the Resources of the Pacific Northwest." This is what we say upon the title page of our growing Magazine; and now, to make good, in some degree, such an implied promise, we propose, in the present article, to speak somewhat in detail of two important elements of wealth possessed by this, the Northwest Pacific Coast, viz.: *Protoxide of Hydrogen* and *Lignum*. Or, to descend from the language used by great men and big books, we mean, simply *wood* and *water*. In using the term "Northwest Pacific Coast," let it be understood by our readers that we are speaking of Oregon and Washington Territory conjointly.

In the outset, then, and without fear of contradiction or refutation, we undertake to say that the water-courses and forests of Oregon and Washington are practically unlimited and inexhaustible.

The humorous flings — "Oregon mist," "wooden country," etc., are fast becoming obsolete as opprobrious epithets applied to our unstinted rain-falls and grand old forests by our California neighbors. Nay, what would the people of that State give, to-day, could such expressions be truthfully applied to the whole extent of their mountainous ocean border and arid interior? Well may they glory in their semi-tropical fruits, their treeless grain fields, and the grandeur of their canyon scenery; but, to us, there is ever a fullness of glory in our own mighty rivers, fostered by the yearly melting of everlasting snows, our hills decked in perennial green, and our almost interminable timber belts. "Give us plenty of wood and water," say the poor, dusty, travel-worn emigrants, "and we will take care of the soil;" and never was a more pungent and unanswerable argument uttered in favor of a land possessing these indispensable adjuncts of an agricultural country.

There is a profitable lesson inculcated by the above remark, and one which incoming settlers from the Atlantic and Northwestern States would do well to heed. It is only about three years ago that hundreds of well-to-do families, within our own borders, were inveigled into the silly notion of leaving their comfortable homes, undertaking an expensive journey and settling upon the

desiccated, stunted-willow plains of Southern California so blatantly cried up by the unscrupulous railroad companies and land swindlers of that State. But the tables are turning, and scores of those same families are wending their way back again, only to find the old farms they repudiated, doubled or trebled in value, and they themselves driven to the cruel necessity of hewing out for their children new homes from our now more than welcome forests. Experience is a dear school, but, to its credit be it said, the lessons there learned are seldom or never effaced.

That was a scathing commentary on a boasted agricultural country, when a farmer of Southern California said he could travel all day without finding water enough to wash a sheep, or a sapling of hard wood big enough to supply the place of a broken whiffletree.

Believing that all lands ought to stand upon their own merits, we would not attempt the undue aggrandizement of our own fruitful hills and valleys by the deterioration of less favored portions of the earth's surface.

Moreover, we believe that God knew what he was about when he created *all* lands; as well when he scored the mighty canyons of the Yosemite and Colorado, as when he smoothed the contour of other lands and planted them with herbs adapted to the necessities of man and beast. Hence are our strictures aimed especially towards the blind prejudices of those men who know not their best interests rather than towards the lands in which they seek their fortunes.

The Northwestern Pacific Coast comprises, essentially, three great natural divisions of country, viz: The western slope of the Coast Range; the valleys and table-lands extending from the crest of the Coast Range to the Cascades; and the eastern slope of the latter range. The valleys of the Willamette and Columbia, and the great basin and valley of Puget Sound give rise to some remarkable innovations in the otherwise general and usual topography of the coast districts. Severally and unitedly, then, these three divisions offer to the husbandman, the miner, the business man and tourist, every possible variety of soil, climate, location, production, and natural scenery that can be found in either of the temperate

zones, whithersoever we may go to seek them.

True, we sometimes have exceptional winters, bringing deep snows and unwonted ice blockades in our navigable rivers—but no country is wholly exempt from such irregularities. Thanks to an over-ruling Providence, we are not driven to the necessity of constructing artificial water-ways for the purpose of irrigating arid lands. On either hand, from the east and from the west, our rivers flow down to us from living fountains filled to the brim by everlasting snows and glaciers. Among the Bedouin Arabs, a common expression for water is, "the gift of God." So can we well bear our lot if nature does sometimes, with a too lavish hand, pour us out a greater measure of this blessed "gift of God" than we may at such times chance to require.

As to the variety and magnificent growth of our forest trees, the story has been told over and over again; yet it is a pleasant theme and one upon which we love to dwell. The several types of fir, cedar, spruce, pine and hemlock, constitute, perhaps, what might be called our large timber; fir, cedar and spruce being the great dependence and staple of the lumbermen. Besides these, our oak, ash, maple and alder serve important purposes in supplying material for hundreds of wood working industries. While, as all we have said on the subject implies, our water supply is destined to continue as it now is for all time, or so long as our snow-clad mountains endure, it is equally safe to say that our timber resources are good for generations to come.

The wastefulness and vandalism of man can never break down or remove our grand system of water-sheds, but if left unrestrained, the woodman's axe and the sweeping fires of the dry season can do much towards causing our now widely extended forests to disappear before the merciless inroads of reckless enterprise.

The wanton destruction of timber now going on along the wooded belts of this coast is a crying evil; and we are entertaining an abiding hope that the strong arm of both our Federal and State governments will be speedily brought to bear against it. Truly, our lines have fallen in pleasant places, and we feel no hesitation in saying to the whole world, "Come to the Pacific Northwest."