

THE WEST SHORE.

FIFTEENTH YEAR.

FEBRUARY, 1889.

NUMBER 2.

VANCOUVER ON THE COLUMBIA.



UPON the north bank of the great Columbia, and but a short distance above the mouth of the Willamette, lies the city of Vancouver, occupying the most beautiful and eligible site of any city in the entire northwest. Rising in a gentle slope from the river's brink, it commands a view of great extent and wonderful beauty. To the south lies the great Wil-

lamette valley, between two parallel ranges of mountains; to the west the river soon loses its identity among the wooded hills; to the north stretches a region of timbered upland and forest-clothed hills and mountains, dominated by the great white mass of Mount St. Helens; but it is to the east the eye turns with the greatest sense of pleasure, for there, with the sparkling waters of the broad Columbia in the foreground, and framed in a massive setting of verdant mountains, the kingly Hood rears his snowy crown far into the heavens, a sight to fill with admiration every soul possessing a spark of love for the beauties of nature. On a clear day, when the sun has passed well to the south, so that the shadows cast by the huge, projecting ridges mark distinctly the deep canyons and glaciers that scar the mountain's sides, the view of Hood obtained by looking up the broad channel of the Columbia from Vancouver, is the most striking and enchanting the peak can offer. At no other point can all the elements of this great picture be had, and it is worth all the time and trouble necessary to obtain this view of Oregon's famous mountain. Sitting on the dock, waiting for the steamer, or promenading on the beautiful parade ground at the barracks, with its soft, green carpet, the eyes involuntarily turn toward the great gorge of the Colum-

bia, from which the great river issues in a mighty flood, and fasten themselves upon the commanding form of that majestic mountain with sensations of pleasure that seem never to lose their potency. It is a scene of which the eyes never weary, and one which can never be effaced from the mental canvas of one who has beheld it.

Vancouver dates its birth from the first quarter of the century, and was for years the commercial center of the entire region from California to Alaska and from the Pacific ocean to the summit ridges of the Rocky mountains. In 1823 the headquarters of the great Hudson's Bay Company, which had formerly been at Astoria—called Fort George by the company and other British subjects—were established at this point, and were given the name of that celebrated English explorer, Captain George Vancouver, one of whose lieutenants had ascended the river in a boat as far as this place soon after the discovery of the river by Captain Gray, in 1792. There were important reasons for this change of headquarters by the great fur company. All the routes of the company's employes from the various trapping grounds to the north, south and east, converged at the mouth of the Willamette, near which, of course, should be the great central station and supply point. An extra day's travel was necessary to reach the mouth of the river, and the vessel which came annually with supplies and to carry away a cargo of the accumulated furs, could ascend the stream and lie in safety along the bank of the river in front of the fort. Besides this, hay, grain and vegetables could be produced to better advantage. For years Vancouver was the hub of Oregon, a name far more comprehensive in those days than now, and so remained until the settlement of the Willamette valley by Americans raised up successful rivals. With interests antagonistic to the great fur company, the settlers founded commercial centers of their own on the Oregon side of the Columbia river, both below the mouth of the Willam-