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HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF.

Seventy-five years ago identically the same arguments now being urged against annexation of the Philippines were pressed with great force in the halls of congress against American occupation of the Columbia river country.

The "Oregon question" made its first appearance in congress in 1820. On December 19th of that year, Floyd, of Virginia, procured the appointment of a commission, composed of himself, Metcalf of Kentucky, and Swearingen of Virginia, to inquire into the expediency of occupying the valley of the Columbia. This committee submitted a favorable report, and in January, 1823, the question came before the house for debate.

Tracy of New York ridiculed the proposition. He had conversed, he said, with persons who had been at the mouth of the Columbia, and they agreed that the country was an inhospitable wilderness. The entrance to the Columbia was dangerous; the climate was bleak and inhospitable—so humid and with so feeble a sun that the grains could scarcely be raised. As for the country east of the Cascades, he said, it was nothing but a waste of sand and gravel! This "waste of sand and gravel" is now providing bread for a large part of Europe, and its fruits find a ready market in the eastern part of the United States.

Wood of New York agreed with his colleague. Such a settlement, he said, must result either in a colony, which would be of no advantage to the government, or an independent state, which would take to itself the commerce of the Pacific.

There was much talk about the Rocky mountains forming a natural boundary, beyond which it would be inexpedient to advance. Baylies of Massachusetts replied to that with the prophetic wisdom of a seer. "Gentlemen," he said, "are talking of natural boundaries. Sir, our natural boundary is the Pacific ocean. The swelling tide of our population must and will roll on until that mighty ocean interposes its waters and limits our territorial empire. Then, with two oceans washing our shores, the commercial wealth of the world is ours, and the imagination can hardly conceive the grandeur and the power that await us." Even the prophetic gaze of the speaker fell short of the stirring events of the past year, which have planted the flag on the distant isles of the blue Pacific.

Breckinridge of Kentucky followed in a speech which, with slight adaptation, would serve admirably for the present opponents of expansion. The bill under consideration, he said proposed a military government, and this he denounced as unconstitutional. He also denied the right of congress to colonize. Occupation of the Oregon country would embroil us in foreign wars.

Congress thought the opponents of expansion had the better of the argument, for on January 27, 1823, it voted, 100 to 61, against taking up the bill to establish a military government on the Columbia.

But the Oregon question would not down. It came up again and again, and the time came when the friends of Oregon triumphed, and a great party went before the country and won on the slogan of "54-40 or fight." We did not get 54-40, and we did not fight, but we did get Oregon up to the 49th line of latitude, and we have never ceased regretting that fortune did not also throw British Columbia into the Union.—Spokesman-Review.

The appointment of Mr. Whitelaw Reid to the British Ambassadorship

is probable. In view of some recent appointments and their consequences perhaps it would be as well for Mr. Reid to visit us for a time with the view of becoming thoroughly saturated with American public opinion.

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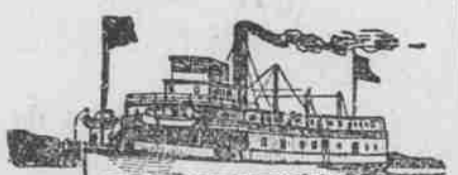
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8 p. m.	FROM PORTLAND. Ocean Steamships. All sailing dates subject to change. For San Francisco—Nov. 28, Dec. 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, Jan. 2, 7.	4 p. m.
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7 a. m. Tues., Thur. and Sat.	WILLAMETTE AND YAM-HILL RIVERS. Oregon City, Dayton, and Way Landings.	3:30 p. m. Mon., Wed., and Fri.
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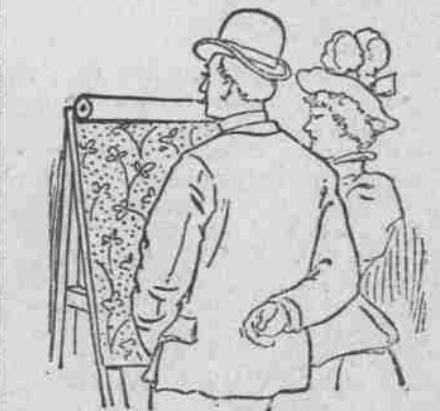
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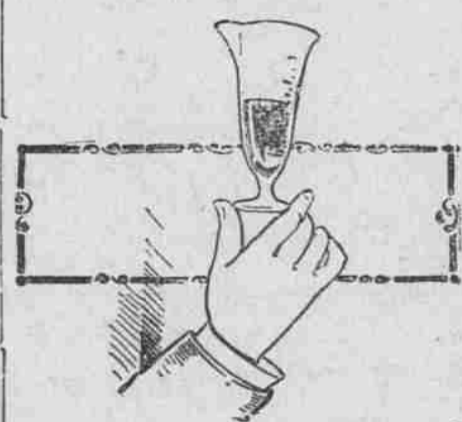
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