

PUGET SOUND CORRESPONDENCE.

SEATTLE, W. T., June 9, '80.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE WEST SHORE:

So here I am, just landed from that staunch steamer, the *Zephyr*, commanded by Captain W. R. Ballard, whose name is a household word from one end of the Sound to the other. In fact, like the romantic appellation affixed to the elegant craft over which he so fittingly presides, the Captain is none other than a living synonym of courtesy and suavity. The irrepressible hotel runners, with their coaches, are on hand, and after being rolled through the sawdust up to the Occidental, I prepare myself for a pleasant stroll around this, another one of those cities "by the sea," for which Puget Sound is so famous. But hold! I should apologize to the good people here; for, since the burning of Yesler's mills, in the heart of town, it is no longer considered elegant to speak of the sawdust in the streets of this little city.

Seattle has one thing, at least, in her favor. There has been enough capital already invested or "sunk," here, to insure the indefinite improvement of the adjacent and surrounding country.

This, the 9th of June, is an auspicious day for Western Washington, and the Sound country especially. By a preconcerted arrangement, the leading lumber manufacturers of the upper and lower Sound have commenced to-day to run their mills on "full time;" the late breezing up in the foreign markets fully justifying this important step. To the scores of hardy loggers and their hundreds of employes, this is, as politicians say, glory enough for one day. Six months ago there were several million feet of prime quality logs in the water, for which the owner could not realize three dollars per thousand. At present good logs are selling readily at from five to six dollars per thousand, and the price is steadily going up. From all quarters we hear the echoings of thrift and enterprise. Old settlers are just beginning to find out what this country is made of, and we are hearing less and less of emigration to the eastern sections.

The iron interest of Clallam county, the coal of Seattle and Puyallup, the dairy products of every valley and the lumber from our forests are doing more to fit this Territory for becoming a full-grown State than all other influences

combined. Every year, and we might say month by month, old prejudices are going by the board, and the startling discovery is made that this part of the Territory is eminently adapted to some enterprise heretofore held to be an impossibility. It is doubtless true that lumber will continue to be the staple commodity of export for a term of years to come. But this does not result from the fact that the country is lean in every other respect.

The people of Washington Territory are passing through a transition state, quite similar to what the people of Oregon experienced a few years ago. Many an old pioneer Oregonian would confess to-day, that lumber and the precious metals were once supposed to be the leading, and perhaps only, available resources of that now sovereign State; and in those days these things constituted the chief attraction to business men who followed in the wake of adventurers. What Oregon is to-day, Washington Territory hopes to be in less than ten years from date. Of course, it is idle to speculate as to the results of the census now being taken, so far as it relates to this Territory. Many sanguine ones who are placing their estimates at 100,000, are doomed to be disappointed. Much as the country is in need of an influx of brain and muscle to subdue and utilize its broad acres, we must be content to wait for the natural and legitimate increase of population. This growth alone will be sure and abiding.

Reports from the Skagit mines continue to be conflicting. The most favorable accounts need some qualification, but that coarse gold exists in paying quantities all along the lesser headwaters of the Skagit, there is not a question. For all practicable purposes, however, these mines are as yet inaccessible to the hundreds of explorers who are impatiently awaiting the construction of a trail suitable for pack animals and footmen. Had the business men of Seattle gone to work, nothing doubting, and prosecuted this enterprise as soon as the weather would have permitted, in the early part of the season, they would have received interest and principal on all their money expended, and their city would have become the thronged rendezvous of miners and adventurers from all parts of the coast. As the situation now is,

miners are disheartened, and many are leaving to return no more. But we are satisfied that the precious metals in our mountain fastnesses, like those in California and Oregon, will assert their value and importance in the due course of time.

There are some premonitory symptoms, unmistakable to the observing man, clearly indicating that the eve of important developments is near at hand, tending to the lasting benefit of this Territory.

Your readers may have heard rumors of gold discoveries in Thurston county, near Olympia. As I write, word comes that several prospecting parties are fitting out at the capital city to explore the highlands known as the Black Hills, situated from ten to fifteen miles south-west from the head of Budd's inlet. It was known ten years ago that placer gold could be found in small quantities in the gulches that permeated those hills, but more distant mining excitements diverted and engrossed the public mind, and for a term of years the matter has been napping. The Skagit stampede, however, had the effect to awaken and fan into new life several old enterprises, and our own Black Hills gold fever is one of them. Responsible parties have returned after a few days sojourn thither, bringing with them valuable specimens of decomposed gold-bearing quartz, together with both coarse and fine placer gold.

The Kelsey Bros., of Centerville, Lewis county, discovered a few months ago, what they claim to be an ancient river bed, similar in all respects to the celebrated Blue lead in California. These ancient water-courses are essentially of the same geological age, and so far as they have been explored, an abundance of coarse washed gold has been found in the gravel which they contain. The Messrs. Kelsey have sent a specimen of their gold to Olympia, and a quantity of the precious metal, mixed with black sand, is now on exhibition in the show-window of the Board of Trade rooms. But more of this in another letter.

Yours, TRAVELER.

Scene, or rather heard, on a Lowland horse-car: Conductor—"There ain't no seats, ladies, unless you want to stand." One of the ladies—"Well, I won't ride if I've got to walk."