

A Pen Picture of the Lower Columbia Valley.

This article was recently published in the Daily States of New Orleans, written by John H. Whyte, manager of the Chamber of Commerce in this city:

"Every State in the Union most probably excels every other in some one particular.

It would perhaps be one of the most interesting features of current literature, that which would set forth in just what specific agricultural product, mineral resource, manufacturing industry or commercial opportunity any given State excels all the others. This would be especially interesting to any individual who might be seeking a new business location or the best place in which to make a certain investment, and interesting to all good Americans possessing that commendable pride which causes them to wish to be considered well informed concerning their own country.

"It has occurred to me that an article about Oregon as seen through the eyes of a former New Orleansian along the lines just indicated might pass muster before the respected editor of the States, though armed as I always knew him to be, with the most terrible of blue pencils.

"And that blue pencil gives me a thought to start with—not a blue thought but a thought about most artistic, pleasant things of blue.

"To one who has lived all his life in the Central or Southern States, as I have, it is difficult to understand the color scheme of some of the world's famous landscape painters, especially those of Holland who persist in making the predominate tone of their pictures blue.

"The Dutchmen even make blue chinaware to the exclusion of almost all other kinds.

"Now for the first time in my life I understand and appreciate that there are blue landscapes, intensely blue, and they are pretty, much prettier in nature than blue paintings or a blue china done in windmills.

"My home is near the crest of a big hill from which you can always see such beautiful and eternally snow-capped mountains as Hood, Pitt, Adams, Rainier and St. Helens; and from this hill of my domicile though higher than the greatest elevation in Louisiana, I can see the mouth of the mighty Columbia River where it tumbles headlong into the Pacific Ocean. During the midsummer months

the sun sets exactly in the river's mouth as seen from my window, and I consider it a sight worth a trip across this broad continent to see.

"It is a blue sunset. At least it is purple just where the sun sinks into the limitless expanse, with all the deep valley behind it spreading between the mountain peaks of Washington and Oregon, a blue much bluer than the thin blue of the sky, as blue as Dutch China or Dutch pictures. And it is very beautiful.

"I am sending you an excellent photograph of the sun setting in the mouth of the Columbia as I have seen it, but your imagination must supply the purple and blue until the exponents of the science of photography have perfected their art to the degree of reproducing colors through the camera.

"Blue runs riot in the color scheme of Oregon. The Columbia River is from seven to fifteen miles wide in front of the port of Astoria. From the tops of the highest mountains on the Oregon side of the gorge to the tops of those on the Washington side in many places it is more than 50 miles. Blue dazzles and bewilders in all this great valley. Sometimes, in fact quite often, it is colored just like the landscapes of the South, but many, many times can it be seen overwhelmed in blue. Every morning as I eat my soft boiled eggs and toast, I sit where I can look out of my dining room window down over this river of blue, and while at first it seemed very strange, and it took me a long time to get used to it, I am now thoroughly convinced that the blue in the color scheme of nature as it is applied to Oregon is not only very beautiful, but something that should be pointed out by the close observer as being of exceptional interest. Indeed this blue color scheme has impressed me quite as much as did the fact that the cisterns were built in the air in New Orleans, and all graveyards there were above ground.

"Oregon with its two mountain systems, the Cascades and the Coast Range, has much of the most beautiful scenery in the world, especially through that part of the mountains pierced by the matchless Columbia with its renowned Cascades. It has valleys more beautiful than any others in the United States and celebrated for their beauty the world around, among which may be mentioned those of the Willamette, the

Hood, the Rogue and the Nehalem Rivers.

"But there is another beautiful sight in Oregon that can not be seen under such favorable conditions anywhere else. The latitude and the conditions of the air appear to be just right to make it possible to get the best sunset effect on the splendid snow-capped mountains.

"If one should search the world over it might not be possible to find a more sublimely beautiful effect in nature than that produced by Mt. Hood immediately after sunset. In the home of a friend I saw a picture of this dazzling snow peak on which the sun continues to shine several minutes after it has sunk below the horizon of the rest of the world, and I thought the artist might possibly be suffering from an overwrought imagination, such was the riot of the colors displayed. But one would no longer wonder at the impression in which the artist had attempted to convey were he to see the original. As seen from a distance, the effect varies from the livid hue of the lightning as the sun sinks further and further down, to the softer radiance of the aurora borealis.

"Between these there are shaded, produced with the prismatic perfection of the rainbow, the most brilliant of purple and crimson and yellow. As the twilights in this latitude are very long drawn out, one often times being able to read a newspaper more than an hour after the sun sets, the observer has an abundance of time to enjoy this rare spectacle which gradually fades to a pale white finger pointing silently up among the stars.

"God could have made prettier than Oregon scenery but many do not believe He ever did.

"There is no climatic excuse here for a man not to work unless indeed he is too lazy. I have never seen the thermometer above 90 degrees in Astoria and in fact it has only been to that point twice during the summer. In the winter time it seldom freezes. The mean temperature during the summer months is 61 degrees, and during the winter months 41 degrees, a difference of only 20 degrees. There are no mosquitoes, no flies and no malaria or any other kind of fevers. Longevity is remarkable. A picture was published in the Oregonian a few weeks ago of a man 86 years old crowning a woman 116 years old as 'Queen of the Pioneers.'

"Not only does vegetation grow very large here but people and livestock also assume exceptionally large and robust proportions.

"At the Astoria fair early in September, as an instance in point, there

were turnips on exhibition that weighed 50 pounds, cabbage heads fully as large, and some of the finest apples, pears, strawberries, blackberries, loganberries, raspberries, cherries, and plums that could be collected together in one exhibit anywhere. Potatoes grow so profusely that farmers have made as much as \$600 an acre raising them. Naturally where there is so much vegetable energy there is more than the ordinary amount of animal and mental energy. Salmon weighing less than 20 pounds are tossed back in the river by the fishermen who catch them for the canneries. It is not uncommon to see fish weighing from 60 to 100 pounds. Horses and cows and dogs grow larger here than in most other places. Babies are bigger than they are in Louisiana and as logical sequence so also are the men and women that grow up from them. I weighed in a party, exactly the skidoo number of grown men, just before we took a recent river trip and there were only two who weighed less than 162 pounds, and I was one of the two. Here I might add parenthetically that I weigh 15 pounds more than I did when I left New Orleans on March 22nd, last, and now tip the scales at 150. In this party of 23 there were seven who weighed more than 185 pounds, two that weighed slightly over 200, and one fine young athletic specimen who weighed 218 without even the suspicion of stoutness.

"Climatic conditions are such that one can carry on hard mental work

which Oregon is noted the world over and in which the State most likely excels. Apples grown in Hood River Valley have acquired a reputation such that they bring the highest price of any grown anywhere in the world. A poor man cannot even afford to eat them although he may be fortunate enough to raise them. Genuine Hood River apples are worth more than California oranges. One variety, called the 'Delicious,' sells here for 30 cents apiece, and is served on the tables of the swell Portland Hotel, at the rate of two for 75 cents.

"The Royal Chinook salmon is found in the highest state of perfection in the Columbia River near Astoria. His royal highness has made famous both Astoria and Senator Fulton whose home is in Astoria since the Senator has established the custom in Washington of giving a Chinook fish dinner at the close of each Senatorial session. But it is only the native Oregonian who knows the epicurean delights of 'salmon checks.' As for Oregon's crawfish they are as large as an Atlantic lobster, and many fishermen have made small fortunes catching them. In some places in the larger cities, there are little shops where nothing is served but Oregon crawfish, and you buy them by the half-dozen. After you eat one portion of course you are at liberty to call for another and another until you eat as many dozen as you like.

"Another delicacy of which Oregon boasts that should be mentioned in

"Louis W. Hill, president of the Great Northern Railroad Co., while in Astoria last July, said: 'This is undoubtedly the place from which the grain shipments of the great Columbia River Valley will be made. You have the situation here unquestionably for the port of the future.'

"It was only 65 years ago that New York began to change into a big city. The Albany papers ridiculed the efforts of what is now the metropolis and wound up by declaring that New York harbor could never be more than a gangway to Albany.

"For the same reason New York became a great city, so must there be a great port in the lower Columbia Valley. Both are down grade from everywhere.

"The Columbia is the nearest port to the Orient. It is one of the three great ports on the Pacific Coast and God will never make any more. As two-thirds of all the people of all the world live on the shores of the Pacific the commercial future of this ocean must become more important than that of the Atlantic. The completion of the Panama Canal will do much to enhance the value of the Pacific commerce.

"The Northwest is now entering upon a period of development that will surpass anything hitherto known. And the most rapid development to be witnessed in the Northwest, will come in the lower Columbia Valley and unless the law of gravitation ceases to govern the forces of the earth and it becomes cheaper to send



TROY LAUNDRY CO.

IN the Troy Laundry, Astoria has one of the best and most up-to-date plants of any city of its size on the coast. No expense is spared in keeping it a modern plant in every respect. The latest and most improved laundry machinery and methods are used and it is conceded by all visiting laundrymen that the quality of work turned out by them is equal to the best grade of work of any laundry on the coast. Special care is given to the wants of their many patrons, resulting in the rapid increase of business and the good will and confidence of the Astoria people. Their pay roll of over \$15,000.00 per year is beneficial to the city as it gives steady employment to between thirty and forty people. Besides their pay roll a large amount of money is expended monthly for supplies and maintenance. A visit to this institution is a surprise to those who are not familiar with the operation of a modern steam laundry. Visitors are cordially welcome and shown the different methods used in cleansing their linen.

ASTORIA,

OREGON

with the minimum of fatigue, and I can scarcely conceive the possibility of nervous exhaustion in Oregon, especially in the case of an Oregonian to the manor born, and therefore who could be reasonably expected to have a physical constitution as rugged as the great mountains and giant fir tree here abundant. It is worth a great deal to live in a climate which affords such advantages for mental activity, especially when one has nothing but the product of his mind to offer in the world's market.

"Very few housekeepers use ice during the summer months, because there is no occasion for it. In the larger cities like Portland and Astoria, almost ice-cold water clear as crystal and chemically pure comes direct from the hydrant and faucets furnished by mains that have their source in the mountain streams.

"There is one extraordinarily beautiful feature of Oregon that is first noted by the stranger and then longest remembered by them, that of the roses. There are roses in Dixie and roses in California, but nowhere are there roses that will begin to compare in beauty, odor or profusion with those of Oregon. And nowhere in Oregon are roses to be seen in such luxuriant perfection as in Portland and Astoria. Portland has assumed the worthy title of the 'Rose City' and each year it holds a carnival called the rose festa. In Portland roses may be seen growing on trees as high as a house or on bushes below your hand.

"There are several products for this connection, is 'razor clams.' But delicious as they are, I prefer digging for them to eating them. They can burrow into the sand much faster than most people can spade.

"As for dairy products, one who has never tasted Oregon butter, milk or cheese, does not know what real good cow specialties are.

"As for future prospects commercially the Columbia River which drains one-sixth of the total area of the United States and which is as much as 15 miles wide at the mouth is an inspiring theme to railroad builders and financiers of the West, and in fact to those of all parts of the world who have given the important subject that attention necessary to insure some familiarity. And it has been a theme calculated to furnish inspiration for the past many years.

"Thomas Benton while in Congress in 1850, said, 'The Columbia River will one day provide the great outlet to the Pacific Ocean for the entire western half of the United States.'

"S. H. Clark, the father of American Railroads, said: 'Here will be built the greatest maritime city on the Pacific Coast.'

"Collis P. Huntington once said 'The mouth of the Columbia River is the only natural outlet to the Pacific Northwest.'

"Archibald A. Schenck, engineer of the New York Central Railroad Co., has asserted, 'Whoever controls the railroads to the mouth of the Columbia River, will for all time control the transportation problems of the Pacific Northwest.'

commerce up hill than down, the largest city on the Pacific will be close to the mouth of the greatest river that flows into the Pacific Ocean.

"And it is well to remember that the commerce of the Columbia River basin is now doubling annually in a geometrical ratio.

"One in the least wise possessed of the gift of prescience, in the light of the statements of the wise men of finance gone before, and of the facts of the present day, might say: Standing guard over the majestic port near the mouth of the only mighty river that flows into the western ocean, nature's highway for an already vast commerce, a commerce that springs perennial like the grass of spring, is the great Pacific port of the future, a powerful commercial center brought into existence under the immutable laws of trade. Far back in what was once called the desert, through the process of irrigation, most communities are springing up where once the prairie dog and the rattlesnake were the only inhabitants. And these irrigated villages and towns and counties, the sites of which a few years ago produced nothing more valuable than dust storms and northers, through irrigation and intense cultivation will soon become the ideal places for human abode. These communities, soon to be as thickly populated as the oasis of the Sahara, will annually pour down the Columbia millions of dollars worth of agricultural and manufacturers products where a few years ago there were only dollars worth."