

A PICTURESQUE TOUR.

PART II.

PORTLAND, the metropolis of the northwest, claims, and well deserves, more than the passing notice of the tourist. In many respects it is a city unique in its characteristics. A recent writer aptly observes that from whatever direction a person approaches it he emerges from the woods. Its site was originally selected, with rare prescience, from among those continuous woods of which the poet sang long before its locators even thought of seeking homes on these far-off shores. The judiciousness of their action has been amply vindicated by the passing years. Attempts have been made to build up rival communities nearer the sea, but each effort has failed in its purpose. Until within the past five years, natural gravitation has resulted in pouring into Portland's warehouses and commercial establishments, by rail and by steam and sailing vessels, the undivided wealth of the great Inland Empire. Within that period, a railroad having its terminus on Puget sound has challenged a "division of the spoils." But the result has been to arouse the public men of Portland to the exhibition of renewed energy, vigorously directed, not only to the retention of fields already won, but to the enlargement of her commercial dependencies and tributaries, and right well have they done their work. A fixed population of sixty thousand souls is claimed for Portland and its adjacent towns and villages within a radius of three miles, all of which, by the operation of the same force of natural law which has made the city what it now is, will inevitably, and that within a short time, be included in the corporation proper. These things are, perhaps, of but incidental interest to the tourist. Nevertheless, the knowledge of the fact that for a third of a century Portland was practically without a rival for absolute supremacy in trade for a region greater in area than that of three or four ordinary monarchies, will serve at once to emphasize the ever multiplying evidences of wealth and refinement and culture which present themselves to view, and explain the painfully apparent contradictions of a four story, hundred feet wide, marble fronted block, in close juxtaposition with a tumble-down rookery, mossy with age and strangely incongruous with its surroundings.

Portland has many attractions; but what the Old South church is to Boston, what Independence hall is to Philadelphia, what its bay is to Naples, what the Acropolis was to Athens, or the Forum to Rome, Mt. Hood is to this city.

Grim monolith in nature's temple vast,
White warden of the gateway to the sea,
Through which the proud Columbia pours its flood!

When skies are cloudless and the air is balm,
And all the vale is carpeted with flowers,
And all the trees are glorious in green robes;
When birds are nesting and the fields are lush
With promise of great crops and well-filled barns,
And orchards heavy with unripened fruits,
And nature seems once more at her full prime,
Fair as in Eden at creation's dawn—
Serene in his unblemished purity,
The towering mount, in robe of samite white,
And seen of all men, witness bears to all
That the round earth, swung by its golden chain
Fast by the throne of God, can not be moved.

Such is Mount Hood as it appeared to me, across fields and through long vistas of grove and orchard, on a June day not long ago. If I am asked from what point of view about Portland the best impress of its grandeur can be obtained, I confess myself utterly at a loss how to reply. On a favorable day—that is to say when neither clouds, fog nor smoke obscure—a walk along Front street, say from Stark to the southern boundary of the city, pausing at each cross street for an observation, will result in a memory stored with a kaleidoscopic panorama of unsurpassed sublimity. As the visitor ascends the higher elevations of the city, Hood reveals its mighty bulk in new, but not more fascinating, situations. Chaste and beautiful, Mount St. Helens rises clear in view, Mount Adams lifts its white front above the envious hills, and as greater heights are reached at length, eight snow-clad peaks complete the "vision splendid," while far below, river and lake, forest and homestead, city, village and unbroken wilderness, lend grace and beauty and rugged grandeur to the scene.

Portland's homes, from those of the millionaire, noticeable for their luxurious appointments, to those of the modest burgher, tree-embowered, lawn-surrounded and flower-bedecked, rightfully challenge comparison with those of older cities. Her wharves and docks, at which lie ships from remotest climes, her commercial establishments, her banks and insurance companies, are striking evidences of her commanding situation in the great northwest. China and Japan bring here their finest wares and most expensive articles of bric-a-brac for the choice of tourist or denizen with purses equal to the occasion. Her public school system is abreast of the times, and her high school building is the finest to-day on the coast. Her private educational establishments have a deservedly high reputation. Her churches are ministered to by men of mark and note. Her hospitals are noticeable for their excellence.

I have heretofore hinted at the abundant yield of the soil, from which her fruit and vegetable market is supplied. Just let me copy here a memorandum of the contents of one of the city fish stalls on June