



THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GREAT COLUMBIAN REGION.

Particulars as to Climate, Soil, Products, Resources, Statistics, Facts, and Incidents Concerning Oregon and Washington.

From the Willamette Farmer of Dec. 3, 1880. INTRODUCTORY.

We shall attempt, in a series of articles to be published in the WILLETTE FARMER, to write of the great region now growing up in the Pacific Northwest, on the waters of the Columbia and its tributaries, covering an extent of country that will in time become an empire in its importance, and which the enterprise of leading capitalists of our own and other lands is suddenly developing by a system of internal improvements that will, within two years from this time, bring all this region within railroad reach of the city of Portland, where the business of the North Pacific centres now, and must centre through all the future. This sudden inroad of enterprise is astonishing the inland regions, that have hitherto been only roaming ground for herds and flocks, and will open up to cultivation and settlement fertile and desirable agricultural districts that cannot be surpassed on the face of the earth. Our sketches will include all the wide scope of country drained by the Columbia, the lands of Eastern Oregon and Washington, the valleys of Western Oregon, Puget Sound, the wide and undeveloped stretch of mountains and valleys in Southern Oregon and the attractive portions of our State and Washington Territory that lie along the coast towards the Pacific. We shall endeavor to do simple justice to every section embraced within this wide scope of territory, and not only describe its physical appearance and natural resources, but furnish statistics that will show all facts of importance elicited by the late census.

TRUTH, NOT FICTION.

We enter upon this work determined to do it the best justice possible with the means at hand, and in the same spirit of fairness we have always shown in writing of Oregon and Washington in our journal. We have never published exaggerated or too flattering accounts, believing that more is to be gained by truthful and moderate statements than by giving such a gloss to plain facts that honest men cannot recognize them. We have never sent a single statement forth in ten years that has been untrustworthy, and we have the same conscientious determination now, when we commence the publication of what we intend shall be a full review of every part of these regions for general circulation through the United States. We undertake it for the purpose of affording all those who wish, the means to send full facts concerning our North Pacific world back to their friends, when the sketches shall be completed and published together in one number, which will be within two months time.

THE RAILROAD ERA.

There never was a time, before this, in the history of the Pacific Northwest when our region held out so many inducements for settlement. We have been waiting all these years for the era of improvement that has existed elsewhere to overtake us. But we have been distant and remote from the great thorough-

fares of travel that population has shunned us. Disappointment after disappointment has thwarted our hopes; projected enterprises have dragged slowly, so that in great part the facilities of transportation we possess are those that have gradually developed with the country. Communication with the outside world has chiefly been by way of San Francisco, and this region, that was believed to be of great national importance before California became an American possession, and to which a transcontinental railroad was projected in 1840, to be built by means of a national subsidy, has been the last to realize such anticipation. The writer of this remembers reading in newspapers, forty years ago, of Whitney's project for building a railroad to Oregon, which was much discussed at that time. But the years have flown, Oregon has developed slowly, railroad communication with the Eastern States has been long coming, and is not here yet. But we can see its approach; the work is going on rapidly among us. Already over 800 miles of railroad has been constructed in Oregon and Washington, and with work urged rapidly at each end of the long line we can now safely predict that 1883, at farthest, will see through connection by more than one railroad to the East. That is all our country needs to place it on the top wave of prosperity, and it must be evident to all that the time to come here and secure the greatest benefits is before the way is made easy for all comers. These facts will be made plainer in detail as we proceed, but they need to be borne in mind from the first. There is no portion of the United States where improvement and development now go on, any more rapidly than with us. Railroads are now building in many directions and others are projected. The comprehensive designs of men of great sagacity and enterprise look to the construction of roads to all parts of Oregon and Washington within two years, so that every productive region will be within easy reach of market. The change already effected seems like magic, and we know that the work is to be pushed forward in all directions. Eastern capitalists, having visited this region, have become thoroughly convinced of its great importance and vast resources, and there is a strife between different corporations to occupy the field and reap the great harvest of the future. A country that capital is so eager to develop is surely one where farmers can afford to carry on the work of production with safety.

FROM 1850 TO 1880.

One who has for thirty years watched the growth of the North Pacific region; who was here when Oregon City was its chief business town and Vancouver was still the headquarters of the immense trade of the Hudson's Bay Company; who saw the first steamship come up the Willamette from the ocean to Portland, and has seen this city grow from doubts and uncertainty that clouded its early days and claimed for other, now unknown, points the greatness of future commerce, until to-day it has distanced them all and is the commercial centre of the vast Columbian region, naturally compares the future with the past and wonders what another thirty years will accomplish for this much favored country. The day of uncertainty is past and the activity and development of to-day indicate that all that human enterprise can do will be done to make known the resources of this great region; to build here prosperous communities and give opportunity and encouragement to all the industries that distinguish and enrich the most favored portions of the East.

It is desirable to have a true and impartial description given of the North Pacific country, setting forth its many resources; its varied soil and climate; its well established pro-

ducts; what can be done, as well as what has been done, and the means of wealth that are waiting for the hand of labor to develop them. It is the poorest policy in the world to overestimate any country or to overstate its resources and advantages and so endeavor to induce emigration by false representations. All our country requires is to be known on its actual merits. There is no earthly paradise that waits for the coming of man to occupy and enjoy a life without labor or hardships, but there are yet regions to be filled up that possess the charm of newness and offer rich rewards from virgin soils, and of all regions that to-day invite settlement and offer satisfactory rewards for industry and enterprise, and are blessed with healthful climate, we claim that none can exceed and few can equal the natural advantages that belong to the Pacific Northwest.

THE ERA OF DEVELOPMENT.

The city of Portland, situated on the Willamette twelve miles above its confluence with the Columbia river, is the commercial metropolis of the wide Columbian region, reaching from British possessions to the California line, from the Rocky Mountains on the East to the Pacific ocean on the West, containing an area which will provide great States and immense wealth in the near future. The era of development that has commenced so energetically of late must continue until all parts of this region are thickly settled and have facilities for transportation fully equal to all needs. The past thirty years have only led us up to the day of great things; we have only seen a beginning fairly made and from now onward the world is to know more and more of us, and our products will figure largely in the world's needs. The past thirty years have seen this region we have alluded to grow from a mere handful in 1850 to a quarter of a million, and more inhabitants in 1880. In 1850 it was all known as Oregon and the census showed but 13,000 inhabitants. There came here during the decade previous to 1850 a handful of earnest men who asserted themselves against British assumption and secured this then comparatively unknown region as a part of our national territory. The early history of Oregon is rich in romance and the patriotism of the early pioneers deserves the highest honor we can bestow.

A PEOPLE TO BE PROUD OF.

Compared with the growth of all the other so-called Western States, we have made rather slow progress. California has stood between us and the great world and held all she could from coming to us. The early days saw thousands journeying across the plains in caravans, and many are coming so again, but though the people of the East felt the greatest interest in Oregon and the romance of the early days of our history was repeated all through the West, yet the long and tedious travel was a hindrance to our success. To come here was to leave the old civilization a long way behind; we grow but slowly, and have always had to suffer from our remoteness. The great cost of making the journey either with families is all that has prevented the Pacific Northwest from being to-day peopled by millions. Under such circumstances we have had comparatively small growth, but the best element of American citizenship has kept steadily coming hither, bringing with them all the good qualities, the energy and enterprise that make sterling worth more valuable. We can safely claim that Oregon and Washington Territory to-day possess a population that for moral worth and all the best qualities of citizenship are not excelled in the United States. The tourist who visits us often has occasion to express surprise at what we have accomplished. When President Hayes was here he candidly owned that in all respects the country, the people, the towns and cities, far exceeded his expectations; so the distant citizen who has it in his

mind to come hither need not fear for all that is worth having of life, comfort, culture, intelligence and refinement has long preceded him. We confidently assert that our country fully equals in every social quality, in intelligence, ability and general progress, any of the newer states, and far exceeds most of them. The Willamette valley counties will compare favorably with the best portions of the Eastern and Middle States, and its long settlement and social organization gives it every valuable feature of the most permanent civilization. Of course the newer regions East of the Cascade mountains have to be seen at an earlier stage of development, but the people there erect the school house at the beginning and have not left the true American idea behind them. The class of people who possess the energy and character necessary to come so far, and who frequently sacrifice so much to come here are not the ones to sit down tamely when they have made their location, but build up the community from the beginning and strive to make their new homes worth possessing. Our people are gathered from all other sections and represent the enterprise of those sections. The vigor and life of a new country is well sustained by such emigrants. We of the Pacific Northwest feel proud of our people as well as of our country, and those who seek a home with us need not doubt that they will find kind friends and good neighborhoods when they reach here.

DIFFERENCES OF CLIMATE.

In the outset we must call attention to a fact that has never been made sufficiently plain to the outside world, which is impressed with the idea that Oregon is a land of almost constant rains, and many suppose that the same characteristics pertain to the whole territory of the Columbia and its tributaries, which is far from being the truth. There is a great diversity of soil and climate through this region. Along the coast where the influence of the great Japan current is directly felt, the climate is humid, and the sea influences prevail so constantly that the Coast mountain sides facing the ocean are green all Summer and Winter; while also, over the range, inland between the Coast mountains and the almost inaccessible ranges that wall in the Western valleys and Puget Sound, on the East—the Cascade mountains—the sun bleaches the pastures. Along the coast and through the Puget Sound country and the Willamette, Umpqua and Rogue River valleys Winter rains prevail, and these valleys are called "web-foot regions." Rogue River valley, that joins California, has not so humid a climate as the valleys farther North, and probably more rain falls in Puget Sound than in the valleys South.

DRY CLIMATE OF THE INTERIOR.

Fully two-thirds of the area of Oregon and Washington lies East of the mighty Cascade range. The Coast mountains are low and have no snowy peaks, and there are several passes through which the sea breezes pour, or the sea fogs roll, so that the sea influences are strongly felt in the Willamette valley, as also they are in the Umpqua and Rogue River valleys, but East of them all rise the Cascade mountains, the Andes of North America, the continuation of the great Sierra Nevada range of California, and there are no low passes in these mountains through which the winds of the ocean pour to influence the climate of the interior, where the altitude is from two to four thousand feet above the sea level, and in every respect the climate is very different from that of the valleys across the mountains, only a geographical degree to the Westward. Snowy peaks of the grandest proportions and most sublime aspect dominate this great mountain range and look towards the West for five hundred miles on a region of rich valley lands.