

BULLETIN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON.

HISTORICAL SERIES VOL. I, NO. I.

SEMI-CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF OREGON.

MILE POSTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OREGON
AND
CHARACTERISTICS OF OREGON AS AN AMERICAN
COMMONWEALTH,

BY

HORACE S. LYMAN,

With a Supplement:

A WORLD MOVEMENT AND A NATIONAL MOVEMENT THAT
HAD IMPORTANT RELATIONS TO THE
MAKING OF OREGON,

BY

F. G. YOUNG, EDITOR HISTORICAL SERIES.

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PREFACE.

The average youth of the Pacific Northwest gets but little help towards understanding the elements of civilization around him as the outgrowth of an orderly historical development. He has not such bearings as would stimulate him to do some real thinking about the land-marks and institutions under his observation. He is not equipped so that he can run out independently the lines of historical relationship between the civilized life about him and the life of the rest of his country and of the civilized world.

His study of American history drew his attention to the Atlantic Coast and held it there with only an occasional glance at his own region as the names of Drake, and Lewis and Clark were mentioned. To him the Oregon question was only a party ruse.

Some of the more earnest students of Oregon history believed that such a state of darkness pertaining to the Pacific Northwest history in our schools need no longer exist. There was a wealth of guiding power among them to afford the best historical instruction to the Oregon youth. As two noteworthy anniversaries of great turning points in the history of Oregon occur during this school year it was felt that the time was auspicious for arousing a general interest in the history of the Pacific Northwest.

The University of Oregon proposed to utilize these opportunities. Its proposition was most heartily seconded by the Press. Papers constituting a complete Semi-Centennial history of this state on a co-operative basis were patriotically pledged. The Legislature of Oregon reinforced this project by taking steps to arrange for appropriate observances of the anniversaries at Salem, Feb. 14, 1899; at Portland, June 15, 1899.

We have ardent hopes that the superintendents and teachers of the Oregon schools will give an enthusiastic response to this movement and make it a new and true point of departure for an enlightened and strong commonwealth spirit. The American State as a political organization has, says Bryce, shriveled in im-

portance since the days of our Revolutionary forefathers. But that body politic upon which devolves the solution of questions of the relations of labor and capital, of corporations and the maintenance of conditions fostering social and industrial evolution; in whose keeping are the interests of education and public philanthropy cannot but expand to vigorous life again, if it fulfils its destiny.

The spirit of co-operation, which this undertaking manifests in operation among the contributors, will we trust will communicate itself to every school district of the commonwealth and inspire the teachers and students to find every vestige of historical data and use it so that it may not be hid "as a candle under a bushel," but be made to shed its light for all.

There are historical sites in almost every school district, where some worthy public deed was done. These should be identified and commemorated by permanent inscriptions. There are more or less extensive collections of newspaper files to be found in many school districts. Left where they are these are liable to lose worth in the eyes of their possessors and be consigned to the rubbish heap, turned over to a public custodian and combined with others they become invaluable. Likewise there are old diaries, account books, collections of letters written in the early days; some possibly could be secured from the East from persons to whom they were written or from their heirs. Many a garret has old books touching upon life in early Oregon. These should go to the district school library. In not a few places records of literary societies now no longer active are to be found. The reminiscences of the living pioneers of every district should be carefully secured. An accurate history of land-holding in each district from the first settler down would be valuable.

County associations of teachers could catalogue the memorable historical sites of their respective counties, assign the work of compiling histories of the leading industrial and commercial interests and county institutions, and aid the writers by supplying them with material. The following anniversary dates could be used as times for general meetings with historical exercises:

February 14, 1859—Admission of Oregon as a State.

March 3, 1849—Extension of the laws of the United States over the Oregon Country.

May 2, 1843—Organization of the Provisional Government of Oregon.

May 11, 1792—Discovery of the Columbia River.

June 15, 1846—Treaty between the United States and Great Britain by which the Americans were given sole right to territory south of the 49th parallel.

University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, Nov. 12, 1898.

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Mile Posts in the Development of Oregon.

The subject assigned to me, as above, is of enough difficulty in treatment to give a strong feeling of diffidence as I approach it. Mine is the task of disclosing the epochal events in the history of our development as a state. It is in such events that the most which makes history interesting is found.

As a leading object in this series of articles is to awaken interest in our history, it will be seen what a responsibility has been devolved upon me. If the really epochal events are well shown, the articles that follow will be assisted to a clear understanding.

Yet if we apprehend our history correctly, we need have little worry about making it interesting. As the sculptor Powers used to say he took no pains for the *expression* of his statues: if they were made correctly they had the expression.

The facts as they happened are interesting the moment that they are really understood. To begin with we must not allow any conventional ideas to preoccupy our mind.

It is so easy for helping the memory to divide historic times into periods of three, five, seven, one hundred, or one thousand years and this method of making history remembered has been so much employed, that it is hard to be clear of it. Conventional divisions seem impressive. We have seen persons who could not

suppress a shudder when the clock struck the hour of midnight; the last year of a century seems freighted with especial importance, and it was once thoroughly believed that the world could not survive the end of the first millennium of our era. But artificial aids to memory, or stimuli to awe, are subjective and act as a blur upon the real historic page. We must search for events such as terminated a state of affairs and from which flowed a different order. Such events, once disclosed, serve as our mile posts. It will not be too much to say that epochal events terminate one mental state, of the world at large, and introduce another; as the poet and philosopher Goethe said after seeing the troops of Dumouriez chase the forces of the allied monarchs, "Gentlemen, today begins a new age."

Searching then for events in our history that affected and changed the thought of the entire intelligent world, let us proceed as rapidly as the theme will permit to name them in order.

We may remember that our Oregon history is not simply local. Our quarter has affected the whole world mind, even for an appreciable number of centuries. From the days of Cortes, in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, it was the unknown; and hence the region of fable. The geographical myths that had receded before the progress of discovery were allowed here a last lurking place. Second Mexicos and Perus, Northwest passages, Anian Straits, Rivers of the Kings, adventures of ancient mariners, and regions of Brogdignags, found in this unknown world a possible location. This probably accounts for the peculiar suggestion of distance and strangeness—a certain weird fascination—that attached until very recently to the name Oregon, and led the young poet of America to unite it with the desert name, Barca, as the emblem of remoteness from common life.

That was essentially the period of myth, when the world at large possessed no accurate information, and only enough suggestions to set loose ungoverned fancies—a long period, almost three hundred years, and even yet holding in its misty distance the clue to innumerable romances, that future minds—especially of the young who are preoccupied with fancies—will follow through all the labyrinths of ocean and shore. The event that ended this period was the discovery of the Columbia river by Robert Gray, of Boston. By that event myth was ended; positive knowledge took its place.

What a change in the world's mental state; and with what few cool words Gray terminated the era of mental speculation!—

"Anchored opposite Indian village in six fathoms water; opposite bank of river three miles distant.....; nasty weather. So ends." With that peculiar, fine, American grasp of objective fact, the mystery and difficulty that had excited and baffled Spaniard, Russian, Frenchman and Briton in turn, was solved at the first touch by this Boston sea captain! Gray sailed as easily and naturally between the breakers into the harbor of the Columbia as an American captain sails anywhere—as Dewey sailed into Manila bay. The Spaniard Heceta had reached the river, and looked in, but the night seemed coming on, and a powerful outgoing tide bore his craft far out to sea. Meares had come and looked in; but judged from a masthead observation that here was no great river. Cook sailed by both the Columbia, and the straits of Fuca, even sighting and naming Cape Flattery, but preoccupied with incorrect European accounts, left the place of real discovery and sailed far to north. Vancouver attempted an entrance, but thought it prudent to retire and to distrust Gray's information. The minds of all these great navigators were oppressed with the weight of fable; giving them either undue caution or a contempt of the region. It was the Old World sitting on their shoulders, and holding their arms. But a new order of mind, reared under free institutions, and having no dread because trusting in the powers of native mind and in Nature, accomplished the task.

The discovery of the Columbia is easily the first mile post.

It was a universal truth that Schiller uttered when speaking of Columbus: "Nature is ever in league with genius"—The genius of Gray, however, was only what has become characteristic of the American—love of reality, confidence in fact, and delight in the exercise of his own faculties—the freeman's soul.

Gray's discovery at once turned to fable all that had been currently reported of the Northwest Pacific. Intelligence succeeded fancy. There was no northwest passage; no Anian; no river of St. Roc; no River of the Kings. There *was* a river Columbia. This was the first mile post; a positive fact shooting over the whole world a new and correct information.

This ended the age of myth; it introduced a period of political uncertainty. It was so easy after the American led the way for the Briton to follow, and the Briton did follow so stubbornly, that it was indeterminate who was the rightful discoverer. Thus Vancouver made a careful survey of the straits and inlet that

Gray entered, and his lieutenant explored the Columbia a hundred miles up. The Lewis and Clark expedition was quickly duplicated by a British explorer. The Astor fur company was followed within less than two years by the Northwest fur company from Canada. The American post at Astoria was soon changed to Ft. George. It is not my part to detail the oft repeated but still curiously interesting historical drama, during which it was not known who owned Oregon, or even who wanted it; almost every move of the Americans, whether for trade, or missions, or for settlements, being vigorously followed by a counter movement on the part of the British, and often met with so much more decisive results as to render the operations of the Americans ineffectual. That will yet furnish scenery, plots and characters for the historian and novelist, and give opportunity for the exercise of critical judgment and artistic power to the best authors. A hundred earnest, fascinating characters, selected by some characteristic social or spiritual influence, and, most remarkably, in virtually uninterrupted peace, here amid the shapes of vast mountains, wide plains and majestic rivers passed away their years; the pathetic native tribes occupying the dusk of the distance. He that can revive that life in literature, not repeating its occurrences so much as interpreting its purposes, will be the greatest benefactor of the arriving generation, for he will show it its soul.

But our purpose is to name the event that put an end to the political uncertainty. This is not so easy a matter. There are those who would place Whitman's journey to Washington as the one event that made the old condition—having then lasted almost fifty years—no longer possible. Many reasons justify such choice. Almost all that has been claimed by the admirers of Whitman as his due, has been fully proved; and as a substantial, well-poised character, capable of independent and self sustained action history honors him even above any claims of partisan admiration. All doubt has been removed that he made the memorable journey with the main purpose of visiting the national capitol and convincing our government of the value of Oregon, and inducing such action as would encourage a great and overwhelming occupancy by Americans; and that in large measure he accomplished his design.

But another event, occurring about the same time, had at least equal importance, and a significance above anything that any one

man could accomplish, however heroic. Ours is a government by the many. We depend, not upon any one person, but upon an idea; trusting that that idea will have elective power to find the person necessary to carry it into execution, and that, having found the man, or men, it will energize and advance them to its requirements.

This was wonderfully illustrated among the handful of Americans in the Willamette valley early in 1843, just about half a century after the discovery of the Columbia. "Once an Englishman, always an Englishman" was the old theory of the British government. Once an American, always an American, is no theory but a simple fact. One who has participated in a popular government can never forget his birthright. The formation of the Provisional government of Oregon was of significance beyond even Whitman's exploit. Whitman indeed showed what a man could be produced here, but the Provisional Government showed what an idea animated Americans,—which was one that could create conditions and even make heroes at its need.

The provisional government will be discussed in another paper, by one who has been giving fresh and scientific study to our history. Here we need simply to note the fact that few more than fifty men, out of about one hundred in the country, decided to set up an independent government. They were as various a set of people as could be found in the world. They were not all Americans, indeed, by birth; but mostly of the same stock as that from which the Americans sprung. As to antecedents, some were mountain men or trappers. Some had been sailors. Some had been old servants, or colonists, of the Hudson's Bay Co., but easily saw the advantages of coming to a par with their former employers. Some of the American party were of French blood, as such names as LeBreton and F. X. Matthieu, would indicate. Neither was the educated Eastern man wanting, as W. H. Gray and J. S. Griffin, who had both come as missionaries, were not only present, but leading spirits. Yet though thus almost as motley an aggregation of men as could be picked up, from almost all quarters of Europe and America, they all understood the idea of self-government. Even the French Canadians, who had been assembled by Bishop Blanchet, though formally opposing organization, very readily accepted the result, and became as loyal citizens as any.

This event—whose progress and leadership will be described by another—illustrates, as in other places, (Texas and Hawaii) how wherever there are Americans there is self government. Intolerance alike of anarchy and of civil inequality is the American passion.

Undoubtedly the actual change from a state of uncertainty as to whom Oregon should belong to was not accomplished alone by any one of the three almost independent but wonderfully synchronous events: the establishment of the provisional government; Whitman's journey; and the large immigration of 1843. That the credit of making Oregon American in government and finally in population cannot be decisively given to any one man, but must be awarded in varying degrees of praise to almost all the Americans, and to even others then in the country, only shows upon what an irrefragable rock our civil liberties and our civil securities are built—in a government really free every man is a rock; or a brick, to use the word of the Spartan. Whitman met the hour, and being by all odds the greatest man in Oregon, towers highest in history. But it was the American Idea after all; not the man; and to the level of that Idea almost every man in the country rose—making all heroes.

After the events of 1843 there was no room for intelligent doubt that Oregon would be American. This was confirmed by the results of the Cayuse Indian war, brought on by the massacre at Waiilatpu in 1847; which fused all the settlements into one purpose of retribution, and the protection of all the citizens. The just claims of Great Britain and of the Hudson's Bay Company were settled, as a result of fixing the boundary line at its present limit and by special legislation. But these were rather formal, than deciding, events. Such also were the formation of the territorial government, and admission as a state.

For further decisive events to serve as mile posts, we are limited to industrial and social development: the period for independent discovery and politics having now been forever merged into the national life, of which Oregon forms a part.

Social development, centering now mostly in its industrial phase is in general too little understood, and indeed itself too little advanced organically, to command popular interest. In Oregon it is even less advanced than in many other states, as in the United States it is far behind some of the European states. In the idea

and practice of government America leads the world; but the now fast focalizing questions of organic industry find us but experimenters.

Yet, not to leave my theme unfinished, I think I will not be wrong in naming the opening of rail transportation in 1871, and its completion in to eastern connection in 1883, as epochal. Life and industry have been wonderfully changed here by the railway; some think greatly for the worse. As the telescope has been called the new eye of science, so steam, especially as applied to the rail car, is man's new foot, or both foot and hand and shoulder. At present no doubt it works tyrannously, arrogating power over its creator, human society; and much like a hand or foot endowed with unwearied self power, it runs away with the people who gave it legal existence and protection; and so like Franksteins we stand scowling and wondering what the creature that we made will do with us. But however that may be, whether for present good or ill—of the future good there can be no doubt—the railway came, and modified our life. Its coming was an epoch. Not here however the exclusive giant that it is in other places, as California, or the prairie states; for the Columbia, with its numerous tributaries, compels competitive transportation rates.

CHARACTERISTICS AS AN AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH.

Our brief review of the epochal events of our history leads very naturally to a short consideration of the characteristics that as a people, or commonwealth, we have developed. In such we see the future; since the determining factor of the future is the character of the people at present.

Oregonians are no doubt still Americans; so that feature of their character need not be discussed; only its modification.

Probably the most distinctive mark about our people as a whole—and all the people in the limits of the old Oregon are included—is in their strong local peculiarities. Even the somewhat

careless observer will see almost as many different types among our people—comparatively few as they are—as there are localities. There seems to be something almost marvelous in the power of our communities, large or small, to reduce their dwellers to the type of the place. Even previous state or racial differences soon yield and he who dwells in any one of our towns—soon assimilates to its character. Even the Englishman and the Eastern man—whose peculiarities are most deeply grained—generally give in, if they consent to stay at all.

This is no doubt due in large measure to the geographical peculiarities of our states, with their lofty and difficult mountain chains, within whose depressions repose innumerable valleys. To these scattered and thus isolated tracts the people were led first to look for homes; each family in its own little kingdom. The rivalry of growing towns also, each claiming a pre-eminent natural situation, has led to intense local spirit. These things acting even down to the details of life, have had a dispersive effect. Constructive work has been put to a disadvantage, and our people have been left to develop their own differences, rather than to seek the advantages of organization and union,—as many in the fields of education, literature, religion and even politics and industry have found to their cost. It is hard to find any one line of interest to which any considerable number of our people will adhere.

As beyond question the great good of mankind can be reached only through organizations much more close and extensive than anything that has yet been attained, a character suited to isolation and division can hardly be called hopeful. But there are modifying circumstances, which will have force to prevent our people sinking to the condition of the mountain whites of the South, or developing the centrifugal tendencies that ruined old Greece.

One of these is restlessness of disposition—mental restlessness, which some one has named as Gladstone's most marked quality. It is certainly very common among our people. It leads at present to continuous changes of residence and of occupation. It is the exception when the young people of our state live in the place where they were born or reared. In a little rural community that I have in mind, the young people have gone to almost all parts of the world—to eastern Oregon or Idaho, to

California, Alaska, Boston, or Canada. Families tired of the valleys or mountains of the interior press to the Sound or sea-shore; those tired of the salt air country press to the interior. Families in the country think it the ideal of life if they can move to the villages for the sake of education and society. Families in the villages or cities try to get out where the air is good and the children can grow up strong—Motives for change, affecting the fancy and imagination of youth, or the mature judgment of age, seem always present.

This internal circulation has its disadvantages, but no doubt with almost every move, as the body leaves its local microbes by change of air, so the man leaves local wrangles, or ideas, and makes of his life more a personal education, increasing his intelligence and broadening his many sympathies.

This mental restlessness is no doubt the heritage of many generations, the store both in blood and in books, of a thousand years; and our location is not likely to permit its decrease. We do not anticipate any diminution in the energy of the forces of civilization in general, or of American civilization in particular; and along the shore of the Pacific ocean, and especially along the shores of such waters as those of Puget Sound, or such a water way as the Columbia, those forces will find natural course for action. Our restlessness is not likely to decrease, but will probably become more strictly mutual, and operate more in the world of opinion and ideas, and seek the theatre of organized society.

The other great check upon the tendency to diversity and separation, such as in its extreme ruined old Greece, Greece never had, and it hardly more than need be alluded to here. It is our national life. The national government, with its protection, its rewards of honor, its great history, is an abiding presence, dissolving absolutely all differences: a universal potency into which all interests may be converted, and out of which all energies may be drawn. The Oregonian indeed will ever be profoundly moulded by the local enjoyment of the hills or mountains of his valley home, with their varying tints of red or purple of the morning and evening. Nowhere can he be absent from the view, during day's clearness, of mountain forms, like the old Pelion and Ossa, making the attempt to ascend into heaven; and successfully like Olympus itself penetrating to the ether, the home of the gods, and wearing upon their heads the never melting snow: and over

such warmth of lowland, and such splendor of highland, he will see the heaven much expanded, out of which the unchanging stars still look down.

The land itself, nature as here drawn, will ever lead the mind toward the ideal emblemized in our national standard: the love that makes life worth living; the purity—a pure manhood, a pure womanhood, a pure government—that lifts that life to the level of the divine; and a much expanded heavenly azure, which changes from day's light to night's darkness only to disclose innumerable reading eyes, looking for the truth which only can feed love, and sustain purity: a heaven full of truth over us made near and clear by the earth lifting herself to meet it as it bends down.

In the end, when all is wrought out, our lonesomeness will nourish vast individual independence and poise; our restlessness will deny us repose until each unit finds in others the missing element,—the need of one becoming the opportunity of another; and our society, consisting of somewhat more highly endowed individual members, and with a vastly increased body of individual and local traits, and wants, shall assume proportion and a power not easily realized elsewhere.

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The Mile Posts, then that we have erected are: First, after the period of myth and legend, the *Discovery of the Columbia River*; second, after about half a century of political uncertainty, the *Formation of the Provisional Government*; and third, after about forty years of commercial isolation, the opening of *Rail Communication with the East*.

Our Characteristics are like our country; rugged, independent, with infinite individual variation, yet all really of one grand type, and united in the supreme and prevailing National Idea; symbolized by the red, white, and blue—love, purity, and truth; home, country and God.

HORACE S. LYMAN.

A Supplement.

A World Movement and a National Movement that had Important Relations to the Making of Oregon.

The preceding paper points out the internal historical forces, the essential life, of Oregon. It is proposed under this supplementary title to direct attention to the progress of a great world movement and of our greatest national movement as they precipitate themselves upon the Oregon country. We have, then, in the main division of the introductory chapter a comprehensive internal view; in this part there will appear in bald outline two great historical processions as they move toward Oregon.

The impelling motives to the discovery and exploration of the North-West Coast were but a part of that impulse to world-exploration that culminated in the last decade of the fifteenth century and the first two decades of the sixteenth. The movement had long been waning before it penetrated to "where rolls the Oregon" and banished the north-western mystery. The pioneers

in their occupation and settlement of Oregon were the vanguard of a people bearing civilization westward. That civilization was borne from Europe a British civilization. For two hundred years it was subjected to the distinctively American influences involved in subduing wildernesses and constituting institutions under a prevailing and strengthening democratic spirit. In the Oregon pioneer this process of Americanization had wrought its effects to the farthest degree. Issuing from the Columbia gorge or from one of the passes of the Cascades he was in a large sense the most representative American of his time.

These two movements, one of exploration and one of immigration and settlement, constitute two unities. They comprise what the world civilization has contributed toward civilization in Oregon.

The best point of view from which to grasp the scope of these historical processions is probably to be had from the period of transition when the first is about to cease and the second shows signs of its on-coming. In this transition period we have only to regroup facts that are familiar to the reader of general European and American histories.

The career of the European nations in exploration and colonization that had extended through three centuries was suddenly interrupted at the beginning of the last decade of the eighteenth century. The spirit of the French Revolution threatened to involve the old order of things there into dissolution. For three decades nearly all of the energies of the European nations were consumed in the struggles that the French Revolution had engendered.

In America during this generation—the first under the Constitution—covering the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first two of the nineteenth, the conditions were just the opposite of those in Europe. The first stirrings of might were felt. A career of expansion to continental proportions was entered upon. The following is the course of events in this period pertaining to this western country: Robert Gray, an American captain, discovers the Columbia in 1792; the Louisiana Territory abutting on this region is purchased from France in 1803; the far-seeing Jefferson was instrumental in getting the Lewis and Clarke expedition to explore this region in 1804-5; the Astor expedition occupies for purposes of fur trading a post at the mouth of the Columbia in 1811; this is turned over to the English in 1813, but relinquish-

ed in 1818; the United States and England agree by treaty to a joint occupation in 1818; Spain transfers to us all her claims to the Pacific coast north of the forty-second parallel in 1819. As Russia recedes with her operations to the Alaskan regions about the same time, we see that the nations of continental Europe have "stepped down and out." And further, there is a sequence in this rapid succession of events. It indicates a development and points to a destiny. The United States has entered the lists to rescue Oregon from haphazard colonization by any European power. Moreover, through these events there was generated in the national consciousness the idea that had its expression a few years later as part of the Monroe Doctrine: "the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers."

After the battle of Waterloo and the fall of Napoleon (1815) the monarchs of Europe regained their old grip upon the reins of authority, but were kept uneasy by unmistakable signs that their subjects were not reconciled. In America, North and South, Spain had revolts of continental proportions on her hands. The other part of the Monroe Doctrine admonished the Holy Alliance to let her manage them as best she could. The result was a loss to her of all her continental possessions in the western world.

While the nations of continental Europe had thus been pre-occupied with the troubles of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars the states and territories of America had risen to a new status.

With regard to the future occupation and colonization of the more primitive districts of the American continents president Monroe's message stated a definitive fact. The door was closed to European nations against further operations with designs of territorial aggrandizement in the western hemisphere. Only during the Civil war while the energies of the United States were not available for defence against foreign aggression was this spirit renewed by Napoleon III, and he quickly receded from his projects when the arms of the Union had become free to contend for the validity of the Monroe Doctrine.

During this period of transition the Oregon Country had thus emerged from a condition in which it was a possible prize for any one or more of four European nations. The period

marks the disappearance of several actors from the scene and the coming forth of those destined to attempt the role of a new civilization upon this stage.

The two English speaking peoples who had occupied the eastern portions of the North American continent were the heirs to the fruits of all the efforts that had been required to bring the Pacific Northwest within the bounds of the known world. During this period each had traced a route from the limits of their western frontiers to the Pacific: Mackenzie doing it for the English in 1793; Lewis and Clarke for the Americans in 1804-5.

It was definitely settled that the North American continent from the tropics north was to be the home of a civilization based upon common law and constitutional freedom with the use of the English tongue. This territory comprises the most extensive and choicest single section for the home of a progressive people that the earth affords. Russia, it is true, still hovered on the extreme northwest coast and the spores of a stationary Spanish civilization were cumbering the ground on the southwest. But the United States and Great Britain were now in possession of all the rest. They had just (1818) run the line of division between their holdings along the forty-ninth parallel to the base of the Rocky mountains. A fair grand domain thus lay before these two peoples. They held it by divine right as they have since fully demonstrated. No other nations could have matched them in utilizing these unparalleled resources. They promise still to do the most with them and make the most of them.

We have now our bearings in this period of transition from which to glance at the world movement that terminated in it and the national movement that issued from it, each having a progress towards the Oregon country. In one we can see, as it were, several lines of explorers, some three centuries long, turned towards the North Pacific coast of America; in the other we can discern a westward movement of a people of more than two centuries' continuance. Our need in this introductory view is a conception that reveals the essential natures of each of these movements.

First, what is the motive that unites the voyages of Columbus, the Cabots, Magellan, Verrazano, Cartier, Cortes, Frobisher, Drake, Hudson, Heceta and Cook? They were all inspired by the spirit of discovery directed especially towards finding a

short route westward from Europe to the gems, the spices, and other riches of Asia. The maritime and overland expeditions when they are viewed as a whole are best conceived of as but the offshoots of that great tidal wave of westward movement which was led by the spirit of discovery at the close of the fifteenth century and the opening of the sixteenth round the world. Columbus received this spirit in largest measure and initiated the movement which Magellan completed in its central sweep. The influence that carried these was the predominant one of that age. It was the age of the Renaissance, and the "greatest fruit of Renaissance was America." The desire for adventure as a phase of the Renaissance possessed many of the greatest men of the time. It had its culminating height in a few decades before and after the opening of the sixteenth century, but wave succeeding wave bore intrepid explorers into every recess of the North American continent, intent mainly on finding a passage through to make a short cut to Asia. When in the middle of this century Robert McClure's voyage relegated this idea of a northern passage to the limbo of the impracticable, the open polar sea slipped into its place as an object in the pursuit of which daring spirits could find a congenial sphere of action for a now inbred race trait. Andree is the present day representative hero in this line of exploits. The discovery and the exploration of the Oregon country was but the last phase of the discovery of America. By the voyages of Perez, Heceta and Bodega, of Cook and Vancouver, of Kendrick and Gray, all revealing features of the North Pacific coast, the discovery of America was fairly complete.

So far the exploration of the Oregon Country has been connected with that grand display of activity in adventure during the period of the Renaissance. Suppose we trace this phase of Oregon History just one step farther into still wider relations. America was reached independently along three different highways. The Northmen from their training courses on the Baltic and North Seas by easy advances reached the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and Greenland, when they were taken in tow by the Arctic Current and brought down the eastern shore of this continent. Cabral in 1500 following along the route of south-westward exploration off the coast of Africa was carried by the Equatorial current and the hurricanes along its track to the shores of Brazil. Columbus, too, had a natural highway westward in the trade

winds, but his voyage was not a mere experimental adventure nor an accident. It was based upon a line of geographical speculation which the desire for direct trade with India brought to a test. This speculation which was transformed into a fixed idea in the mind of Columbus had its inception in general inquiries into the geographical relations of western Europe to eastern Asia. These inquiries followed as a matter of course upon the great Greek discovery of the sphericity of the earth. They arose in the time of Pythagoras; received new stimulus under the Roman empire; were little considered in the Middle Ages; but when in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the attention of Europe, because of commercial interests, became strongly directed towards India these inquiries were renewed with new vigor and were in the air during the youth of Columbus.

These three independent lines of exploration westward to America, one followed by the Northmen, one by Columbus, and one by Cabral were but radiating branches of a more primal westward movement. In the eastern end of the Mediterranean basin European civilization had its beginning. The Archipelago of this basin gave man his first important lessons in navigation. He became trained in the use of wings on the sea, while his power of locomotion on land was yet for a long time to remain in a rudimentary condition.

The expanding desires of the Phoenicians and Greeks led them on beyond their horizon. It was into the west, across the great sea, that the merchant was free to push his ventures and the colony to found its new city state. This first phase of the primal westward movement was exploration in a field to them vast and romantic. It gave them experience in navigation and hope of discoveries. From these earliest times human activity has been stimulated by westward adventure. Westward movement became an instinctive trait with daring and dauntless Europeans. The conditions of nature have thus drawn the European towards the setting sun as the needle is drawn towards the pole.

The logical faculty of the Greeks reinforced experimental adventure in developing this westward impulse. Having once conceived of the earth as a sphere in space, it was inevitable that the principle of symmetry with them should lead to the conjecture of a plurality of habitable continents. Aristotle was appar-

ently the first to construct a geographical theory involving the possible existence of America. He surmised that the Old World might be only one of several greater or lesser continents emerging from the ocean. One of his geographical phantoms in the shape of a gigantic Antarctic continent remained on the maps in various forms until the navigator, James Cook, in the last quarter of the last century reduced it and established it as a certainty.

Aristotle, notwithstanding his conjecture to the contrary, leaned to the idea that there was only one continent in the northern hemisphere, and did not disapprove of the notion that India could be reached by sailing west from Spain. Thus early was the Columbian hypothesis broached.

The ancients had no accurate knowledge either of the extent of the circumference of the earth or of the size of the eastern land hemisphere. Under the influence of the growing desire to reach Asia by sailing west and of an increasing knowledge of Asia, they naturally extended the continent to the east, in their minds, and thus brought it round to within hailing distance of Spain on the west. To make a voyage west to Asia still more feasible they dotted the Atlantic with islands as convenient stepping stones.

Many influences combined to urge Europe westward in search of a new route to India. Marco Polo kindled a flame of desire for its wealth. This was not allowed to expire. As the Europeans of the fifteenth century were obliged to trade for Indian goods through the mediation of the Turks, who drove hard bargains, it required a regular shipment of three hundred thousand ducats in coin to settle the adverse balance of trade. Europe was being drained of her money. Politically also Europe was ripe for great enterprise. All the nations of western Europe were ruled by sagacious, ambitious and powerful sovereigns. Each was jealous of the advantage gained by the other.

The impulse behind the voyage of Columbus was the demand that arose out of these special economic and political conditions, and out of a general awakened state of the European mind. It was not like the last step in the discovery of America by the Northmen, an easy transit from one shore to next close by to which the restlessness of ignorant seamen alone urged.

The nascent forces of Europe that the landfall of Columbus set free could not spend themselves until all geographical mysteries had been dispelled from the surface of the earth. By the voy-

age of Columbus the Europeans were precipitated upon the continent of America as upon a great barrier. They could not and would not believe that it was a barrier without one or more passages through it. Geographers for two thousand years had suggested only islands as stepping stones in the regions of the newly found lands. And moreover, with all the bays and inlets of the North American continent it was hard to prove that their traditional geography was wrong. With the South American continent the matter stood differently. Its almost unbroken outline made it easy to prove the non-existence of a passage. As South America did not stand in their way for a short direct route to India in the higher northern latitude it was easy to concede its integrity. Not so with North America. It stood directly in their way. For nearly three hundred years did they search for a passage through it. And still longer were attempts made to find a feasible route round it on the north.

One of their leading motives in searching for a short cut to India had been to share in its abundance of gold and silver. The large sums of treasure so easily obtained in Mexico and Peru only strengthened the desire and fired the imagination so that the temptation connected with a possible find of gold ruined many expeditions for a hundred years.

Antilia, the largest and most famous of the fabulous islands with which the mediæval maps swarmed, was otherwise called the Island of Seven Cities. Cities had been found in Mexico and Peru. Vague and exaggerated rumors, with Zuni pueblos as a basis, led to many a wild goose search for the treasures of the Seven Cities.

It was while prosecuting maritime and overland expeditions in search of a northwest passage, or for stores of gold and silver to match those of Peru, or for the cities of Quivira that the outlines of the North American continent were developed. The Pacific Northwest was, with the exception of the extreme northern portion of the continent, the last to be explored. Under the impulses given by these three motives, either acting separately or combined in various proportions, expeditions were projected along converging lines towards the Oregon Country. Not until near the close of the eighteenth century was there any large admixture of the purely scientific spirit of geographical discovery. Commerce in the line of fur trade was not an object until 1785.

The courses taken in the explorations and the different rates of progress along each line are to be explained as in the first trans-Atlantic passages by references to the physical conditions that constituted facilitating means of approach. The sea and inland water ways were alone the natural highways. The lines of access to this region must follow them.

The North American continent thus stood in the way of navigators who were under the influence of a fixed idea that it was a string of islands. They would not recognize it as a continent.

The great central westward moving tidal wave of discovery was passed by Columbus and Magellan round the world. For three hundred years off-shoots from it break upon the North American continent. As a wave strikes a bold headland, buttressed with rocks and indented by recesses, it breaks around the rocks and currents follow up the length of the recesses; in that way waves following in the wake of the great discoveries of the Columbian era break upon this continent.

We see one line of advance leaping the barrier in Mexico and turned and carried by Cortes himself up the shores of Lower California. It had its impetus from the energy and ambition of Spain. When that is paralyzed we see the advance along this line weaken and recede. The presence of Sir Francis Drake near San Francisco bay indicates that England is feeling the stir of might. In her mortal rivalry with Spain she is being led on to a career of world colonization. Another head of an advancing column comes up toward Oregon by tracing the routes of Cabeza De Vaca, De Soto and Coronado; with these the spur is gold and treasure cities. Through the Hudson strait and bay Frobisher, Davis, Hudson, Baffin and the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company come on. The St. Lawrence River and the great Lakes lead Champlain, La Salle and Verendrye. The last reaches the base of the Rocky Mountains. The representatives of the British nation, agents of the Northwest Fur Company, are barely beaten by the Americans down the Columbia River route. Meanwhile Peter the Great and Catherine of Russia had through valiant representatives turned the north of Europe, and traversed Siberia. Led on by Behring they approach Oregon from the north.

Oregon history furnishes a fine vantage-ground for tracing the progress of this great westward world movement. It affords

the same vantage-ground from which to view our greatest national movement.

The exploration of the Oregon region as has been shown did not by a gradual and continuous process of transition develop into colonization. Exploration proceeded along lines of approach by water, colonization was to be overland. Captain Gray's discovery of the Columbia river had not been announced to the world before the energies of the European nations were engrossed in the struggles of the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars. While these were in progress the nation that was to become the Young Giant of the West paved the way as far as diplomatic measures could effect for what so far has been the nation's greatest role,—that of subduing and preparing a continent for the purposes of civilized life.

The settlement of Oregon was the climax and consummation of the march of the American people across the continent. The Pacific was first reached by the American pioneer in the Oregon region. The passages made by the pioneer families across a two-thousand-mile stretch of wilderness made up of plain, parched desert and rugged mountainous regions—all infested by fiercest savages—have no parallel in history. These migrations rank in the history of colonization where the voyages of Columbus and Magellan rank in the history of maritime discovery.

The sublime audacity of the Oregon pioneers is seen when it is noted that they carried the line of the American frontier from the borders of Missouri and Iowa with one move to the Pacific, while it had taken three flights to span the distance from the tide-water region of the Atlantic across the Mississippi river: The first move had been back beyond the "fall line" of the rivers of the Atlantic slope; the second crossed the Alleghanies; the third the Mississippi. The element of the heroic in the resolve and action in crossing the plains by the pioneers in the 40's will some day find its appreciative poet. It will furnish the basis for the culmination in the epic of the first century of our national life.

When this epoch is reached in the following chapters, a narrative of the details will present a picture of vivid reality. Adequate narratives of this epoch will serve as a heritage of inspiration for all succeeding generations of Oregon youth.

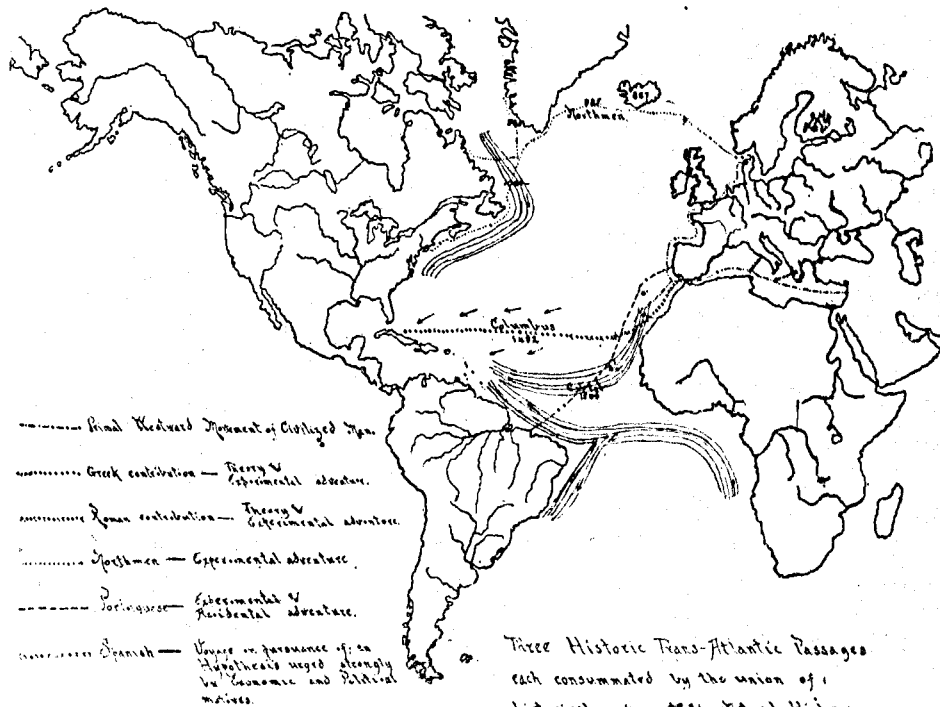
The fact that the progenitors of the Oregon people were

borne at the crest of this "wave of human restlessness and energy" as it rolled across the continent has the deepest and widest significance for them. A most suggestive writer on the "Frontier in America" says: "The advance of the frontier has meant a movement away from the influence of Europe, a steady growth of independence on American lines. And to study this advance, the men who grew up under these conditions, and the political, economic and social results of it is to study the really American part of our history." Pioneers and their descendents who constitute the core at least of Oregon life have for generations back been in touch with social development in its primitive and plastic conditions. Oregon characteristics represent more largely than those of any other commonwealth the influence upon successive generations of moving from one frontier to another farther west and beginning over again. Such a past has no doubt meant a sacrifice of upward progress, but it as surely has been fraught with a special gain of resources and spontaneity; it has meant the retention of a more youthful spirit as a people. What we have so far missed in height we have gained in breadth.

The antecedents of Oregon that were involved in the protracted process of colonizing a continent have made for race stamina, simplicity of institutional life based upon distinctively American ideas, and an emphasized individualism. For the future, however, she has set for her a goal in common with those of her older sisters commonwealths. There are for achieving progress the same instrumentalities, material, social, political, and spiritual, which the experience of the race has vouchsafed. The older states have attained the lead in organizing the forces of modern life, in experimenting with the new problems of an age that develops these problems faster than any preceding age ever did.

Herein lies the vantage-ground of Oregon and her great stake in the study of American history and in general education: The conditions of settlement here were such as to extend her period of youth and give free play to the process of adjustment to physical environment and to the progress in amalgamating a wonderfully composite nucleus of population. She has now the opportunity of profiting by the experience that the older states have had with the problems of transportation, taxation, municipalities—in fact, with all that develop in the growing complexity of commonwealth organization. And further, with her stock of youth-

ful vigor intact she can take up the work of a common higher education—of ascertaining what the race knows—with appliances and methods greatly improved. There could not be a more practical and patriotic endeavor than that of determining for our state her position in the line of historical development of the race, and of arousing her to take that position, conscious of her race and commonwealth relationships and inheritance. The Oregon people so educated would co-operate in the national and race life and work, and ever raise their own ideals.



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