

THE GENEALOGY OF OREGON.

WHEN, half a century hence, the student gazes upon the map of the United States and sees one unbroken line of sovereign states from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and then turns to the map of to-day and finds that more than a thousand miles of territories intervene between the solid wall of states on the east and their sister commonwealths bordering on the Pacific, he will be certain to ask how it happened that in the history of the development of America the wave of civilization swept over such a vast region and broke on the narrow strip at the utmost western verge of the land; how it was that before Minnesota became a state California entered the Union, and that just after Minnesota entered the gate, and while Kansas and Nebraska were still in territorial vassalage, Oregon passed the guarded portals of the nation and became a sovereign state. There were then no highways of commerce binding these western states to their sisters by parallel bands of steel, no telegraph lines along which flashed the electric spark of intelligence, none of the multitude of conveniences and common interests that unite and are enjoyed by the two sections to-day, or the still greater multitude that will be known at the time the student of fifty years hence shall ask these important questions. Let us answer him now, and not only him but the thousands of to-day to whom these great facts are unfamiliar, and who wonder why it is that "way out west," in the land of the setting sun, in the region "where rolls the Oregon" in all the grandeur, but with none of the solitude, referred to by the poet, there has for thirty years been a state of our common Union, to reach which one must traverse more than a thousand miles of territories.

Oregon and California, two sister states of the Pacific, have a lineage and history as diverse as Maine and Florida. How California was conquered from Mexico by Fremont and Stockton, how the gold discovery of 1848 brought to its shores the wild rush of humanity of 1849, and carried the state into the Union in 1850 without passing through the territorial stage, is a matter of almost common knowledge. Such an air of romance clings to

The days of old,
The days of gold,
The days of '49,

that there is little fear of the main facts of the genealogy of California passing from the minds of the youth of America. Not so with Oregon, the brightest gem in the crown of the indomitable pioneer, who has carried the principles of a free people and a representative government from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and made them the enduring foundation of the grandest

nation the world has ever seen. No chance discovery of hidden gold, no meteoric flight, brought Oregon within the charmed circle, but the sterling patriotism, the patient endurance, the unflagging industry and zeal of the sturdy pioneer men and women of America carved it from the wilderness of "continuous woods" and made it a state, worthy to rank with the older members of the great sisterhood. Twenty years of patient effort, amid discouragements unnumbered and dangers bravely encountered, were required to complete the period of its birth, and it is this story, briefly told, which should be recited to every citizen of the Union for all time to come.

When, a little more than a century ago, the United States sprang into being as a nation, Oregon was known in name only, and that name was applied simply to a great river which was supposed to flow westward from the Rocky mountains to the Pacific, but whose source, mouth or any intermediate portion no white man had ever seen. This river was known to Americans and Englishmen as the Oregon and the River of the West, while the Spaniards called it variously Rio de Aguilar and Rio de los Reyes. As a matter of fact, the country north of California had no name by which it was distinctively known, and no Caucasian had ever placed foot on the soil of either Oregon or Washington. In 1792 Captain Robert Gray, in the American ship *Columbia*, discovered and entered this large River of the West, and named it Columbia. A few weeks later Captain George Vancouver, in command of an English exploring expedition then on the coast, having heard of Gray's discovery, appeared off the mouth of the river, and sent one of his vessels, the *Chatham*, under the command of Lieutenant W. R. Broughton, into the river, and this officer ascended the stream in a boat a distance of one hundred and twenty miles. The same year Alexander Mackenzie, a member of the Northwest Company, a Canadian fur company, made the first overland journey from the east to the Pacific, reaching the ocean on the present coast of British Columbia. He discovered Fraser river, which, upon his return, was supposed to be the same stream the mouth of which Gray had entered the same year. This error was not corrected until twenty years had elapsed, and the stream was then named in honor of Simon Fraser, who had established a post in that region for the Northwest Company, in 1805. Meanwhile, the United States had taken steps to perfect its title to the region drained by the Columbia. In 1803 President Jefferson negotiated a treaty with France, by which all the territorial rights of that nation in North America were conveyed to the United States for the sum of \$15,000,000.00. Under the title of Louisiana, France claimed all that region to the north of the