

THE GREAT NORTHWEST.

II.

In the previous number of this series I mentioned the great tidal wave which was observed by Jeremiah Lamson, Esq., referring to it as an evidence of a "bank" not far distant. Anxious that even the most non-scientific reader may have a clear understanding of the matter, I will now make some explanations.

In navigation a bank is understood to mean "an elevation of the bottom of the sea," which in no way resembles the bank of a lake or river. If the bank is tolerably smooth on its surface, it is called a *flat*, *shoal* or *shallow*; if rocky, a *ridge*, *reef* or *key*. Cod and other fish seek these banks for the purpose of feeding, spawning, etc., and it is worthy of note that the color of the codfish partakes of the color of the bank which he inhabits or frequents. Hence, those caught on banks where the dark, golden seaweed abounds are of a rich, golden hue, and on the Atlantic coast are called *rock cod*. I frequently caught them there in my younger years, having once been engaged for several months as a hand on board a fishing schooner in Penobscot and Frenchman's bays. I have never seen any of the "golden fish" caught by the Indians off Salmon River, and therefore cannot pronounce them a species of the cod, but from the description given me by a half-breed, who had eaten them, I am of the opinion that they belong to the same *genera*, if not species, as the codfish. The "rock cod" I consider only a *variety* and of the same species as the cod of commerce. I return to the tidal wave seen by Mr. Lamson.

The upheavals of the bottom of the ocean are spasmodic, or convulsive. Imagine, then, several thousand acres suddenly raised a hundred feet perpendicularly. The water immediately above would be raised seventy-five feet, at least—perhaps more. Then, as water always seeks its level, it would roll away in all directions, constantly diminishing in altitude until the desired level is found. It is not very unfrequent that these huge waves are encountered by vessels at sea. Many a ship has sailed from port and never been heard of again, even at times when no violent storms prevailed. May they not have been engulfed in a tidal wave?

I have conversed with intelligent mariners engaged in the coast trade between Victoria and San Francisco, who inform me that they have often found shallow water at various distances from the shore along the coast, even more than fifty miles away, and some have told me of catching fish on these shoals while becalmed. It seems to me that all these pointers furnish stronger presumptive evidence of the existence of a bank near the eastern shore of the Pacific than Columbus had of the existence of a "new world." True, cod have been caught off this coast, and a few men make a business of it, but I am satisfied that the real bank has never been discovered. Furthermore, I feel assured that if discovered it will prove a source of greater national wealth than any dozen gold mines ever have.

The geological history of North America, as recorded

in the rocks, demonstrates that the growth of our continent has been the result of upheavals along the western coast, while on the east, instead of gaining by upheavals, accretions or by any other process, it is observed to be gradually disappearing again beneath the waters. At Cape May, from 1804 to 1820, the ocean encroached upon the land the alarming distance of 144 feet, as proved by measurement. Reasoning by analogy, Columbus concluded that there should be a great continent far away in the west, as a compensating balance for the continents in the east. Adopting this style of logic, we must conclude that the law of compensation will raise up dry land in the west, as an atonement for its disappearing in the east. Finally, not only geology, but anthropology, proves that for thousands of years progress and new development have tended constantly in a westerly direction. It has even passed into a proverb, "Westward the star of empire takes its way." Scientists have estimated that 1,000 tons of earthly matter are transported seaward from the coast of Long Island every day. Three hundred and sixty-five thousand tons every year! It is only a question of time when Long Island will be no more. A similar state of affairs exists at Long Branch, and, in fact, all along the coast. But in the great Northwest, instead of constantly losing a portion of our territory, we have reason to expect its extension many miles westward by additional upheavals.

Let us take a broad and comprehensive view of the subject. Judging the future by the past, upheavals upon the west, and depredations on the east, continuing for untold thousands of years, it is only a question of time when the upheavals on the west will span our globe. New York will then calmly repose at the bottom of a mighty ocean. Monsters of the deep will swim above it, and great ships, carrying the commerce of the world, will sail proudly over what was once the greatest city on the earth. But as the ages roll on it shall be again resurrected—perhaps a coral reef or sandy waste, again to mature into a home for the deer and buffalo, finally for man himself, and again become the metropolis of a continent. It is thus that great Nature works.

Or it may be that after a few more ages—perhaps ten thousand—of depredations upon the eastern line of North America, another of those sublime catastrophes, when land and water suddenly change places, may in a moment send our continent to the bottom of the ocean and return Atlantis, "the lost continent," once more to the surface. But we need not speculate, for the solution of problems like these belong to the unknown and unknowable.

A vast region, large enough for a powerful kingdom, lies between the Rocky Mountains and Coast Range. Reading Nature's hieroglyphics, according to the established rules of science, there was a time in the remote past when the Rocky Mountains formed the eastern shore of the Pacific Ocean. Even after the Cascade system had appeared above the waters, forming groups of islands, the tireless waves of the grand old Pacific still continued to beat upon the flanks of the Rockies. Grande Ronde Valley, in Eastern Oregon, a beautiful circular plain,