

COMMERCIAL FACILITIES.

Our enemies, even, being judges, the commercial facilities of Oregon, and the Territory of Washington, are second to none on the globe. Let any one take a late map of the North Pacific Coast, and note, carefully, the navigable water courses, from Rogue river valley to the Straits of Fuca, extending, as some of them do, hundreds of miles into the interior, and he cannot help being forcibly struck by the truthfulness of the above assertion.

To consider the subject negatively, for a few moments, let the question be asked, what would have been the condition of the great western interior of Oregon, to-day, had there been no such thing as the Willamette river, with its hundreds of tributaries ramifying as many smiling valleys and draining thirty thousand square miles of rich and productive territory? What would have been Eastern Oregon and Washington, had not the Great Spirit, as the Indians say, broken up the everlasting masonry of the Cascades, and opened a grand passage-way for the pent-up waters that now come down to old ocean through the river bed of the Columbia? And what if the Strait of Fuca had only been an estuary or broad arm of the sea, wholly devoid of that magnificent extension known as Puget Sound, and without which Western Washington would, to-day, have been an impenetrable and unexplored wilderness? These, indeed, are leading questions, and exhibit to us, in the best possible light, the wholly unexcelled and almost unequalled facilities for commercial enterprise and prosperity possessed by the people of this our Northwestern domain and frontier. Many of the inconsiderable streams put down as "rivers" on the map of California, Nevada, and several of the Territories, are little better than so many dry river-beds during the greater part of the summer months. Not so, however, with the snow-fed streams that empty from every point of the compass into the Columbia river and Puget Sound. As if the Coast Range and Cascade mountains were not enough to supply our magnificent river systems, the eternal glaciers of Jefferson, Hood, Adams, St. Helens, Olympus, Rainier and Baker, are destined to remain as grand and inexhaustible reserves while God, in His providence, shall please to

prolong the sojournment of man upon the globe.

"Take the wings

Of morning and the Barcan desert pierce,
Or, lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save its own dashings."

What the Columbia was seventy years ago, when Bryant penned *Thanatopsis*, so is it, save in name, to-day. The Philadelphia *New Northwest* may persist in calling it the "grave-yard of ships," other jealous parties, with more zeal than truth or discretion, may apply to it disreputable and libelous epithets, but, with its ten thousand sources, it will continue to drain its three hundred thousand square miles of territory, and carry upon its bosom to the great patriarch of oceans its infinitude of shipping, bound to every seaport known to the commerce of civilization. During the twenty years that the lamented Captain Francis Connor has commanded sea-going steamships plying between San Francisco and Portland, his first Columbia river casualty is yet to be recorded. Favorable as this showing appears to be, hundreds of other shipmasters of various grades might boast of a similarly prosperous career. So much, then, for the largest and grandest river that empties from the Western Hemisphere into the Pacific ocean.

And now, what shall we say of Puget Sound and its wonderful ramifications? Argus had a hundred eyes, and Briareus a hundred arms, while other mythological celebrities had a plurality of heads. But, unlike, and superior to them all, this admirable sheet of water may be said to be all eyes and all arms, and with so many heads projecting into the forest-fringed land that our Government's Coast Survey experts have been for years striving to determine which one of its countless inlets should be considered, *par excellence*, its ultimate and principal source. Landlocked, and protected from oceanic storms and currents, its is verily the paradise of fine steamers, and the smaller sailing craft so essential to the best interests of our growing inland commerce, to say nothing of the magnificent forest and mountain scenery within which, throughout its whole extent, it is so happily ensconced.

But we trust that enough has been said in this connection, to convince business men and the commercial world generally, that this part of the

Pacific Coast offers fair, if not superior inducements to those capitalists, at the East and elsewhere, who may be looking for desirable fields of enterprise.

In treating of this subject, it has been our special aim to carefully avoid all mooted questions of local character and tendency. Provincial rivalries always did, and, probably, always will, exist in every land. It comes not within the province of a journalist to settle and reconcile these points, and hence we have endeavored to confine ourselves to candid and liberal views in regard to the various phases of this most interesting topic.

SOME INTERESTING COMPARISONS.

BY L. P. VENEN.

In treating of the mammoth trees of California (*Sequoia Gigantea*), Mr. Franklin B. Hough, in his official report upon the Forestry of the United States, wisely remarks: "These trees have attracted widely the public interest, rather on account of their enormous dimensions than their commercial importance." Hence, it will be seen, upon careful investigation, that it is an egregious error for incoming settlers from the Atlantic States to base their estimates of California's timber resources upon the wide-spread reputation of the so-called mammoth trees. The *Sequoia Gigantea* producing area of that State consists, mainly, of a few narrow and isolated belts along the western slope of the Sierra Nevada range, between about thirty-six and thirty-eight degrees of latitude. Comparing these trees with the fir, cedar and spruce of this, our Northwestern Coast, we come in possession of some curious and interesting results; especially interesting because they are deduced from actual calculation. It is a fact well known among mill men and lumber dealers, that, beyond a convenient size, the girth of a tree tends rather to its disadvantage than value and profit. On the other hand, however, long, straight and clear timber will ever be held in great estimation by producers, dealers and consumers.

As objects of curiosity and admiration in the vegetable world, the big trees of California are sufficiently grand and glorious to merit all that has ever been said and written about them, but let us hear what actual measurement and calculation have to say as to their practical