



THE SPECTATOR.

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WILLAMETTE RIVER.

It will probably be interesting to many, and particularly so to those who anticipate visiting Oregon at some future time, to know something of the Willamette, the Great Falls of which are now so rapidly coming into notice, and to learn something of the many cities that are springing up in the neighborhood of the most important water privilege west of the Rocky mountains.

The Willamette river takes its rise in the California mountains, in about 43 degrees of north latitude; its course is nearly north, winding through beautiful fertile prairies, now and then skirted by lofty forests of fir, pine, and cedar, receiving many considerable tributaries both on the east and west—all of which have traversed their whole length through a rich and fertile country, and, in many places, we might say, bounded with beautiful and luxuriant meadows, encircled with the lofty fir, and interspersed with beautiful groves of oak.

But to describe the Willamette in its descent, time and space will not permit us to enter minutely either into a description of the river or the country adjoining. On arriving near the Falls, "the river spreads out into a wide, deep basin, and runs slowly and smoothly until within a half a mile of the Falls, when its velocity increases, its width diminishes, eddies are formed, in which the water turns back as if loth to make the plunge; but is forced forward by the water in the rear, and when still nearer, it breaks upon the volcanic rocks scattered across the channel, and then, as if resigned to its fate, smooths its agitated surges, and precipitates down an almost perpendicular of twenty-five feet, presenting a somewhat whitened column." The rising mist, on a pleasant day, forms, in the rays of the sun, a beautiful bow—the whole forming a sight, the grandeur of which has to be seen to be appreciated.

Below the falls, for the distance of half a mile, the channel of the river is confined by ledges of basaltic rocks to about two hundred yards in width. About one mile below the falls enters the Clackamas river from the east, which takes its rise near Mount Hood, one of the perpetual snow peaks of the Cascade mountains. Here are the Clackamas rapids, another obstacle in the navigation of the Willamette; but the difficulties here presented are of minor importance—at almost any stage of water, the boats of the Hudson Bay Company ascend and descend with but little difficulty. From this place to the mouth of the Willamette, a distance of twenty-five miles, navigation is good, as the tide runs up to the foot of the Clackamas rapids. The Willamette, running its whole course from south to north, enters the Columbia in about latitude "46 degs. 30 min. north, longitude 122 degs. 20 min. west."

On the east side of the Willamette, at the falls, the land is claimed by Dr. John McLaughlin, who laid out Oregon City in the year 1842. The many advantages presented for the growth and prosperity of a manufacturing city, is manifest to the most casual observer. We are informed that where Oregon City now stands, it was, three years ago, a dense forest of fir and underbrush. The march of improvement has been with gigantic stride. The city is now incorporated with a population of not less than 500 souls, and

about eighty houses, to-wit: Two churches, two taverns, two blacksmith shops, two cooper shops, two cabinet shops, four tailor shops, one hatter shop, one tannery, three shoe shops, two silversmiths, and a number of other mechanics; four stores, two flouring and two saw mills, and a lath machine. One of the flouring and one of the saw mills, together with the lath machine, were erected and put in operation by a company of American citizens, associated together under the name of the "Oregon Milling Company," and until within a few weeks past, the flouring mill was conducted as a public mill, grinding for the settlers for toll; it, however, has been changed from doing custom work to that of exchange, giving a certain number of pounds of flour for a bushel of wheat. The mill owned by Dr. John McLaughlin has never done any custom grinding, but exchanges flour for wheat.

We are satisfied that the march of improvement would have been much greater at Oregon City, if nails and paints could have been obtained sufficient to meet the demands of the citizens.

On the west side of the river, immediately opposite the falls, the land is claimed by Robert Moore, Esq., who has also laid out a city, called Linn City, and improvements are going ahead. We are informed that Mr. Moore has sold one half of the interest he claims in the water power at the falls, to a Mr. Palmer of Indiana. From our acquaintance with Mr. Palmer, we feel warranted in saying that he will, at an early time, prosecute, with energy, the erecting of machinery on the west side of the river, unless prevented by the government of the United States, reserving the water power at the falls. Linn City contains one tavern, one chair manufactory, one cabinet shop, one gunsmith shop, and one wagon shop.

Next on the list of cities comes Multnomah City, laid out by Hugh Burns, Esq., immediately adjoining Linn City, and opposite to Oregon City. Multnomah City is located on a beautiful site, and must, in a short time, be a city in appearance as well as name. The falls of the Willamette affords ample water privileges for the erection of machinery of every description, to any extent desired; and we believe that, in a few years, there will be constructed a canal on each side of the river, commencing at the head of the falls and locked down for a distance of one mile, which improvement would afford power for the manufacturing of every thing necessary for internal purposes, as well as transportation. With these advantages, together with the great quantity of timber immediately in our neighborhood—a healthy climate, a productive soil, and minerals yet to be found, we are sanguine that the time is not far distant when we must become great, and we hope, good.

EASTWARD BOUND.—Hugh Burns, Esq., informs us that himself and party will leave early in March next, for the United States. Their route will be across the Rocky mountains by way of the South Pass. Persons wishing to send east by the party, would do well to avail themselves of this opportunity.

FIRE!—On Saturday the 7th instant, the plank kiln of Dr. John McLaughlin was discovered to be on fire, which was, however, soon extinguished by the united efforts of the Americans, English, Irish, Kanakas, (alias Sandwich Islanders,) and Indians. On that occasion it was hard to tell which nation had the preference. It was a perfect heterogeneous mass of conglomeration guttural sounds. "Hiack 'isuck!" was the only audible sound we could hear, and that was from the doctor himself, which means hurry! water!! Loss sustained about 1000 feet of lumber.

NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA.

We are informed by a respectable gentleman, who has just returned from exploring the north side of the Columbia river and Puget's Sound, that the exploring party are highly pleased with the country. North of the Columbia, particularly in the vicinity of Puget's Sound, the country, susceptible of settlement, is much more extensive, and the soil much better than before represented. Splendid prairies, surrounded with the finest of fir, pine and cedar, with a great many beautiful water courses, sufficiently large for steam boat navigation, and possessing water power well calculated to propel any kind of machinery; of these Frazier's, Snohomus, Puyallup, Cowlitz, Chehalis and Nesqually, are the most considerable. The last named stream empties into the Sound, which forms one of the best harbors on the Pacific. Hitherto the country has been unexplored by emigrants wishing to settle.

We are well satisfied, from the information received that, that region of country north of the Columbia, as far as Frazier's river, will, in a short time, be populated with the enterprising emigrant, who anticipates and intends to realize the advantages of a location at or near the harbor of Puget's Sound. To show that the above conclusions are well founded, we are informed, since writing the above, that five families have already located immediately on the Sound.

☞ "A Subscriber," who makes the inquiry for information, can have his understanding brightened by reading the 8th article of the Constitution of the Oregon Printing Association, as we have to be governed by that Constitution. In no case will we, knowingly, violate it. We gave our reasons why we thought it bad policy to agitate politics in the columns of the Spectator, and we remain of the same opinion still; but if the gentleman thinks that the people in this section of country do not sufficiently know what his politics are, it would be nothing but right that he have that opportunity.

☞ In our first number, we published the Organic Law of the provisional government of Oregon. The Land Law is organic, and no doubt, will be read with interest by many of the citizens who have not had an opportunity of knowing the law upon the subject of land claims. It appears that a considerable business is going on in the territory in the traffic of land claims. The most important change of ownership we have heard of lately, is that of Cape Disappointment being purchased by Mr. Ogden, one of the factors of the Hudson Bay Company.

☞ We gave notice in our last publication that the postmaster general had contracted with H. Burns, Esq., to carry the mail, for one trip only, from this place to Weston, Missouri—that letters mailed at any of the offices, post paid, would be forwarded. Postage only fifty cents on single sheets.

We understand the construction given by some is, that Mr. Burns receives the fifty cents for his pay for carrying the mail. This is a mistake. The postmaster general, we hope, will make better contracts than that for the department.

The terms of the contract are: Mr. B. receives 25 per cent. on the amount of postage that the department receives for sending letters east, and only fifty cents can be charged for a single sheet.

BALSAM.—On Saturday the 14th instant, some wood choppers having cut into a small sized fir tree, standing on the town plat, they discovered that it emitted large quantities of balsam. After considerable loss, preparation was made for saving it. During the day about forty gallons were saved. We have no doubt but the balsam thus obtained from the fir in Oregon will become valuable.

THEATRICAL INTELLIGENCE.

THEATRE ON BOARD H. B. M. S. MODESTE, VAN COUVER.

A sailor's life is one of excitement, and Jack is generally far more happy on his briny element, than leading the life of a landman. The happy crew of the above ship have had a spell of shore-going for the last two months, but to break in upon the monotony of waddling through the mud, they formed a little theatrical party among themselves, (the first by the bye in Oregon,) and have performed twice since the new year, sustaining their characters in the most creditable manner, that even had Will Shakespeare himself looked up, he could not say nay!

Upon Tuesday the 3d inst., under the patronage of Captain Baillie and the officers of the ship, and before a full and respectable audience, was performed the comedy of *Two weeks after Marriage*, followed by the *Prince of Hain*, and the *Mayor of Garratt*; and to give the whole performers their due, we must say that we have witnessed far inferior acting by the duly qualified "Corps Dramatique." We must first speak of the scenery—painted by themselves—it is really beautiful. The prologue composed and spoken by Mr. Pettman, elicited great applause—his concluding sentence that "Modeste" was our ship, and "modest are we," was excellently given. Our columns will not permit us to take notice of every actor, but we beg here to say the whole of them deserve the highest commendation.

The characters of Sir Charles and Lady Rackett were ably sustained. Mr. Hodgcock, old *Demetrius*—I might be proud of her share of the best during her husband's rage, was exquisite. Roberts' *Demetrius* was also choice. Fleming, as *Lecher*, looked and did his part well, but it is with the vocal powers of this gentleman we have to do—they are truly admirable—and we would not be ashamed to pitch him against a *Brabanca* of a *Hibernia*. Miss Allen, as *Dianda*, was not so bad—only she spoke rather low. Miss Lloyd, as *Nancy*, was also good—the old man's walking was excellent.

The parts of *Colonel Timpson* and *Major Balford*, by Messrs. Samson and Charles, were most respectably sustained, and here again that favorite actress, Miss Hodgcock, displayed her talents. The sweet but delicate Miss Ross, (her first appearance on any stage) as *Maria Flouval*, was well received, and we judge favorably of her future histrionic career. The performance concluded with the popular comedy of the *Mayor of Garratt*, and the house was kept in a continual roar of laughter from beginning to end. Every one did their part almost faultless, but we cannot omit specially to notice Roberts as imitable in *Jerry Sual*—it would take the most descriptive mind to do him justice; suffice it to say, we even doubt if the great *London* himself could come it as he did, in the comical twist of the muscular fibre; and his "I'll have a bit of the brown" almost sent every one into fits—it was that at one time that two gentlemen present would require to be held, the risible faculties being so acted upon. Mr. Bynon's *Suffler* was also done to perfection—the gestures and face were first rate—even some of the children called out "look at the man making faces." The orchestra was well got up, with violins, flute, and the harmonious bagpipes. Messrs. Fleming and Pettman's songs were highly applauded—the former's "Through the wood" was sweetly and beautifully sung, and deservedly encored—the latter's "Jeremiah" given with much zest, but we would recommend less of the screaming in chorusing poor Jeremiah. We conclude by saying that we wish these supporters of the drama every prosperity and success, and bid them God speed! Gratified, I think, I may safely say, in my own name, with that of the other settlers in Oregon, shall we be, when we shall see the "curtain raised" in our infant city, and entertainment afforded us equal to that of "Modest" blue jackets.

BALL AT VANCOUVER.

Captain BAILLIE and the gun-room officers of H. B. M. S. Modeste, entertained a numerous circle at a ball here, upon Wednesday evening. There was a brilliant assemblage of the "fair sex" of Oregon; and although in the far west, yet from the gay display that night, we are proud to state that the infant colony can boast of as pretty faces and handsome "figures" as the mother country. Dancing commenced at 8 o'clock, and it was pleasing to see the "tripping on the