

archs, Hood and Rainier, whose summits the more strong and venturesome essay to reach. Taken all together, on the coast and in the mountains, thousands of the citizens of Oregon and Washington court health, comfort and pleasure during the summer months.

H. L. WELLS.

GATEWAY OF THE COLUMBIA.

ASTORIA stands at the gateway of the great natural channel of commerce of Oregon and the entire region of the Columbia river. Every vessel which crosses the bar, either inward or outward, passes the docks of that city, at which the great majority of them stop. Many never proceed up the river, receiving their cargoes from the huge warehouses of that busy city. Nearly a hundred years have passed since the first ship cast anchor in the broad estuary of the Columbia, opposite the site of Astoria, and three-quarters of a century have rolled away since the city itself had its beginning. About it cling the earliest traditions of American history on the Pacific coast. Here first waved the American flag, and here was planted the first American settlement, by means of which the whole Columbia region was saved to the United States.

In 1792, Capt. Robert Gray, in command of the ship *Columbia*, one of the few American vessels then engaged in the trade of the Pacific, discovered the mouth of a great river, which he entered and named in honor of his craft. In 1805, Meriweather Lewis and William Clarke, two captains in the United States army, crossed the continent at the head of a government exploring party, and wintered at the mouth of the Columbia, at Fort Clatsop, so named in honor of the Indian tribe then living along the coast south of the river. The name is perpetuated in the name of the county of which Astoria is the county seat, and the names of the daring explorers have been bestowed on objects and localities in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. In 1810, the Pacific Fur Company, chiefly owned and controlled by John Jacob Astor, the New York merchant prince, founded the town of Astoria, as a headquarters for an extensive trading and trapping business, and this was the first American settlement on the Pacific coast. During the war between England and the United States, which began in 1812, Astoria and the interior posts which had been established, were sold to the Northwest Company, a Canadian fur company, and fell into the hands of the great Hudson's Bay Company, in 1821, when it absorbed its rival. After the treaty of 1846, confirming the title of the United States to Oregon and Washington, and especially after the establishment of the custom house, in 1849, Astoria rapidly became a place of much commercial importance, and has increased in this regard with the gradual settlement of the region tributary to the Columbia and expansion of its commerce. The first