

of those best acquainted with the growth and possibilities of the falls city for very rapid advancement during the coming months.

Since the completion of the free suspension bridge across the Willamette river at Oregon City a year ago the west side has become very desirable property and several additions to the town have been platted there. The prospect of connection with Portland by means of electric and steam motor lines that are certain to be built before long has had the effect of creating great activity in real estate, and the land on both sides of the river between Oregon City and Portland is fast losing its identity as country property and is being divided into lots and small tracts suitable for market gardening. Opposite Oregon City previous to this year timber came down to the water's edge. Already handsome residences have been erected there and it is fast being made a part of the city in appearance as well as in fact and theory. No pleasanter residence locality can be found and it is not at all strange that that property is becoming so popular. Property of all kinds is augmented in value by the great industrial improvements that have been made this year and the promising prospect for the future.

Of course activity in building operations creates a demand for building materials and this demand has led to the starting of new saw mills, brick kilns, sash, door and blind factories, etc. in and near Oregon City, in addition to the facilities that previously existed for turning out the needed materials. There is an abundance of good building stone to be obtained, and one of the paper mills will be of stone quarried on the site. Stone and brick enter largely into the buildings now going up. The main street of Oregon City presents an appearance similar to that of the streets of Seattle and Spokane Falls since their great fires, so actively are building operations being prosecuted. This spirit of progress marks a new era for the falls city. The progressive movement is always slow to get started in the old towns but when it comes the prosperity is of the substantial order and has no tinge of the speculative boom about it. This is true of Oregon City, the perfect security of investments there being a principal feature of the business situation. It is situated too near the metropolis to ever suffer retrogression, because the chief element of advantage that location possesses is its superb water power which can not be destroyed and which is always in great demand for driving the wheels of factories. It has good railway and steamboat transportation facilities. There is no more favorable site for establishing manufacturing institutions in the west and the rapidity with which they are collecting at the falls shows that the advantages of the situation are coming to be appreciated by manufacturers.

THE THETIS IN THE ARCTIC.

THE cruise of the United States steamer *Thetis* is one of the most remarkable ever made by a government vessel not bound on a genuine voyage of exploration. Early in the spring she left San Francisco with instructions to keep with the whaling fleet and render any service possible. This task she executed, and returned to port on the seventh day of December after a cruise of seven and one-half months.

The *Thetis* followed the Alaska coast line from Fort Tongass to the demarkation point, or extreme northeastern boundary, and she is the first ship to accomplish that feat in a single season. She penetrated, in company with several whalers, as far to the northeast as Herschel island, called after the famous astronomer of that name.

Of Herschel island the captain gives the following report: "It is about 500 feet in height, has a rounded contour, sloping gradually from the center on all sides, and shows the appearance of former glacial action. The vegetation is confined to grasses and small arctic flowers. On the east side of the island there is a small, snug harbor named Pauline cove, capable of receiving vessels of less than sixteen feet draught. An open bay on the same side of the island was found to be fairly good anchorage with westerly and northwesterly winds.

The report gives a graphic description of the perils encountered by the *Thetis* in an ice pack, twenty-five miles east of Point Barrow. The vessel was fast in the ice for four days. Ice closed in on her on the eighteenth of August, when she was on her way back to Point Barrow from Herschel island. The wind shifted to the west southwest, bringing the ice down off Cape Halpet. The *Thetis* pushed on, however, so as to reach Point Barrow before the wind had brought the ice down upon that point, but it was too late, as there was heavy ice resting on the shore westward of Tangent point.

In endeavoring to work in shore the steamer got into shoal water, and upon turning back found all the leads closed. The captain was obliged to make fast to a heavy floe in an open pool of water. The danger to the ship was very great, as she was likely to be crushed at any moment. There was, however, little danger to life, as the men could have made their way over the ice to land and thence twenty-five miles to the relief station. The captain, in speaking of this trying predicament, pays a high compliment to his officers, and has, in a report to the department at Washington, attributed the preservation of the ship to the "watchfulness and readiness of the officers and men and to the faithful working of the engines."

The vessel, by constant ramming and with the assistance of a favorable wind, got out and anchored at Point Barrow. On her way down she took Governor Knapp, of Alaska, aboard and conveyed him from Sitka to various points in Southeastern Alaska. Captain Stockton says the *Thetis* is admirably adapted to the work she has been engaged in.