

question the crab-apple, the sallal, and the wild-cherry. Do you see that line of silver down under the river bank? That is the glisten of the catkins on the willows (*salix scouberiana*) that were out in February. It makes a pretty contrast to the red stems of a smaller species of willow that grows along the very margin of the river, with its roots in the water. I am not certain of the variety.

There certainly is no lack of interesting things in the woods of early Spring in Oregon. To my eye, with such a variety of green and really growing trees and shrubs, it is a relief to take into the view a group of naked stems, like the straight and light holes of the aspen (*populus tremuloides*), the gray trunks of the dogwood (*cornus nuttalis*), or the rugged, scraggy forms of the water-loving ash (*traximus Oregona*). Uniform as our climate is, and little as the dropping of the leaves of our deciduous trees affects the general aspect of the landscape, there is yet to the critical observer a sufficiently marked difference in our seasons to make the study of Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter, as shown by the vegetation of our magnificent forests, profitable and compensatory.

It is true that you cannot come back from a walk at this time of year laden with armfuls of flowering shrubbery, as you may in six weeks from now. You cannot, with safety, stretch yourself on the earth, and indulge in building Spanish castles, as in July weather it is pleasant to do, while birds sing among the branches overhead, the nervous little squirrel scolds at you from a safe distance, or the only half-confiding quail maintains vigilant picket duty in your vicinity—all, as you think, for your gratification; though in truth you are regarded by these little residents as an alien and an intruder. The beauties that should invite you now, pass away or lose their freshness with the approach of dry weather. The mosses and lichens will have dried up by mid-summer; the ferns can then only be found in the coolest recesses of the woods. The excess of foliage then will close many beautiful vistas; there will be no more signs of daily growth, no tender tints on the leaflets. The year will be at middle age, round and perfect, but with the touching bloom of its youth forever past.

There will be a corresponding difference in the color of the skies, the shape of the clouds, the hues of the water; in every part of nature. Let the student of nature learn all her passing moods. There is a wealth of enjoyment in having well trained eyes, and a receptive observation, that no amount of gold can purchase. It depends on the individual. Certain of us never do come into our kingdom, which is the kingdom wherewith the Creator endowed us "in the beginning," because we are too sordid, too indolent, or too effeminate. Certain others of us are rejoiced to think that we have not wholly missed of it, through these faults; and that enjoyment grows with possession.

EXPENSE OF COMING TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST.

The following are the present rates of fare between Eastern cities and Portland, to which should of course be added the price of meals whilst enroute from the East to San Francisco. Meals and berths are furnished free on the steamships from San Francisco to Portland. The rates for berths in a sleeping car are \$17.00 between Chicago or St. Louis and San Francisco, or \$22.00 between New York and San Francisco. No additional charge for berths in immigrant or third-class sleeping cars. The price for meals at eating stations are from 50 cents to one dollar each. An excellent piece of economy and comfort, however, is to carry a well filled lunch basket. Schedule time between New York and San Francisco first-class, is 7 days; immigrant trains, 12 days.

From San Francisco to Portland by first-class iron steamships, carrying both first-class passengers and immigrants, the schedule time is 2½ days.

	Fare to Portland, Or.,	First-class	Immig't.
From New York City.....	\$158 30.....	\$75 00	
" Boston, Mass.....	150 30.....	76 00	
" Chicago, Ill.....	135 30.....	65 50	
" Cincinnati, Ohio.....	142 85.....	69 80	
" Council Bluffs, Iowa.....	120 50.....	60 50	
" New Orleans, La.....	155 75.....	78	
" Oshkosh, Wis.....	139 45.....	71 20	
" Omaha, Nebraska.....	120	65 00	
" Philadelphia, Pa.....	156 30.....	73 50	
" St. Louis, Mo.....	132 85.....	65 50	
" Galveston, Texas.....	162 75.....	82 30	
" Leavenworth, Kan.....	126 20.....	91 20	
" Atlanta, Ga.....	157 80		
" Cheyenne, W. Ter.....	103 00.....	53 00	

ANOTHER bed of brick clay has been discovered on the line of the railroad about two miles from Tacoma. It is to be at once brought into use.

INTERESTING TO HOMESTEADERS.

The much mooted question involved in the granting of benefits intended by the act of June 15, 1880, which refers specially to the right of all persons who had taken a homestead prior to June 15, 1880, has at last been decided by the Department that the homesteader can, if he so desires, make proof by the payment of \$1.25 per acre in cash or by Special Deposit Certificates at his option, at the same rates less the amount of fees which had been paid at date of entry. It is also further decided that all homesteads taken prior to the date of above act, whether settled upon now or not, abandoned as well as homesteads actually resided upon, can now be paid at \$1.25 per acre less the fees paid at date of entry as above stated. This decision virtually leaves the homesteader in position to buy the homestead, even if he has abandoned it, and no further settlement is required. Applying only to the advantage of those whose claims were taken prior to June 15, 1880, the many whose claims were taken subsequent need not expect nor attempt to take advantage of it. Great complaint has been occasioned by this recent decision, and it is possible an attempt will be made to have the act repealed thereby depriving all those who have neglected in having their homesteads paid for before the benefits intended by the act, and which repeal if possible can only be taken advantage of by immediate proof on all the homesteads possible.

Crops never fail in Oregon. A Wasco county family produces the following heavy weights: The father weighs 200 pounds; mother, 225; oldest girl, age 30 years, 190; next, 18 years old, 225; next, 16 years, 210; next, 14 years, 160; next 6 year old boy, 50; next, 1 year old baby, 35; total, 1,305. Average weight 163 pounds.

WESTERN WASHINGTON LANDS.

ROOM YET FOR THOUSANDS OF SETTLERS.

COUNTIES.	ACRES.		
	Total Area.	Survey'd	Settled
Benton.....	1,197,000	737,000	322,000
Clackamas.....	950,000	490,000	345,000
Clatsop.....	552,000	307,000	115,000
Columbia.....	398,000	200,000	115,000
Douglas.....	3,710,000	1,850,000	600,000
Lane.....	2,275,000	1,150,000	600,000
Linn.....	1,150,000	480,000	308,000
Marian.....	750,000	520,000	477,000
Multnomah.....	270,000	161,000	130,000
Folk.....	414,000	275,000	230,000
Tillamook.....	1,012,000	307,000	115,000
Washington.....	477,000	308,000	270,000
Yamhill.....	480,000	414,000	270,000