

the water. What cloud, piled massive on the horizon, could cast an image so sharp in outline, so full of vigorous detail of surface? No cloud, as my stare, no longer dreamy, presently discovered—no cloud, but a cloud compeller. It was a giant mountain dome of snow, swelling and seeming to fill the aerial spheres as its image displaced the blue deeps of tranquil water. The smoky haze of an Oregon August hid all the length of its lesser ridges, and left the mighty summit based upon uplifting dimness. Only its splendid snows were visible, high in the unearthly regions of clear, blue, noonday sky. The shore line drew a cincture of pines across the broad base where it faded unreal into the mist. The same dark girth separated the peak from its reflection, over which my canoe was now pressing, and sending wavering swells to shatter the beautiful visions before it. Kingly and alone stood this majesty, without any visible comrade or consort, though far to the north and south its brethren and sisters dominated their realms, each in isolated sovereignty, rising above the pine-darkened sierra of the Cascade mountains, above the stern chasm where the Columbia—Achilles of rivers—sweeps, short-lived and jubilant, to the sea; above the lovely vales of the Willamette and Umpqua. Of all the peaks, from California to Fraser river, this one before me was royalest. Mount Regnier, christians have dubbed it, in stupid nomenclature perpetuating the name of somebody or nobody. More melodiously the Siwashes call it Tacoma. Whatever keen crests and crags there may be in its rock anatomy of basalt, snow covers softly with its bends and sweeping curves. Tacoma, under its ermine, is a crushed volcanic dome, or an ancient volcano fallen in, and, perhaps, not yet wholly lifeless. The domes of snow are stateliest. There may be more of feminine beauty in the cones, and more of masculine force and hardihood in the rough pyramids, but the great domes are calmer and more divine, and, even if they have failed to attain absolute dignified grace of finish, and are riven and broken down, they still demand our sympathy for giant power, if only partially victor. Each form—the dome, the cone and the pyramid—has its type among the great snow peaks of the Cascades. \* \* \* The Cascades are known to geography—their summits to the lists of volcanoes. Several gentlemen in the United States army, bored in petty posts, or squinting along Indian trails for Pacific railroads, have seen these summits. A few myriads of Oregonians have not been able to avoid seeing them; have, perhaps, felt their ennobling influence, and have written, boasting that St. Helens or Hood are as high as Blanc. Enterprising fellows have climbed both; but the millions of Yankees—from codfish to alligators, from chewers of spruce

gum to chewers of pig tail, cooks of chowder or cooks of gumbo—know little of these treasures of theirs. Poet comes long after pioneer. Mountains have been waiting, even in ancient worlds, for cycles, while mankind looked upon them as high, cold, dreary, crushing, as resorts for demons and homes of desolating storms. It is only lately, in the development of men's comprehension of Nature, that mountains have been recognized as our noblest friends, our most exalting and inspiring comrades, our grandest emblems of divine power and divine peace. \* \* \* I had been following thus for many hours the blind path, harsh, darksome and utterly lonely, urging on with no outlook, encountering no landmark. At last, as I stormed a ragged crest, gaining a height that overtopped the firs, and, halting there for panting moments, I glanced to see if I had achieved mastery as well as position. As I looked, somewhat wearily and drearily, across the solemn surges of forest, suddenly above their sombre green appeared Tacoma. Large and neighbor it stood, so near that every jewel of its snow fields seemed to send me a separate ray; yet not so near but that I could, with one look, take in its whole image, from clear-cut edge to edge. All around it the dark evergreens rose like a ruff; above them the mountain splendors swelled statelier for the contrast. Sunlight of noon was so refulgent upon the crown, and lay so thick and dazzling in nooks and chasms, that the eye sought repose of gentler lights, and found it in shadowed nooks and clefts, where, sunlight entering not, delicate mist, an emanation from the blue sky, had fallen, and lay sheltered and tremulous, a mild substitute for the stronger glory. The blue haze so wavered and trembled into sunlight, and sunbeams shot glimmering over snowy brinks, so like a constant avalanche, that I might doubt whether this movement and waver and glimmer, this blending of mist with noontide flame, were not a drifting smoke and cloud of yellow, sulphurous vapor, floating over some slowly chilling crater far down in the red crevices. But if the giant fires had ever burned under that cold summit, they had long since gone out. The dome that swelled up passionately had crusted over and then fallen in upon itself, not vigorous enough with internal life to bear up in smooth proportion. Where it broke into ruin was no doubt a desolate waste, stern, craggy and riven; but such drear results of Titanic convulsion the gentle snows hid from view.

"No foot of man had ever trampled those pure snows. It was a virginal mountain, distant from the possibility of human approach and human inquisitiveness as a marble goddess is from human loves. Yet there was nothing unsympathetic in its isolation, or despotic in its distant majesty. But this serene