

is developing so rapidly that added transportation facilities will be constantly required.

Forty years ago the first American settlement was made on Puget Sound, and yet there are large areas in Western Washington practically unexplored and unknown. One of these is the great Olympic Range, lying between the Sound and the Pacific Ocean. These mountains were first noted and named by the early explorers, before the existence of that great inland sea to the east of them was even suspected, and their beauty has always been one of the chief attractions of a voyage upon the placid waters of the Sound. Their white, jagged tops are familiar, but the lower hills and mountains about them are an unknown wilderness to a great extent. Lieutenant Joseph P. McNeill, of the Fourteenth Infantry, has been detailed, with three enlisted men, to make a reconnaissance of that region the present season. It is a rough, rugged country, and it is doubtful if Lieutenant McNeill succeeds in doing more than to confirm the present opinion held of it—that it is comparatively valueless except for its mass of timber.

GREAT are railroads. They have done more to cement the Union, to bind the North to the South and the East to the West, than any other factor, through enabling a free interchange of visits by the people of all quarters of the Union. They have also, in the same manner, redeemed the veracity of the people of the Pacific Coast from the taint which has always clung to it in the East. If we mentioned our big trees, big waterfalls, big crops, or big anything, our mild winters and rainless harvests, we were met with smiles of incredulity, and, worse yet, our statements were picked up and improved upon by writers of "Western sketches" who had never seen the Rocky Mountains from their farthest eastern horizon, much to the detriment of our credit generally. Now, it seems, the railroads have brought us so many visitors during the past two years that the spread of knowledge has wrought a wonderful change in our favor, and an old pioneer can return to the scenes of his youth and speak of the many wonders of this region without being threatened with a commission to inquire into his lunacy or indictment as a common liar.

PROBABLY few of the thousands who will read our description on another page of the immense copper mines and smelters of Butte, will not express astonishment at their magnitude and have their ideas of the copper industry of the United States greatly expanded. Butte is, however, but one factor in the copper world, though, to be sure, a large one. Copper is produced throughout the Pacific Coast, as well as in the older and better known mines of Lake Superior, where large deposits of native copper are found, and other places in the East. Recent reports by General McClellan, President of the Grand Belt Copper Company, and A. J. Womelsdorf, civil and mining engineer, indicate that Texas will soon become an important factor in the industry. For some time past there have been rumors of a copper revolution to be

effected by a great discovery in Texas, and the report of these gentlemen discloses their foundation. It seems that the Grand Belt property consists of 36,000 acres in Hardman, King, Knox and Stonewall counties, showing copper ore in surface deposits and croppings. It is pronounced a contact vein from seven to ten feet thick. The ore is an arenaceous copper-impregnated schist, the copper being both carbonates and sulphides, assaying from 15 to 75 per cent., and can be worked by open cuts, without the enormous expense of tunnels, shafts and hoisting works. The report says that 5,000 tons have already been mined, and smelting works will soon be in operation. The result of operations by the Grand Belt will be looked for with considerable interest. New lodes are being developed in a number of places, and it would seem as though the copper product would be largely increased during the next few years. It is probable that the demand for its use in the mechanical arts will increase in a like ratio, and render the copper industry a continuously profitable one.

MUCH has been said in these columns from time to time about the future establishment of a route for Asiatic trade by the way of Puget Sound and the Northern Pacific. People who imagine that commerce, like their own ideas, will run continually in the same old ruts, have honored such predictions with nothing but smiles of incredulity. Yet there is nothing more certain than that a portion, at least, of the Asiatic through trade will be ere long diverted from San Francisco and the transcontinental routes terminating in that city, to go by the way of Puget Sound. It is folly to suppose that two such great roads as the Northern Pacific and Canadian Pacific will permit the old routes to retain this traffic unmolested. It is only a question of time, and a brief time at that, when regular lines of vessels will be running from the terminal points of both of those great overland routes. In fact, the expected arrival at Tacoma within a few days of the British bark *Isabel*, 1,260 tons, from Yokohama, loaded with teas, silks, rice and other goods, and consigned to the Northern Pacific Railroad, shows that this trade is not even to wait upon the establishment of those regular lines. These goods are destined to St. Paul, Chicago, New York and Montreal, and will be carried across the continent by the Northern Pacific and connecting lines. It would seem as though Tacoma's dream of future commercial importance were less of a creation of the fancy than some people have been inclined to think. There is another point to be considered. The Union Pacific, which now has a virtual terminus in Portland, cannot be expected to remain idle while rival lines are thus taking possession of this through traffic. It has already been hinted that this company will establish a trans-Pacific steamer line from Portland in its own interests. When this is done the prophetic vision of Missouri's great Senator nearly forty years ago will materialize, and a stream of Asiatic trade will pour into the mouth of the Columbia; though, probably, Mr. Benton's idea that the Columbia will become the one great channel of Asiatic