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## OREGON PIONEER HISTORY.

SKETCHES OF EARLY DAYS.—MEN AND TIMES IN THE FORTIES

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NUMBER XXXIX.

How Colonel T. R. Cornelius and Party Crossed the Plains.

COL. T. R. CORNELIUS.

In 1845 the family of Ben Cornelius lived in Jasper county, southwestern Missouri. Mr. Cornelius was advised that his health required a change of residence, and, in debating which way to go, submitted the question to his wife and older children. Texas was then, as now, a growing country, and he was half-way inclined to remove there. But the change of climate was not sufficient to insure health, and the family were impressed with stories that had reached them from California, not merely as to climate and soil, but that the Mexican government was making liberal land grants to actual settlers. Here, then, was the chance for the boys to become land-owners, and no doubt they relied on the certainty that some day, not distant, would see the American banner float over that region if enough Americans ever lived there. The wife and sons solved his doubts, and declared for the shores of the Pacific.

Several families left their neighborhood, and on the 2d day of April started for Independence, which was to be a rendezvous for a large company intending to cross the plains for Oregon. The grandfather, Thomas Adams, was along, and accompanied them with his family to Oregon; but he was never satisfied here, and in the spring of 1848 went overland to California. He was about 70 years of age when they all left Missouri, and was almost 100 years old when he died in California.

### MAKING UP A WAGON TRAIN.

At Independence they made a train of thirty wagons and organized with great care. They had sixty men and a company of about 250 persons. Their captain was Lawrence Hall, who was afterward a captain in the Cayuse war. He was also a member of the territorial legislature. As was common on the plains, after becoming used to matters, companies divided up considerably. During the last of the journey Captain Levin English had charge. He afterward was well known as an early settler on Howell prairie. They made safe progress on the plains and had no trouble of any kind. Previous to Fort Hall buffalo were abundant and they had plenty of meat. The Indians made them no trouble and they got along well with each other. At Fort Hall they would have turned off to California, but they were few in numbers and could not get recruits from among the advance guard. They had been in the lead all the way. If they had known it, a company that was destined for California was only a few days behind. Not knowing it, they gave up that intention as too hazardous and kept on with the crowd for Oregon. By this time they were broken up into small squads, few wagons together. Having been watchful they met with no losses and all went well. This side of Boise they changed their minds and undertook a most hazardous diversion of route.

### STEPHEN MEEK MISLEADS THEM.

Stephen Meek, the mountain man, a brother of Joe Meek, who had hunted and trapped from the Rocky mountains to the Pacific ocean, had followed them in some other company, and now pushed to the front to speculate on the credulity of people who had dared much and would not be afraid to dare more. The first Col. Cornelius remembers—he was then a boy of 17—was that Steve Meek was telling the older

men of the company that there was a "cut-off" from Fort Boise by which much time and travel could be saved. This new route he said was located in a beautiful country where water and grass abounded, while he asserted that the old route, so often traveled, was scant of both. He drew such felicitous pictures of this new route, and was apparently so familiar with it that they took up his offer to pilot them by that route to The Dalles for \$300. Part of this sum was paid in advance and satisfactory arrangements were made for the remainder. Then the companies parted, some to go the old emigrant route, so well known, and the more adventurous to follow Meek and his young wife and Nathan Olney into the wilderness. Meek had found a young girl somewhere on the frontier, and was married to her at some post near the starting point. He did not seem to have much means, and was anxious to turn some of his store of knowledge to account. Parties in the Hall and Tetherow companies took the new shoot and cheerfully struck off to the south of the Blue mountains, expecting to reach The Dalles by a much better and nearer route.

### GOLD FOUND IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS IN '45.

The Cornelius family and Grandfather Adams all took the new shoot. It was not long before they discovered that Meek was not as familiar with the country as he had pretended. While this was apparent before the end of three days time, they still did not believe it possible for the man to have utterly deceived them, and that he had no knowledge at all of the country, but such was the fact. It could be possible that a hunter and trapper was acquainted intimately with general features and yet not know the best routes for travel, so they pushed on with as much faith in themselves as they had in Stephen Meek. It was some time within a fortnight of their leaving the emigrant road that they camped one night on a stream in the foot hills of the Blue mountains, and this was the site of the famous Blue Bucket diggings of which so much has been said and written. Col. Cornelius was then a mere lad and was hunting cattle and herding stock—too busy to be about camp much. He recollects that when, a few years later, they were returning from the California mines his father told him he was satisfied that he found gold on that creek, on Meek's cut-off, for he picked up a nugget or piece, half as big as a coffee grain, pounded it flat on a wagon wheel tire and threw it away, wondering what it could be. They had not the least idea it was gold then, but after they had experience in the mines of California they felt no doubt whatever as to the existence of gold in the Blue mountains. That the elder Ben Cornelius picked up a piece of gold on the exposed bedrock of a mountain creek seems beyond a shadow of doubt.

### TRAVELING A LOST ROUTE.

Their course for awhile should have been west, gradually turning north as they gained towards the waters of Crooked river and the Deschutes; but they kept on west and south, and in the course of a fortnight found themselves—as now seems apparent—out in the midst of the dry and inhospitable region that separates the waters flowing north to the Columbia from those that feed the lakes of southern Oregon. Their course had been over a very rough and barren country. There was no sign of game save an occasional jack rabbit, no deer in sight, and the buffalo country far behind them. They began to get short of provisions and some had to deal out a shorter allowance. When they left the old road they were all well and hearty, and those that remained on it staid so to the end; but the souls lost in the wilderness were become mere shadows, while sickness and death in-

vaded many camps and reduced their numbers. In spite of care and nursing many died. For awhile they had funerals at every camp.

### MANY DYING BY THE WAY!

"Few and short were the words they said." They dug the graves, made fires over them, and drove their teams and wagons over the consecrated spot to deceive the Indians as to the places where their dead were laid. Mourning and grief gave way to painful apprehensions that all were to lay their bones down to eternal sleep among the rugged hills or on the dreary desert. They were to reach The Dalles in a short time—so Meek had said—but the time passed by, and lengthened, week after week, with no symptom of alleviation. They grew moody and selfish. Cold-faced and stony-eyed selfishness looked out of faces that had before shone all alight with human sympathy. Almost in silence the days departed and the sick died. They killed young heifers they had hoped to drive through to be mothers of princely herds. They hated to do it. It seemed murder. All the worse because the poor, weary, half-starved creatures had lost all fatness, and became only moving skeletons. On this unwholesome diet women and children sickened and died. There are at least twenty hidden graves to mark that portion of the road—graves that can never be found. There had followed Meek many wagons—perhaps sixty in all—and several hundred persons. The long detention gave time for those behind in the long procession across the plains to reach The Dalles, while Meek and his victims were yet unheard of. They all got through, well and hearty, while Meek's caravan were suffering by hundreds and dying by the score. They only grew less selfish as death came nearer, and the end gave rest and peace. It is astonishing how, in such times of fear and suffering, human sympathy will weaken.

### ON THE DESERT ALL ATHIRST.

One afternoon—it was nearly evening—they found themselves out on what is called "the desert," a grassy and rocky wilderness that stock haunt only in winter, when they can eat the snow and drink its meltings. They had gone all day without water and a small squad that had ridden on in advance twenty miles came back and reported no water on ahead. Matters had come to a pass where every man did as he liked, and discipline, there was none. Meek was silent. He had only become a passenger; the time had come for him when "silence is golden." While he claimed nothing, to those in the lead he managed to leave written directions along the road that encouraged with false descriptions of the road in advance those who were behind.

### A Suggestion.

Another inquisitive 6-year-old bobbed up on a big-four train this morning as a brakeman, wearing a patent-leather cap and a brass-buttoned blue suit, rushed through the cars in the unceremonious style peculiar to his class. "Say, pap, does that man own the railroad?" "No, sonny, he's only the brakeman." "Why does he slam the door so hard?" "Maybe so that he will break something." "Is that the reason they call him the brakeman?" "Be still, Johnny, until we get through the tunnel." "I'll bet if I had \$100 I'd get a suit like the brakeman wears." "Then what would you do?" asked papa, curiously. "I'd wear it to Sunday school and take up the collection; I'll bet I would get lots of money too, 'cause I'd scare the people just like the conductor and brakeman do."—Cincinnati Times-Star.

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### THE CODLING MOTH.

The derivation of the word "codling" is as follows: An unripe and undergrown apple is called in England a codlin, or codling, and as this moth attacks always the undergrown and unripe fruit, it was called in England the codling, or codlin moth, which name it bears today. The meaning of it is, the moth that attacks codlings, or unripe apples. It is proper to spell it with or without the final "g," but it seems to be the most common to say "codling." It is not often that a name has so clear a signification as this. As we are to hear a deal about it in the years to come, we give our readers the meaning and history of the whole word.

The whole State is more or less infested with this pest, and it will soon go where not found as yet. California has a State officer, with assistants all through the State, whose duty is to have the law enforced and all reasonable efforts made to extirpate the various pests that exist there; and they are very numerous because their climate favors the breeding of such insects. One way to catch the worm, after it has made its attack on the fruit and is hunting a quiet place in which to spin its cocoon and become a butterfly, is to put coarse cloth or heavy paper in folds around the body of the tree. The worm leaves the apple, or pear, drops to the earth, and then climbs the tree in search of some quiet retreat where it can quietly make its will and undergo the change from crawling worm to floating moth. The true idea is to destroy this moth, that else will lay its quota of eggs and destroy its full quota of choice fruit. A gentleman who was visiting Oregon last month gave his experience, and seemed to be successful in carrying his experiment out and killing thousands of moths. He has stakes, all with cans at the top, and at night lights whatever candle or lamp he has in the can, and catches from six to a hundred moths. They fly into the can and find there a mixture, or simply kerosene oil. The moths fall in this and that ends them. To try both these plans will be to make a thorough test of known preventives.

Our Legislature should pass an act to provide a competent board of commissioners for such a purpose, and improve on the experience of California. Now that fruit has a prospect of bearing a good price, we should cultivate the orchards and do all that is reasonably necessary to encourage the planting of more. Some legislation is absolutely needed, and our fruit-growers are entitled to such protection. The difficulty is to provide protection without imposing too difficult conditions on the unfortunate fruit-grower who is sought to be benefitted. The codling moth was brought from Europe to our country centuries ago, and then from the Atlantic States to our coast, from California to Oregon. It has been known in the Atlantic States for centuries.

### A Horse's Hoof.

The foot of the horse is one of the most ingenious and unexampled pieces of mechanism in animal structure. The hoof contains a series of vertical thin laminae of horn, amounting to about 5,000, and forming a complete lining to it. In this are fitted as many laminae belonging to the coffin-bone, while both sets are elastic and adherent. The edge of a quire of paper inserted leaf by leaf into another will convey an idea of the arrangement. Thus the weight of the animal is supported by as many elastic springs as there are laminae in all the feet, amounting to about 4,000, distributed in the most secure manner, since every spring is acted on in an oblique direction.

We advise you to have all prescriptions filled at Port's drug store, 100 State street.

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### Fruit Trees with Wet Feet.

Every one has noticed how much more rank the growth of almost any sort of vegetation when the supply of moisture is abundant. Mr. A. N. Cole of New York State, who has been making considerable stir over what he calls the "New Agriculture, or The Waters Led Captive," has availed himself of a system of underdraining to supply the roots of trees and plants with abundant moisture and produced very remarkable results. Prof. B. F. Johnson, the correspondent of the Country Gentleman, writes of what he saw in Colorado as follows:

Every reader of your paper has come to know how persistently and strenuously I have urged the necessity of more moisture than the average Mississippi valley apple and pear gets, and this based on the conviction that the disasters which have fallen on fruit orchards in the section named, were chiefly due to starvation following a deficient water supply.

It is not without a large measure of satisfaction that I saw this view endorsed and confirmed by the irrigated apple orchards I saw at Fort Collins, on the lands and in the neighborhood of the Colorado Agricultural College. At the grounds of the latter I saw Duchess of Oldenburg and crabs in variety, loaded with fruit, at Mr. McClelland's near by the Wealthy and Ben Davis, equally fruitful, but the fruit of every bearing tree more stung by the curculio or the codling moth. But near Denver, on what is known as Wheat Ridge, the fruit was fair, large, untouched and unstung—the foliage perfect, the growth rank, and fifteen-year-old Ben Davis, Wealthy and Duchess of Oldenburg bearing larger, fuller and heavier crops than I ever saw in Illinois, even on the apple-bearing clays of Clay and Marion counties. The essential element of success here was water—an abundance of water and wet feet from April to October. Alongside the handsomest show of Ben Davis apples I ever saw, I observed a generous flow of water coursing down—not suffered to flow constantly, but as often as the soil seemed to need it. The same was true of the small fruits, and the result was Kittatiny, Lawton and Wilson blackberries, averaging in size well-grown Siberian crabs, and black and red raspberries (of the finer kinds) rivaling strawberries in solidity and form.

When, hereafter, those who oppose as destructive my recommendations as to apples and the small fruits in prairie Illinois and elsewhere, state their case, I will advise them to take a trip to the irrigated orchards of Colorado and see what I have seen, and correct their notion, if they are not too old to learn.

### More Money for Your Work

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"The American Cow-boy" is the subject of a timely and instructive article by Joseph Nimmo, Jun., in the November Harper's. The public services which the cattle rangers have performed as pioneers of civilization, repressors of Indian outbreaks, punishers of injustice, and leaders in a great industry, are well shown. Special attention is given to the recent northern movements of cattle raising through Montana, Dakota, Colorado, and Kansas. Some valuable information is given concerning the methods, the extent, and the proceeds of ranching in that section.

### It Depends Upon How You Look at It.

"My dear," said a sentimental wife, "home, you know, is the dearest spot on earth." "Well, yes," said the practical husband, "it does cost about twice as much as any other spot."—Chicago Tribune.