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OREGON PIONEER HISTORY.

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

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The Experience of J. W. Nesmith in Crossing the Plains.

The late J. W. Nesmith, who filled so important a part in the pioneer history of Oregon, and occupied the highest positions the Territory and State could confer upon him, deserves a high place also in the annals of Oregon's "Pioneer Days." It is matter for regret that more particulars cannot be had of his youth but of his manhood we know, because it was spent among us, and is part of the history of our State. His career illustrates how all the paths of honor are open to American youth, and that genius can, in our country, climb to the highest rounds of the political ladder.

Nesmith's own account of himself is as follows: "I have often been asked, by refined and cultivated people in Washington, the reason of my coming to Oregon in that early day, and I have found it a difficult question to answer. I was a poor, homeless youth, destitute alike of friends, money and education. Actuated by a reckless spirit of adventure, one place was to me the same as another. Thinking my condition might be made better, and knowing it could not be made worse, I took the leap in the dark. But in the emigration that accompanied me, there were staid men of mature years and cultivated intellects—men who left comparatively comfortable homes and friends, with their wives and children; gave up the advantages of civilization to cross a desert continent beset with hostile savages, to go they knew not whither, and with certainty that in the event of defeat by Indians or finding Oregon uninhabitable, there could be no possibility of returning. The chances were more than even that if they escaped the scalping knife of savages it would only be to perish by starvation. So far as lands at reasonable rates and fruitful soil were desirable, they were surrounded by these in the homes they had abandoned. No monarchical or arbitrary government oppressed them. No religious zealots persecuted them. They fled from no such evils as brought either pilgrims or cavaliers to the new world. Nor was their avarice tempted by the inducements which sent Cortez and his companions to Mexico, or Pizarro to Peru."

The foregoing shows in graphic words the conditions under which the earliest emigrants came to Oregon. He goes on to show how little of veritable fact there was concerning this region, and that even the information compiled and submitted to Congress was meager and unsatisfactory. Excepting Benton and Linn, no members seemed to attach importance to our Pacific possessions. Many members derided the idea of its ever becoming a portion of the Union, and deprecated attempts at settlement. Mr. Nesmith overlooks the fact that he and his fellow-emigrants had the same conviction that Benton and Linn had, and that the people of the border, from association with mountain men and fur traders, were to some extent informed as to the value of Western Oregon. While it was a hazardous venture, it was not so entirely a "leap in the dark," as it seems.

Nesmith was of New England birth, and of a family that had some note in the pioneer history of New Hampshire. He was a mechanic by trade, and following the bent of the New England mind, had left the land of his nativity for the West. By 1840 he had drifted to the very border, and when talk of Oregon came up, he joined the emigrants who were gathering on the frontier to make the so-called "leap in the dark." In the company there were 295 persons over 16 years of age, capable of bear-

ing arms, 111 wagons and other vehicles, but no pleasure conveyances. The teams were mostly oxen. Five persons and their families turned back on the Platte. As the toil, hardships and privations of the journey became apparent, and the uncertainties of its termination were forced upon their minds, they resolved to return.

As early as 1840 Nesmith heard of Oregon, and during the winter of 1841-2, while in Jefferson county, Iowa, learning that Dr. Elijah White, who had been in Oregon, was wintering there as a sub-Indian agent, and would leave Independence in the spring of 1842, he mounted his horse and rode across Western Iowa to reach Independence seventeen days after White had left there. He would have followed and overtaken the train, but the Pawnees were on the war path, and were a dangerous tribe in ordinary times, so he was obliged to forego the journey at that time. During the next winter Dr. Marcus Whitman, missionary to the Cayuses on the Walla Walla river, "visited Washington to intercede in behalf of American interests on this coast."

"Means for transmission of news at that time was slow and meager on the frontier, but the Oregon question, through the medium of Senators Benton and Linn and Dr. Whitman, did create some commotion in Washington, and enough of it found its way to the far West to make some stir among the ever-restless and adventurous frontiersmen. Without any formal promulgation, it became fairly understood, and was so published in the few border newspapers then in existence, that our emigration party would rendezvous at Independence, to start for Oregon as soon as the grass would subsist the stock. Without orders from any quarter, and without preconcert, promptly as the grass began to start, the emigrants began to assemble near Independence, at a place called Fitzhugh's mill. On the 17th day of May, 1843, notices were circulated through the different camps that on the succeeding day those contemplating emigration to Oregon would meet to organize. Promptly at the appointed hour the motley groups assembled. They consisted of people from all the States and Territories, and nearly all nationalities—the most, however, from Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri and Iowa—all strangers to each other, but impressed with a crude idea that there existed an imperative necessity for some kind of organization for mutual protection against the hostile Indians inhabiting the great unknown wilderness stretching away to the shores of the Pacific, and which they were about to traverse with their wives and children and all their earthly possessions."

Many of the emigrants were from the western tier of counties of Missouri, known as the Platte purchase. Among them was Peter H. Burnett, a former merchant, who had abandoned the yardstick and become a lawyer of some celebrity. He subsequently went to California, was elected the first Governor of the Golden State, was afterward Chief Justice, and long an honored resident. Mr. Burnett—or, as he was familiarly designated, "Pete"—was called on for a speech. Mounting a log, the glib-tongued orator delivered a glowing, florid address.

He commenced by showing his audience the then Western tier of States and territories was overcrowded with a redundant population, who had not sufficient elbow room for the expansion of their enterprise and genius, and it was a duty they owed to themselves and posterity to strike out in search of a more expanded field and more genial climate, where the soil yielded the richest return for the slightest amount of cultivation, where the trees were loaded with perennial fruit and where a good substitute for bread, called La Camash, grew in the ground, salmon and other fish crowded the streams, and where the

principal labor of the settlers would be confined to keeping their gardens free from the inroads of buffalo, elk, deer and wild turkeys. He appealed to our patriotism by picturing forth the glorious empire we would establish upon the shores of the Pacific. How, with our trusty rifles, we would drive out the British usurpers who claimed the soil, and defend the country from the avarice and pretensions of the British lion, and how posterity would honor us for placing the fairest portion of our land under the dominion of the stars and stripes. He concluded with a slight allusion to the trials and hardships incident to the trip, and dangers to be encountered from hostile Indians on the route, and those inhabiting the country whither we were bound. He furthermore intimated a desire to look upon the tribe of noble "red men" that the valiant and well armed crowd around him could not vanquish in a single encounter.

Other speeches were made, full of glowing descriptions of the fair land of promise, the far away Oregon, which no one in the assemblage had ever seen, and of which not more than half a dozen had ever read any account. After the election of Mr. Burnett as Captain, and other necessary officers, the meeting, as was motley and primitive as one ever assembled, adjourned with three cheers for Capt. Burnett and Oregon.

On the 20th day of May, 1843, after a pretty thorough military organization, we took up our line of march, with Capt. John Gantt, an old army officer, who combined the character of trapper and mountaineer as our guide. Gantt had in his wanderings been as far as Green river, and assured us of the practicability of a wagon road thus far. Green river, the extent of our guide's knowledge in that direction, was not half way to the Willamette valley, the then only inhabited portion of Oregon. Beyond that we had not the slightest conjecture of the condition of the country. We went forth trusting to the future, and would doubtless have encountered more difficulties than we experienced had not Dr. Whitman overtaken us before we reached the extent of our guide's knowledge. He was familiar with the whole route, and was confident that wagons could pass through the canyons and gorges of Snake river and over the Blue mountains, which the mountaineers in the vicinity of Fort Hall declared to be a physical impossibility.

Capt. Grant then in charge of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Hall, endeavored to dissuade us from proceeding further with our wagons, and showed us the wagons that the emigrants of the preceding year had abandoned, as an evidence of the impracticability of our determination.

Dr. Whitman was persistent in his assertions that wagons could proceed as far as the Grand Dalles of the Columbia river, from which point he asserted they could be taken down by rafts or batteaux to the Willamette valley, while our stock could be driven by an Indian trail over the Cascade mountains, near Mt. Hood.

Happily Whitman's advice prevailed, and a large number of the wagons with a portion of the stock, did reach Walla Walla and The Dalles, from which points they were taken to the Willamette the following year.

Had we followed Grant's advice and abandoned the cattle and wagons at Fort Hall, much suffering must have ensued, as a sufficient number of horses to carry the women and children of the party could not have been obtained, besides wagons and cattle were indispensable to men expecting to live by farming in a country destitute of such articles.

At Fort Hall we fell in with some Cayuse and Nez Perce Indians returning from the buffalo country, and as it was necessary for Dr. Whitman to precede us to Walla Walla, he recommended to us a guide in the person of an old

Cayuse Indian called "Sticcus." He was a faithful old fellow, perfectly familiar with all the trails and topography of the country from Fort Hall to The Dalles, and although not speaking a word of English, and no one in our party a word of Cayuse, he succeeded by pantomime in taking us over the roughest wagon route I ever saw. Sticcus was a member of Dr. Whitman's church, and the only Indian I ever saw that I thought had any conception of, and practiced the Christian religion. I met him afterward in the Cayuse war. He did not participate in the murder of Dr. Whitman and his family, and remained neutral during the war between his tribe and the whites, which grew out of the massacre. I once dined with Sticcus, in his camp, upon what I supposed to be elk meat. I had arrived at that conclusion because looking at the cooked meat, and then at the old Indian interrogatively, he held up his hands in a manner that indicated elk horns; but, after dinner, seeing the ears, tail and hoofs of a mule near camp, I became satisfied that what he meant to convey by his pantomime was "ears," not "horns," but digestion waited upon appetite, and after dinner was over it did not make much difference about the appendages of the animal that furnished it.

How to Make Home Attractive.

Keep the house clean. Cleanliness is next to godliness. A clean home makes its inmates clean. Outward cleanliness is the symbol of inward purity. Make your rooms bright and cheery and not too nice for the boys and girls to enjoy. If you cannot afford expensive pictures, buy cheap ones that are bright, pretty and in good taste. Beautify the home and thus beautify the childhood of your sons and daughters. Train them to help you in your tasks. Divide with them the toil, and they will double the pleasures of your home. If a child shows ability or talent in any direction, allow him to cultivate it. Encourage and praise his efforts. Let him know he is appreciated, and that his plans and purposes are matters of vital interest to his parents. Teach your children to control their tempers by controlling your own. Lastly, don't fret.

When to Cut Clover.

A piece of especially uniform clover at the Pennsylvania agricultural college was cut in June 21, when the clover heads were in bloom. A similar area on the same piece was cut July 3, when some of the heads were dead, and the balance was cut July 19, when all the clover heads were dead. The hay was re-weighed after being in the barn five or six months, when it was found that the two earlier cuttings had shrunk about 43 per cent in weight, while the last cutting had shrunk only 25 per cent. The weight of the "dry" hay per acre was 4110 lbs on the early cut, 4141 on the next lot and 3915 lbs on that cut when the heads were all dead. The contents of the crop are given in the following figures, which show that the youngest grass furnished the largest quantities of the most valuable ingredients of cattle food:

	June 21.	July 3.	July 19.
	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.
Yield of dry substance per acre,	3660	3430	3361
ash,	360	326	308
Nitrogenous matter,	539	409	421
Woody fiber,	1023	1248	1252
Starch, sugar, etc.,	1631	1759	1578
Fats,	116	106	94

The composition of the clover hay from each period of growth indicates a constant decrease in its actual nutritive value, after the grass has passed the period of full bloom. The decrease in the nitrogenous part of the fodder, which is the most valuable portion, is very marked. The much less valuable woody fiber increased in the late cut, at the expense of the starch and sugar. Begin to cut clover just as the heads are blooming, so that you will get through with the harvest before the heads are dead. The bulk of the crop will thus be secured in the best possible state.

Bismarck's condition has become worse. He is afflicted with rheumatic pains, which prevent sleep. His doctors advise rest and change of climate. His illness, however, prevents traveling at present.

Correspondence.

Commencement at the Oregon State Normal.

This young school has much to recommend it to the people of Oregon. First, it's healthful location; second, the town of Monmouth is quiet and highly moral, no saloons or low places of resort being within its charter limits. Third, the Normal has a most efficient corps of teachers. President Stanley, of the Missouri State Normal, is widely known for his affable qualities socially, and good managing skill. Professor Powell is one of the Normal's own graduates, and is a general favorite with all his students; his efficient skill in music tells in the devotional exercises as well as public entertainments. Professor P. L. Campbell is another Normal graduate, but took his B. A. at Harvard. This young man has also the love, respect and confidence of the students. Miss Millie Doughty, also of the Normal, is loved and respected by all who know her, and with Miss Kate Bristow, completes the faculty.

The students reunion on Monday evening, was a very enjoyable affair. After a short and well selected literary entertainment, the evening was spent in social intercourse. On Tuesday evening the Athletic Association entertained a very large audience in the Normal chapel. The principal features of the entertainment, were as follows: Recitations by Mr. G. E. Honck, Miss V. Goodwin, of Portland, and H. J. Litchfield, solo—vocal, by Miss Rowell, of Dallas; flute solo by Wm. Carpenter, and a whistling solo by Miss Stone, of Dallas, which received great applause. The members of the Association acquitted themselves very creditably indeed, and their college songs and choruses were highly appreciated by all. Wednesday a very large crowd assembled in the chapel to witness the graduating exercises, which began at 10 A. M., with music by the Choir. Invocation by Rev. B. Wolverton; Salutatory, "School Days," by Minnie Wade; "Pearls and Pebbles," by H. C. Harris; "Higher Education of Women," by Ida Wade; Music by the Choir; "Affection," by Wm. Sellers; "Hidden Dangers," by Stevens; "The Relation of Labor and Capital," by Frank Lucas; Music, by the Buena Vista Band; "The Saloon in Politics and Society," by A. E. Dunn; "Dawn of the Drama," by L. R. Lewis; "Education," by Aggie Winnall. After an adjournment of one hour, the exercises were again opened by music by the Band. "Power of Association," by Anna Stevens; "Eclipsed," by I. C. Powell; "Workers," by Sara E. Cavitt; "Man—Class Poem," by J. A. Buchanan; Music, by the Band; "Focalize," by Viola Ruble; "Personal Independence," by B. F. Mulkey; "Echoes," by Kate Croes; "Valedictory—Armanda," by L. B. Reader; song by the class. Presentation of Diplomas. Annual address by Prof. R. K. Warren, of Portland. It would ill become your correspondent to make personal criticisms or comments; let it suffice that each did well his part.

Trouble Ahead.

When the appetite fails, and sleep grows restless and unrefreshing, there is trouble ahead. The digestive organs, when healthy, crave food, the nervous system, when vigorous and tranquil, gives its possessor no uneasiness at night. A tonic, to be effective, should not be a mere appetizer, nor are the nerves to be strengthened and soothed by the unaided action of a sedative or a narcotic. What is required is a medicine which invigorates the stomach, and promotes assimilation of food by the system, by which means the nervous system, as well as other parts of the physical organism, are strengthened. These are the effects of Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, a medicine whose reputation is founded firmly in public confidence, and which physicians commend for its tonic, antibilious and other properties. It is used with the best results in fever and ague, rheumatism, kidney and uterine weakness, and other maladies.

Lubricating oils for every use, warranted the purest and best, at the Port Drug Company, Salem.