

NEW SCHOOL HISTORIES

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF BOOKS ADOPTED IN OREGON.

What Each Has to Say About Lewis and Clark—The Oregon Question—Attractive Style.

The histories recently adopted for the common schools of Oregon are two books—*Elementary History of the United States* and *History of the United States*—both by the same author, Allen C. Thomas, professor of history in Harvard College, Pennsylvania. They are published by E. C. Heath & Co., of Boston. The elementary book bears copyright date 1900, and the grammar school volume was copyrighted this year, and brings the story of events down to the present summer. The first book is bound in cloth and the advanced book has leather back and cloth sides. The former has 228 pages of the size shown in this paper and the latter 303 pages. Both are abundantly illustrated and adequately indexed and the larger work has 70 pages of appendix containing valuable matter for reference.

The elementary work is a biographical story book more or less fictitious and legendary. It is written in an attractive style and well calculated to excite the interest of children in the lower grades. To write so as to command the attention of children and at the same time convey wholesome instruction are not comparatively few possess, but Professor Thomas has it to a rare degree and therein lies the particular charm of his work. The illustrations of high class, being selected from authentic contemporaneous sources and well drawn and printed, the reproduction in another column, though all that could be expected in a newspaper from a first press, being much below the standard of book work and giving only a general idea of what is presented in this elementary history. This book gives prominence to early history as being more interesting to the child and more settled than a narrative of modern events that may not yet have taken their true perspective. The following story of Lewis and Clark forms a complete chapter, which is illustrated by portraits of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and a map of their route across the country. The end of the chapter is an outline of it in fine lines and five questions calculated to fix the important points in the pupil's mind. This is a specimen of the treatment the various subjects receive:

Lewis and Clark.

Very soon after the Louisiana territory was turned over to the United States, President Jefferson sent out an expedition to explore the country, for it was almost unknown to white men. The party consisted of 34 men, under the lead of two captains, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. All vegetation was new to them, and familiar with backwoods life. They set out from St. Louis in May, 1804. In order to secure the good-will of the Indians, they carried with them, among other things, beads, coats, blankets, knives and tomahawks. They expected to live by hunting. Their orders were to follow the Missouri River to its mouth, to cross the great continent and follow the low Columbia River to its mouth. This great river had been first seen by Captain Robert Gray, of the American ship *Columbia*, in 1792. It was explored by him for several years in the following years, and was named after his ship, the *Columbia*.

It was a beautiful time of the year to start for a journey. All vegetation was new to them, and familiar with backwoods life. They set out from St. Louis in May, 1804. In order to secure the good-will of the Indians, they carried with them, among other things, beads, coats, blankets, knives and tomahawks. They expected to live by hunting. Their orders were to follow the Missouri River to its mouth, to cross the great continent and follow the low Columbia River to its mouth.

As soon as the spring opened, they started again, and by the latter part of April reached the mouth of the Yellowstone River. They found a great plain where there was plenty of timber, they camped and began to cut down trees with which to build huts for their winter quarters. The country was a beautiful variety to the picture. The men resumed their march, and in a few weeks saw a snow-covered range of mountains, stretching north and south, and they knew that they were near the Rocky Mountains.

One day Captain Lewis saw a mist in the distance. When he reached the river he was caused by great falls in the river. For several miles the Missouri rushes along over rocks and precipices, through canyons and narrow ways, now almost lost to view, now coming into sight again. The boats had to be drawn over the ground for miles before they could be launched again. Soon the explorers found that these boats were not at all suited for the stream in which they were to be used, and so others were built out of trees, which were cut down along the banks of the river.

Before many days, they had the river became so rocky and its current so swift that the men could not use the boats. To add to their discouragement, no Indian guide could be found, and it seemed impossible to go on through the trackless wilderness. At last Captain Lewis set out alone, saying that he would not return until he found a guide. He kept on his solitary way until he came to a small gap in the mountains, where there was just room enough between the river and the cliff for an Indian trail. This he followed.

After suffering many hardships, Captain Lewis reached an Indian village. The inhabitants could not believe that he had crossed the mountains alone. At length some of the Indians went back with him, and finding his story true, furnished guides and horses for his party.

The march was a difficult one; sometimes the little company could go only five miles in a whole day. The path was often steep; sometimes it led along steep precipices, sometimes through wild canyons. It was so difficult to find food that they ate their broken-down horses.

Though the men were ragged, weary, foot-sore and half-starved, they kept on. After a while they reached a river on which the guides told them it would be safe to embark. So they built new canoes and began to descend the stream. As they journeyed they came to a larger river, which they called the *Lawrence*; and another river which joined farther on they called the *Columbia*. Then they descended the *Columbia* itself.

They were delighted with the beautiful scenery and the charming country through which they passed. It took them a long time to descend the great river, but the day of success came to them at last.

It was a rainy, foggy morning in the autumn, they could see only a short distance around them; once they stopped to get some food at an Indian village on an island in the river. They started again, and had not gone far from this village when the fog lifted, and they "enjoyed the delightful prospect of the ocean—that ocean, the object of all their labors, the reward of their anxieties. Soon they heard the roaring of the breakers, and their joy was complete.

It was now November, and far too late in the season for them to think of crossing the mountains again. They chose a place in which to spend the winter, and made ready for their stay.

During the winter they learned all that they could about the country; its minerals, trees, shrubs, flowers, fruits, animals, fishes, birds, and even its insects.

They found out how the Indians lived, what fish and animals they caught, and what turns they had to exchange. They wrote in a journal their adventures and what they had learned, and it has made a very interesting book.

They began their return journey in March, 1806, and in the following September, two years and four months after they had set out, they reached St. Louis.

They had explored a large part of the Louisiana territory, and had also discovered and

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L. A. Yerex has returned from an extended tour to Asia and Europe, full of the conviction that Portland can get its share of the trans-Pacific trade for the effort. Many Oriental merchants, he says, will soon visit America, and he urged them not to overlook Portland. To an Oregonian reporter Mr. Yerex said yesterday: "A number of Oriental merchants and bankers have signified their intention of making America an early visit, more especially to the coast."