

W. C. BYRD Editor.

THE DISCOVERY OF OREGON

In 1540 the eyes of civilized man first rested upon Oregon, when Cabillo and Ferrer, sailing under the Spanish flag, coasted along until they reached as high as Cape Blanco, 43° north latitude, which Cape Blanco, in the year of our Lord 1892, is in Curry county, Oregon, and only a few miles north of the California line.

If Captains Cabriho and Ferrer thrilled with enthusiasm in contemplating the possibilities of this portion of the North American continent, they successfully concealed it in their report to that king of theirs, Charles V., under whose reign Cortez pillaged Mexico, Pizarro rebelled Peru, and Aimagro carried back to Spain all that was probable of Chili, for nearly two hundred years elapsed before another white man gazed upon it! Or perhaps Charles was too busy to settle Oregon then, since he had settlements of a bloody kind with Francis I. of France, with Germany the Netherlands, Tunis, Algiers, and a single round with his Holiness, Pope Clement VII., spending more money in these European pastimes than his able lieutenants could steal from the murdered natives of the Western World.

Again a Spaniard, one Juan Perez, in 1774, sailed as high along the coast as the 54th degree of north latitude, discovered Nootka Sound, and theoretically planted the flag of Castile and Arragon over this quarter of the earth and sea, while his colleague, Bodega, a year later, took in the 58th degree of north latitude, together with the remaining earth and sea, including Mount St. Elias, which was in sight.

Up to this point everything was Spain's, but north of this a greedy Russian, who had long been engaged in building a town on the Gulf of Finland, had put in a prior claim having hired a Dane, by name Vitus Behring, to go cruising along the northeast coast of Siberia. This Dane discovered a sea which was named for him, and which the United States bought, Oct. 18, 1867. Anyhow, they do not allow any other nation to go fishing in it. Behring also found out that it was only a few miles across from Siberia to America, and on July 18, 1741, he "discovered" the coast of Alaska as far down as Mount St. Elias, and claimed everything for his master, Peter the Great, or rather for Elizabeth, the daughter, for Peter had been a saint since 1725. Honors were about even as between Spain and Russia, but in 1778, Captain James Cook, a famous English navigator, who was

afterward fatally run through the middle with a javelin by a Sandwich Islander, and then devoured in true cannibal style, came coasting along these shores, saw that the country was good, and evidently told it, for in 1785 a school of British trading vessels swarmed in in these seas, and they have swarmed there ever since.

In 1790 the French navigators got up courage enough to get that far from home, and entered into competition for trade on the northwest coast. It was, however, not until 1800 that France put in her claim for Oregon, by virtue of her acquisition of the Spanish title to that vaguely bounded territory, "Louisiana."

In 1781 seven American vessels found their way to this quarter of the globe, and one of these on May 11, 1792 (George Washington had been three years President), commanded by a Massachusetts Yankee, Captain Gray, who distinguished himself by discovering and sailing into a broad and swift stream "the waters of which were so perfectly fresh that the casks of the ship were filled within ten miles of the Pacific." He named it Columbia River, after his vessel of that name. Of course he landed and claimed the country all around, including the rivers and a fair share of the Pacific Ocean.—From "Nathaniel J. Wyeth, and the Struggle for Oregon," by John A. Wyeth, M. D., in Harper's Magazine for November.

THE wisdom of our ancestors packed away in proverbial sayings may always be a little suspected. We have a vague respect for a popular proverb, as embodying folk-experience, and expressing not the wit of one, but the common thought of a race. We accept the saying unquestioning, as a sort of inspiration out of the air, true because nobody has challenged it for ages, and probably for the same reason that we try to see the new moon over our left shoulder. Very likely the musty saying was the product of the average ignorance of an unenlightened time, and ought not to have the respect of a scientific and travelled people. In fact it will be found that a large proportion of the proverbial sayings which we glibly use are fallacies based on a very limited experience of the world, and probably were set afloat by the idiocy or prejudice of one person. To examine one of them is enough for our purpose.

"Whistling girls and crowing hens Always come to some bad ends."

It would be interesting to know the origin of this proverb, because it is still much relied on as evincing a deep knowledge of human nature, and as an argument against change, that is to say, in this case against progress. It would seem to have been made by a man, conservative, perhaps malevolent, who

had no appreciation of a hen, and a conservatively poor opinion of women. His idea was to keep woman in her place—a good idea when not carried too far—but he did not know what her place is, and he wanted to put a restraint upon her emancipation by coupling her with an emancipating hen. He therefore launched this shaft of ridicule, and got it to pass as an arrow of wisdom shot out of a popular experience in remote ages.

It is not often that a man prominent in any walk of life renders such unqualified homage to a contemporary member of his own profession as was paid in the English "United Service Magazine" some months ago by Lord Wolseley to Count von Moltke. The German General, according to the testimony of the British General, directed and ordered events in a way and degree that has not fallen to any man's lot since Bonaparte embarked upon the Bellerophon. He began life with two great advantages: he had an ancient lineage, the possession of which is at once a spur and a curbchain to the righteously ambitious man, and he was, at the same time, brought up in that poverty which Bonaparte declared to be the best school for a soldier. Lord Wolseley calls attention to the curious fact that Von Moltke saw but one battle until he was sixty-four years of age, and that he was then on the losing side; but he knew all that books and observation could teach him, and that his mind was filled with deductions drawn from his long and careful study, as well as with elaborately thought-out and business-like plans for the application of what he had learned to the altered conditions of the period in which he lived.

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