



## **Picturesque America; or, the land we live in**

a delineation by pen and pencil of the mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, water-falls, shores, cañons, valleys, cities, and other picturesque features of our country ; with illustrations on steel and wood, by eminent American artists

**Bryant, William Cullen**

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Up And Down The Columbia.

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Mount Ranier, from the Columbia River.

## UP AND DOWN THE COLUMBIA.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. SWAIN GIFFORD.

MAPS are so unexpectedly made over nowadays, what with the Old World passion of conquest, and the New World instinct of truck and dicker, that even we young people, who are rather proud of not yet having forgotten our multiplication-table and syntax, are not a little put to it to bound American America, or United Germany, or dismembered France. There was a happy time when a "pent-up Utica" judiciously contracted our powers, and when we were limited toward the pole by undiscovered countries which we were taught to call respectively Russian Possessions and Upper and Lower Canada—which was which of the twins last mentioned the infant mind never clearly apprehending. In those days our national Northwestern estate was represented on the atlas by a green and a brown patch of uncertain outlines, severally labelled "Indian Territory" and "Oregon." Lewis and Clark were popularly believed to be the only civilized men who had ocular proof of their existence. In the common mind they stood only as irregular polygons on the map, and not as so many acres of soil, stones, forests, lakes, rivers, habitable places, over which familiar heavens arched, and where rains fell on just and unjust, the former class being represented by wild animals and the latter by wild men. Even the wise geographers skated nimbly over the thin ice of their ignorance, lingering only long enough for a single observation, to the effect that this vast, unexplored country was chiefly trackless desert and unexplored forest. And even Con-



H. SWAIN GIFFORD

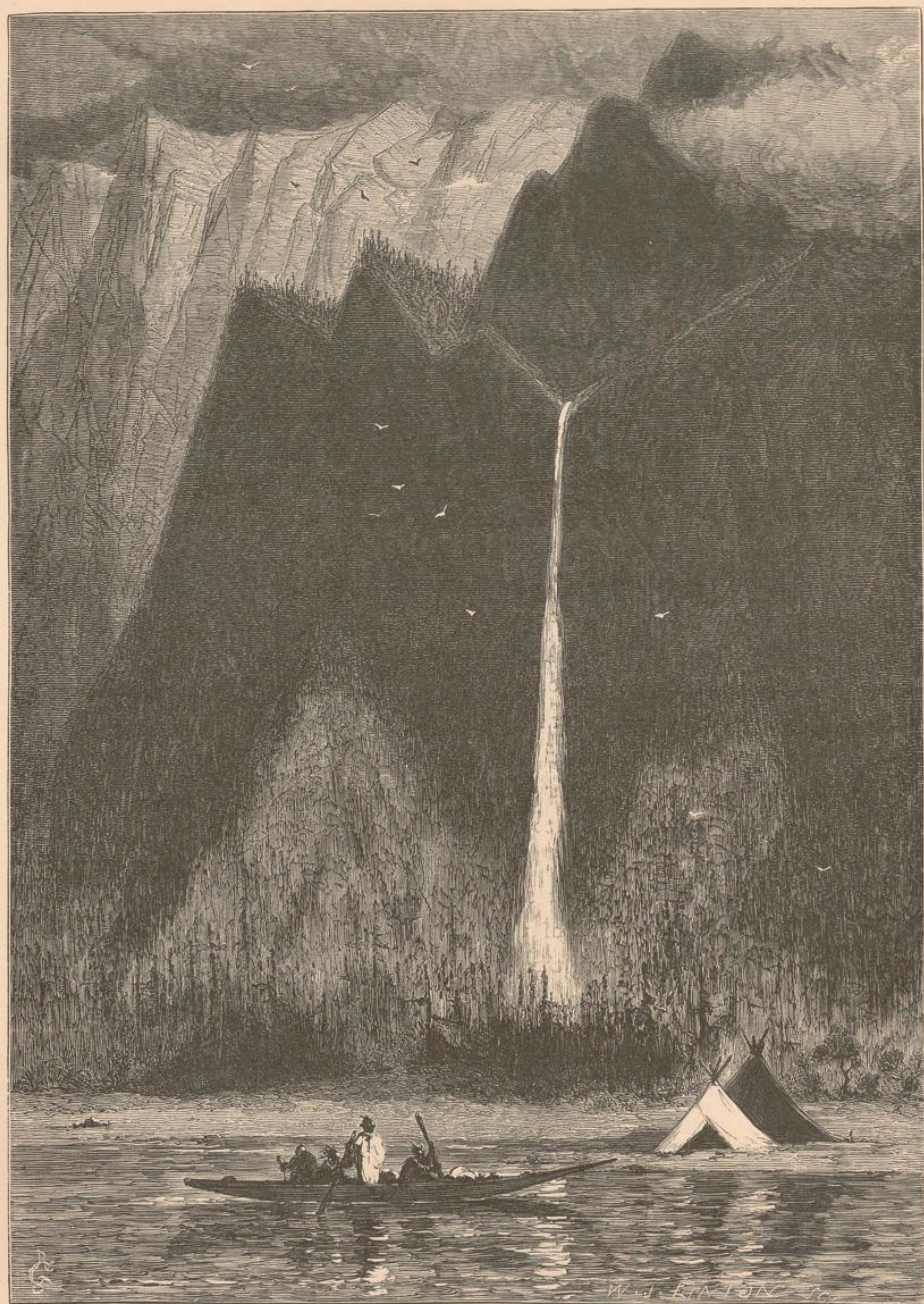
MOUNT HOOD.

gressional orators, who spoke for "Buncombe," and went in, on all occasions, for river and harbor improvements, never could get beyond the third line of the sonorous—

". . . the continuous woods  
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound  
Save its own dashings."

Alas for the infant-schools! Out of that dull, green patch has broken a wealth of offshoots, as out of the scrimp and ugly cactus burst its superb blossoms. A list of States and Territories that dizzies the arithmetic of memory insists on place and nomenclature, and blessed be Providence which ordained that we should not be our own grandchildren, to encounter a tale of three hundred and sixty-five political divisions by them doubtless to be comprehended in the description of their dear, their native land! As the shoots increased the parent-stem dwindled, and now Oregon, pinched and shrivelled, is only a fourth larger than all New England, or rather less than twice New York in extent. And as for the vast Indian Territory, that would seem to exist variably wherever the Noble Savage is upon the war-path, and to comprise so much land as his blanket will cover.

In those better days we children used to have delightful thrills of horror at thought of the Great American Desert and far Pacific coast, peopled, as we believed, with lions, alligators, dragons, polar bears, anacondas, the "anthropophagi, and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders"—creatures all the more terrible by reason of the utter vagueness of their outlines and conditions. And we used to play at being Captain Cook, who, to our apprehension, was the very symbol and archetype of discoverers; and, as he and his heroic band, used to do much execution among the heaped-up sticks in the wood-shed, which alternately, or rather indiscriminately, represented the Rocky Mountains, hosts of savage foes, or such a menagerie of beasts as has not been seen since the creation. By-and-by one of us repeated the fable of "Rasselas," which is the apologue of Time, left behind him the Happy Valley of a delighted childhood, and went forth to explore the world. I do not remember that any wise Imlac began that long journey in his company, nor that he came to any Cairo where he spent two years in learning the Universal Language, and where every man was happy. On the contrary, I am afraid that Imlac, who stands for the lessons of experience, joined him only after long years and innumerable scrapes had cost him dear; and that the Cairo where all men are happy is not set down on any chart by which he took his way. At least it was not built between Boston and San Francisco, nor yet between that golden capital and Puget Sound, nor did any spire or minaret thereof glitter against the perfect skies of Oregon, whither the wanderings of the new Rasselas led him. But, to drop metaphor, which, like Malvolio's cross-garterings, "obstructs the blood," it was I who made the journey to Oregon, and I find that I cannot tell a comfortable story without saying so in the begin-



MULTANOMAH FALLS.

ning, with a heart-felt regret that I am not Wallace, or that most charming traveller, Mr. John Hay, instead of myself.

Perhaps oceans change their habits with time, like climates and individuals. It is easier to believe that in 1520 the Pacific lapsed on purple islands a summer sea, than to discredit the incorruptible Magalhaens, of Portuguese truth and directness, with wittingly bewraying the trust of unborn generations. In 1869, however, it had become the most deceitful of waters, with a horrible swell and pitch peculiar to itself, and caves full of head-winds, like Atlantic gales grown up, out on their travels, and equal to any mischief. Nor is the Pacific content to have its grim way with you only while you are its lawful prey. For it has set a bar at the mouth of the Columbia, which for nine days defied the best seamanship of Captain Robert Gray, of the good bark *Columbia Rediviva*, who named the beautiful river in 1792. And it is only by seizing the unwilling tide in the narrowest nick of time that the pilot compels it to float you beyond the dangerous shoal and into the safety of the stream. Once within the bar, the ship seems to relax every tense nerve and fibre, and to drift on the current like a spent deer which has escaped the hounds. And so, lazily, you come to Astoria.

Astoria, founded by the Northwestern Fur Company, was, I believe, our first white settlement in the Northwest, and it was named in honor of John Jacob Astor, who was the energetic spirit of the company. Astoria is a nice name enough, as names go, and certainly better than Astor's Corner, or Astorville, or New Astor. But to be a mighty trapper, or only to hire the skill of mighty trappers, hardly entitles a man to build himself a monument of imperishable earth, and wood, and water. The Astor Library commemorates in its name a noble benefaction. Astoria preserves the recollection of a sharp and lucky instinct of trade. However, for that matter, there are hardly ten men in a generation for whom a town should be named. Unless Astor, or Lansing, or Lawrence, be many-sided, hospitable, capable of large results and endless activities—unless there be broad avenues leading to temples in his soul, and straight ways to libraries, museums, gymnasiums, schools, in his brain—he has no business to impress his image and superscription on the possible germ of all this completeness. And, if he have this right and title, he will have modesty besides, and never claim it. Alexandria and Rome sound stately, and embalm the pagan virtues of hardiness, courage, force, invincibility. For the men who overran the younger world at least brought blood, brawn, and brains out of their tussle with Nature and man. But our century pretends to a different civilization, and condemns without hope the Anglo-Saxon idiots who, in this age and in this republic, have blasted nineteen post-towns with the name of Rome, and doomed sixteen to stagger under the weight of Alexandria, with the occasional suffix of *Centre*, *Four Corners*, and *Switch*. *Alexandria Switch!* Perhaps we all privately sympathize with the sentiment of Horace Walpole, who declared that he should be very fond of his country if it were not for his countrymen! In the name of grace and fitness, let us keep the sweet

Indian appellatives bequeathed our pleasant places by a vanishing race; and, for whatever other nomenclature we need, let us remember only the "high souls, like some far stars, that come in sight once in a century."

Well, we came to Astoria (which should have been Chetco) in the late afternoon of a perfect summer Sunday. The river, twelve miles wide, lay all aglow with color under the low sun, and out to the west the color deepened and deepened till it seemed to be no longer atmosphere, but substance, like some supernal gem. Astoria is such a tiny place to have set up in the world for itself, so far from civilization! The great river



Rooster Rock.

stretches like a sea to the north; the great ocean creeps close on the west; and on the south and east the forests crowd up to the very thresholds—such forests as only the cunning wolf and wild-cat can find their way in. Yet, as the twilight fell, the little church-bell rang with a sound of cheerful confidence in a responsive congregation, and men and women went churchward, and lights glanced in the windows, and a little, soft baby-cry trembled a moment in the air. So I suppose that the world goes on there just as it does in New York or Nova Zembla, with births and deaths and givings in marriage, and envies and heartaches and sweet charities. But to this hour I cannot think of that atom

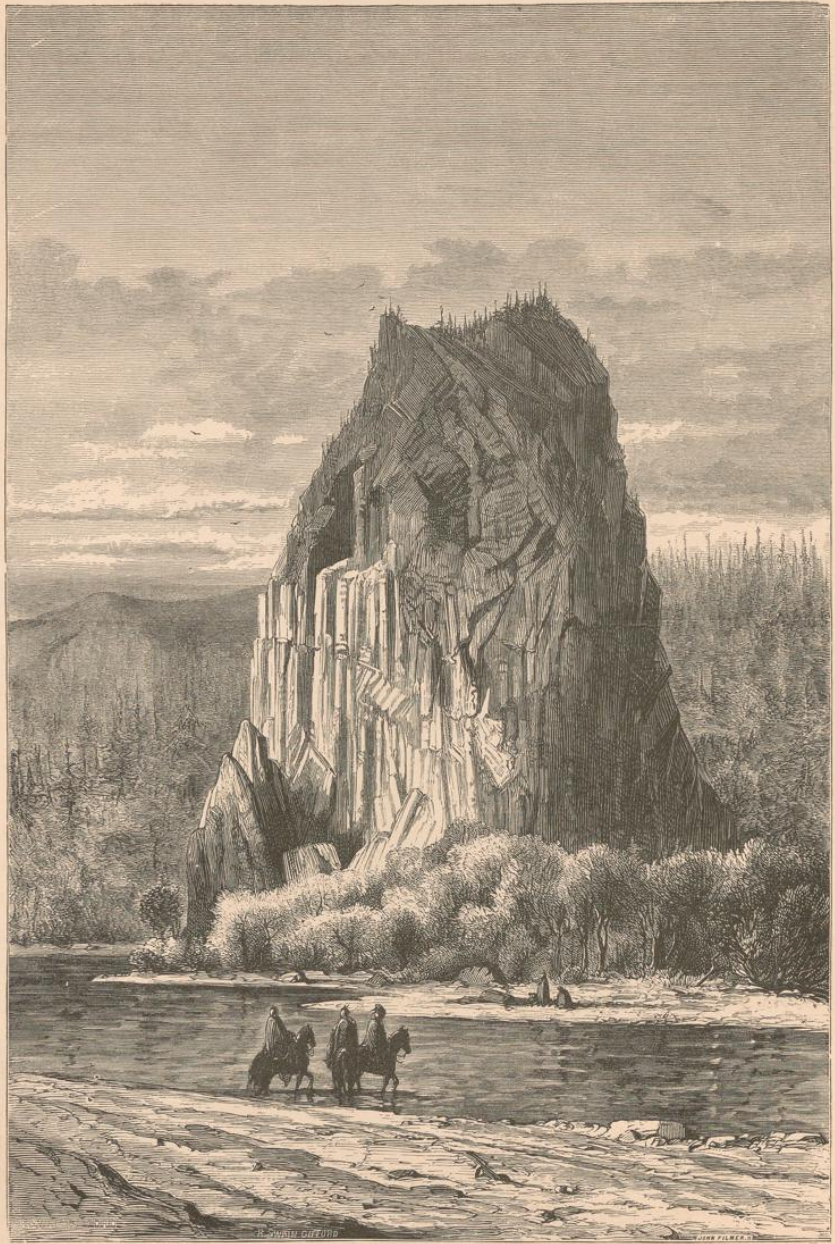
of civilization, made so pathetically small by the vastness of sea and river and woods, without a little pang of pity for what seems its unutterable loneliness; and yet I dare say it sits by the fire in supreme satisfaction, finds the keenest zest in the excitement of the semi-weekly stopping of the steamer, and, if it condescended to make comparisons, would consider New York at a disadvantage as to situation. That beautiful and blessed quality of self-conceit, without whose protection the contusions of every day would keep us morally black and blue from head to foot, not only saves ourselves from the buffetings of the unworthy, but saves also our kin, our neighborhood, our township, even our select-man, unless he happen to belong to the opposite political party.

Very late the long twilight faded, and the darkness grew alive with sound. The soft slipping of the tide and the murmur of the great woods were the ever-recurring lovely air, as it were, with which unnumbered variations blended. The myriad creatures which, every summer-night, seem to be just born, and to try vainly to utter their joy in stridulous voices, piped the whole chromatic scale with infinite self-satisfaction. Innumerable crickets addressed us in cadence with cheery felicitations on our safe arrival among them; a colony of tree-toads interrupted everybody to ask, in the key of F sharp major, after their relatives in the East, and to make totally irrelevant observations, without ever waiting for a reply; and the swelling bass of the bull-frogs seemed to be thanking Heaven that they were not as these impertinents. This inarticulate welcome, this well-known iteration, made the Pacific seem no longer strange, but familiar as the shores of New-York Bay, and it would not greatly have surprised us to open our eyes, next morning, on the barrenness of Sandy Hook or the fair Heights of Brooklyn.

What they really saw, however, when daybreak found us far up the Columbia, was better than city or crowded anchorage. The great river, still lake-like in breadth and quietness, lay rosy in the dawn. The wonderful forests, whose magnificence our tame and civil imagination could not have conceived, came down from farthest distance to the very margin of the stream. Pines and firs two hundred feet high were the sombre background against which a tropical splendor of color flickered or flamed out, for, even in this early September, beeches and oaks and ash-trees were clothed with autumn pomp; and on the north, far above the silence of the river and the splendid shores, four snow-crowned, rose-flushed, stately mountains lifted themselves to heaven. For miles and miles and miles, Mount Adams, Mount Jefferson, Mount Rainier, and Mount St. Helen's, make glad the way. Adams and Jefferson have an unvarying grandeur of form, a massive strength and nobility, as it becomes them to inherit with their names. Mount St. Helen's rises in lines so vague and soft as to seem like a cloud-mountain. Rainier, whose vastness you comprehend only when you see it from Puget Sound, looks, even from the river, immeasurable, lying snow-covered from base to peak.

Portland, one hundred and ten miles up the river, is the point of debarkation for the San-Francisco steamers, and there is much to be said about that busy and thrifty





CASTLE ROCK.

little clucking hen of a city. But, as Portland is not on the Columbia at all, but on the Willamette, twelve miles from its mouth, it may not now be told what golden eggs she has laid. The little steamer which plies up and down the river leaves her dock at the uncomfortable hour of three o'clock in the morning or thereabouts; and that must be very fine scenery, indeed, which reconciles one to being dragged out of bed in the middle of the night, and dumped, hungry, sleepy, and cross, in the chilly cabin of a day-boat, bare of state-rooms or sofas. The view which daylight brought us was a prospect of the boat's paddle-boxes. A gray mist swallowed up every thing beyond. But when it lifted, three hours later, it was worth while to have been chilled to the bone with its cold, and alarmed by its threat of showing us nothing, to see what it really had to show. For, as it slowly crept back to the shores and up the banks, and so away to the north-pole, which it must have come from, river and shores and mountains and sky, and the sun itself, came out upon us with such intensity of light and color that it seemed as if we or they were absolutely new that morning, and had never seen each other before.

Where the mists lifted, the stream flowed clear and smooth between mountain-shores a mile and a half apart, and rising sharp and bold thousands of feet in air. Forests covered their rocky sides, sometimes rising to the very top, sometimes dwindling into groups and thickets as they climbed. And on the very crest, standing alone and sucking their lusty life from the inhospitable stone, lone pines shot out of the crevices of rock, looking, so far above us, like the queer and graceless toy-trees in the shilling boxes of wooden soldiers, dear to the heart of boyhood. These mountains are a solid wall along the river for miles on miles. Sometimes there is neither rift, nor gorge, nor scar, in their huge sides. Then a canyon opens, and you see beyond and beyond other mountains coming down to link themselves in an unending chain, and glimpses of far-off levels or gray fields of rock bounding the vision. Sometimes a water-fall dazzles and dances out of the sky, a little, fluttering, quivering cobweb at first; then a floating ribbon; then a wind-blown veil of spray; then a cascade, leaping from rock to rock, forty, sixty, a hundred, three hundred feet; then a swift, resistless, triumphant rush of water, swirling and whirling toward the river of its love.\*

Yet, if shores and water-falls were beautiful, the forests were the crowning glory of the place. First in rank, again, stood the pines and firs—if they *were* pines and firs. They looked to me like some celestial sort of grown-up, feathery ground-evergreen. And who could expect a pine to rise, straight and fair, three hundred feet, a glimpse of red-brown bolls warm through the foliage of the lesser trees, and a glory of spreading, plummy, dark-green boughs, so purely outlined that every little tuft of them looked as if it, and it alone, had been finished specially to show how perfect a thing a tree-branch may be made for the enjoyment of the woodpeckers and the slugs? Seeing these pines, one

\* See Multanomah Falls.

understands the Northern myth of the tree Yggdrasil, at whose feet flowed sacred fountains and whose branches upheld the world.

Then came the cotton-woods, and the cotton-wood is to the Western settler the symbol of intermeddling and knavish incapacity. He considers it the "dead beat" of the vegetable kingdom, usurping ground that belongs to honest growths, making great pretensions to an early and useful maturity, and no better than a pipe-stem in value



The Cascades

when the axe claims it. Yet there crowded these plausible cotton-woods, standing so idly gracious and welcoming all along the shores in such gorgeousness of golden splendor, and in such royal ease and grace of attitude, that one forgets their good-for-nothingness and their general bad name among the virtuous and useful trees, and takes them to his heart at once. A tree whose polished, brilliant leaf looked like our maple, and whose scarlet, pendent swinging boughs looked like darting orioles, we were forbidden to



CAPE HORN

consider a familiar friend, a very learned pundit assuring us that there were no maples on the river. That was the only vegetation with which we were bold enough to set up the plea of acquaintance, every thing else being quite too splendid to countenance any claim of kinship with the paler and punier growths of our ascetic climate.

Sometimes, so far above our heads that they looked like pigmies at play, we saw the lumbermen getting out logs which came tearing down the rugged sluice-ways to the river. More seldom, even, did a single logger's hut appear, like a hang-bird's nest, far up among the rocks, making the place look wilder than the wilderness, because this little struggle toward civilization and domesticity was so overborne by the savagery of Nature. These half-cleared places had a certain repulsiveness, too. Nature carefully hides unsightly spots with shrubs and bushes, and, when her dead trees fall, she tenderly adorns the wreck they make with vines and mosses. But, when man comes in with rude and indiscriminate rapine, she is profaned, and will long leave the place to his clumsy keeping, throwing neither vine nor moss, nor veiling shadow even, across the scars of his occupation. So that those half-clearings looked rough and coarse as the lives of the inhabitants.

Sometimes the river flowed straight and untroubled. Sometimes the mountains swept round into its path, and the stream bent and parted on rocky mounds or islands, and ran shallow, disturbed, and dangerous. Straightway it quieted into chains of narrow lakes without visible outlet, whereon we sailed close up to lofty, impassable shores, like the walls of Sinbad's valley, but, turning suddenly on our track, found unexpected deliverance. Then, looking back, the way was lost by which we had come. Here, in the solitary mountains, we were alone. No world behind—no world before. The sense of solitude was too vast to be painful. But we felt as escaping prisoners feel when we threaded our way through a narrow rift of stone into the wonderful stream that grew more wonderful as we sailed. For, just there, walls of basalt in vast ledges, rising sheer and straight from the shore, overtopped the farther mountains. Rifted bowlders, like Castle Rock, stood alone, their base washed by the river, their heads upholding the sky. Majestic ramparts, like Cape Horn, rose, a vast, columnar wall, sometimes seven hundred feet in height. Columns, and obelisks, and shafts, lifted themselves with a mightier strength and a more majestic grace than architecture has been able to achieve. And through these stately gate-ways we came to the Cascades.

The Cascades are the fierce and whirling rapids wherein the river falls forty feet, twenty feet of it being taken almost at a leap. But for five miles the river is a seething whirlpool, and a queer little railroad on the Washington side affords the portage. The track runs so near the water's edge that one has a view of these rapids for the whole way, from the Middle Block-house, relic of not unremote Indian wars, to the drowned forest above the upper landing. The whole river-bed is gigantic rocks, sometimes hidden by the water, sometimes tearing through the water to make sharp and naked islands, between which the current rushes down, white with foam and with a roar

like the sea. Round the rocks and between the rocks and over the rocks, and almost burrowing under the rocks in its force, in those five miles the river takes on every possible form of cascade. Yet where we take steamer again, a moment before the river makes its first plunge, it is as quiet as the Connecticut, and washes along over submerged stumps like any slow bayou.

Being born under a lucky star, Imlac and I were invited to ride on the engine, nay,



Middle Block-house, Cascades.

on the very cow-catcher. It is impossible to imagine a madder excitement. With the whole tremendous motive-power behind you forgotten, you seem to be flying, without even the drawback of having to flap your wings. The wild river to the right of you, the wild mountains close on your left hand; your flight through rifts and chasms of stone which seem ever crowding forward with an evil-minded will to shut you in; just a glimpse of blue sky far above, such as miners see from the bottom of the black shaft; a fierce

rush and roar of wind that strikes down your very eyelids—this is riding on the cow-catcher in the canyon of the Columbia. Half blinded as we were, we saw, as we passed it, the great sides of Rooster Rock and a little log-house beneath. This was the scene of Lieutenant Philip H. Sheridan's first battle. Here, in 1856, a small party of white men was for two days besieged by a strong force of Indians; and here the irrepressible lieutenant, tired of his wise and masterly inactivity, determined to attack in his turn, and totally routed the enemy in a very whirlwind of a charge.

Now you are in the heart of the mountains. Soon the rock walls approach each other, and the stream flows narrower and fiercer. The wind roars through the gorges,



Peak of Red Rock

and in the spring, when the banks are full, beats up such waves that a boat cannot live in them, though these straits are two hundred miles from the sea. The walls are basaltic, columnar, rising in distinct, rudely-modelled pillars from four hundred feet to twelve hundred. Now and then, a bold rampart measures two thousand five hundred feet or even more. The receding or advancing cliffs break the river into a chain of tiny lakes. Wherever the mountains fall back on the south, Mount Hood fills the horizon, snow-covered, shining, vast. Mount Hood is fourteen thousand feet in height, and it is mortifying to admit that Mont Blanc is almost sixteen thousand. But, with this foreground of river and forest, with all this blaze of color set against the cold splendor of the icy peak, and with the blue intensity of the warm sky above, Mount Hood is more

magnificent than words can tell or brush can paint. And, if any "vagrom" man, having seen the two, pretends to think Mont Blanc the finer, let us, as Americans, laugh him to scorn.

Where the mountains recede before Mount Hood, the forest again encroaches, but it leaves bare a desolate peak called Coffin Rock, which was a place of Indian sepulture. Cairns of gray stones cover it, and rude monuments of rock. One is not near enough to see the vileness of the human taint upon it—for your true Indian in his death is little better than in his life, and bequeaths himself, a foul legacy, to the pure elements—and its gray melancholy is pathetic.

The Dalles is the second town of Oregon. The Idaho miners make it their base



Coffin Rock.

of supplies. The gold comes down there for shipment, and this babe in the woods even dreams of a mint. But its interest to the traveller is neither in grocery nor in ore, but in its wonderful outlook on river and mountain. For ten miles up the stream the *dalles*, or flag-stones, choke the way, and there you must take to the cars again. Here the strange, weather-beaten, weary-looking, old red rock reappeared, after a long absence, looking, amid the harder and bolder cliffs, like a poor relation, pathetic, but very seedy. The queer, battered, time-worn peak on the opposite page is of it.

The cliffs disappear above Dalles City, and lo, the sand-region! The endless wonder of the Pacific-coast journeys is the suddenness of their changes, as if supernatural scene-shifters were kept constantly busy in whipping off the old scenes, and setting new and



unexpected ones for the next act. From forests of tropic splendor to mountains of northern bareness and grandeur, from still pond to roaring cataract, from verdure and cultivation into Sahara, you pass without the least hint from Nature of what she means to do five minutes hence. Possibly Science gets the better of her, and finds out her whimsical intentions; but to the unlearned she seems to have gotten a little tipsy on that wonderful air—which would intoxicate the soberest—and not to be quite sure of her own mind. Her desert on the Columbia is a lively suggestion of her greater works of the same order in Egypt or elsewhere. It looks a limitless plain of hot white sand.



Passage of the Dalles.

The wind is a hurricane, and seems to blow from every point at once, so that the heavens rain a sandy shower. The shifting, sifting sand covers the track. Men in sand-white garments, with sand-white beards and hair, blindly delve along the rails to clear them, and limp aside with sand-stiff joints that seem to creak, as we go by. The sky is a pale-blue vault, faded out by this torrid plain. The sun is veiled, intense, and colorless. The earth is like a place of graves, as if millions of men, whole peoples, whole races, had been buried there and forgotten. But, if Nature had ever set any race there, it must have been of the lowest—in mind vacant, in body vile, in worship regarding stones and

wild animals, its only symbols of steadfastness and power. And when on the flat-shore rocks we saw the bark lodges of the Trascopin Indians, vile children and viler men and vilest women swarming within and without, we felt that they were accounted for—stupidity, dishonesty, beastliness, and all—and had no disposition to cast a stone at them.

The fifteen miles of portage show superb river scenery wherever the sand will let you see it. It is a succession of rapids, falls, and sucking currents, where the *dalles*, or *dales*—rough troughs or flag-stones, which have given their name to the place—make crooked and narrow channels for the stream. Every form which water may put on, every tint with which it can be beautiful, every caprice of motion with which it can move, finds illustration in this Columbia. Below the great fall, the whole volume of the stream—whose branches stretch north through British Columbia, east through Idaho and Montana, south and west into Nevada, and, reaching down, gather in the icy rivulets of the Rocky Mountains—pours through a gate-way not fifty yards in width, whose sides are perpendicular precipices, hewn as with implements. Smooth and green and glassy, it slides under brown shadows but to be torn again into a hundred ribbons by rocks below, as it has just been torn by rocks above. At the falls it is a mile wide, and plunges over a rocky wall twenty feet high and stretching from shore to shore.

Here are the famous Salmon Falls, up which the salmon go to the quiet reaches of the river to spawn, shooting the rapids with incredible agility. If you can keep your footing on the slippery ledges of rock, you watch them, fascinated. Up they come through the fierce and sucking rapids, gleaming white against the black stones that here and there tear the water; first come a few together; then a multitude swirls along; then the whole river from side to side is light with their innumerable host. And they mind that precipice and torrent no more than if it were a summer pool within its reedy margin. They swim swift and stately to the very foot, where you lose them in the seething, white whirlpool. Something flashes in the air, elastic, strong, light. Something glides up the stream above the fall. The daring, determined, wonderful thing has made that leap, defied rock and torrent, and found its safe shelter in the quiet pool beyond. Or, there is the flash, and then a struggle, and the poor bruised creature, wounded to death against the sharp-edged stones, drops back upon the current, and floats down a bloody track, dying after a little while. So they come, and come, and come—such myriads of them—and leap, and win, or lose, for all the hours of the day and for half the days of the year.

All over the rocks at the foot of the fall flutter the very scanty and disreputable rags in which the noble savage invests minute and accidental portions of his body. We nowhere saw the forest-god whom Cooper believed in, nor yet the statuesque and noble hunter whom Ward has found. It is not possible to imagine human creatures more unromantic, more indecent, more loathsome, more inhuman, than the visible Indian who

appears along every line of travel from the Kansas border to the northwestern boundary. That typical warrior who should be capable of declaring—

“Blaze with your serried columns!  
I will not bend the knee;  
The shackles ne'er again shall bind  
The arm which now is free!”—

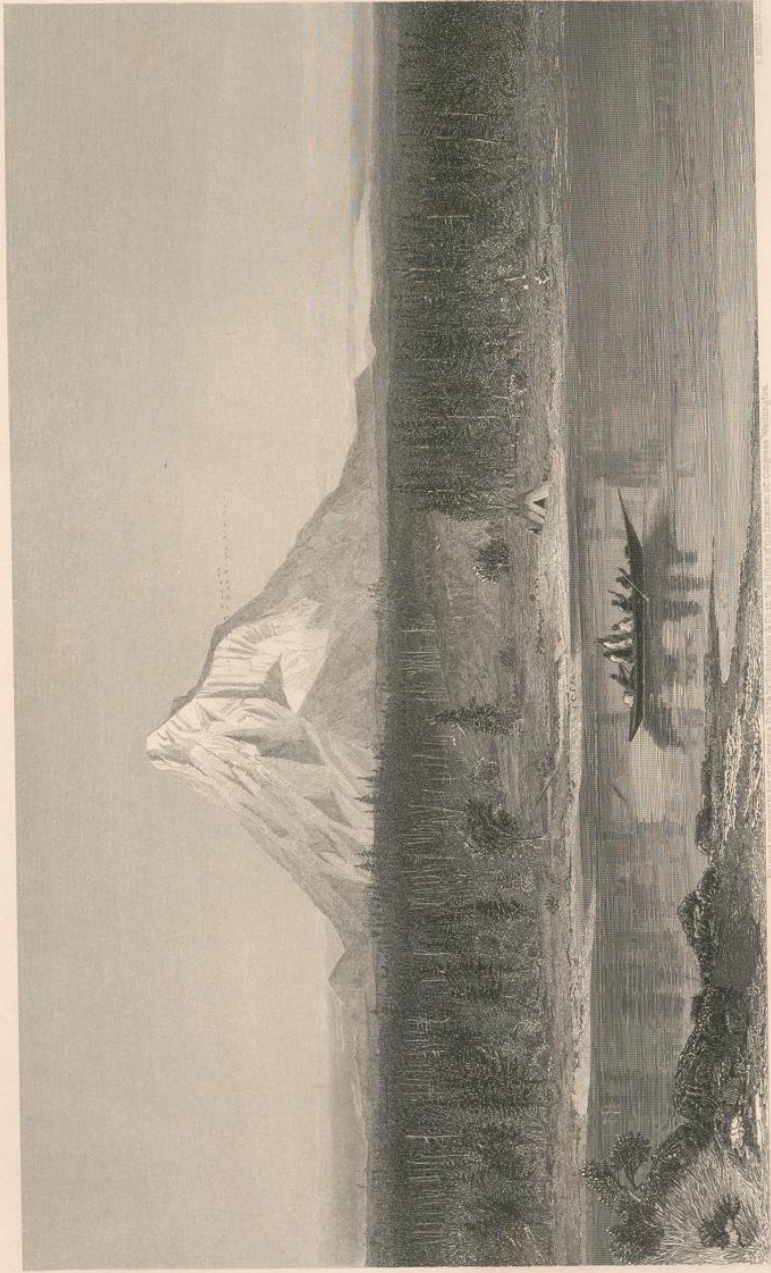
lives in the mountain-fastnesses, if he live at all, and does not corrupt his good manners with the evil communications of pale-faces. The red man of the plains, of the rivers, of the railroad and stage-coach neighborhoods, belongs to the universal genus *loafer*. He



Salmon Falls.

is a mighty hunter only of other men's corn and eggs. Savage virtues, if there be any, have departed from him, and civilized vices clothe him as with a garment. These Trascopins along the Columbia live chiefly on the salmon, and, when they have dried, twice over, all that even their gluttony can desire, they still go to the falls, day after day, and for mere wantonness of cruelty spear the beautiful fish and throw them out on the stones to die there horribly, and rot and infect the air. The ledges were slimy with decaying salmon, and abounded with a horrid parasitic life. Sight and smell drove us quickly away; but the noble savage evidently enjoyed it all. You do not care for their thieving, perhaps; for, besides that you own neither cornfields nor hen-roost within three thousand miles, you reflect that our worthy ancestors set them a large example in that way, to

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*Mount Hood from the Columbia*

New York: D. Appleton & Co.

begin with. Moreover, during this time a notable industry, which the alternative of life leads to this exclusive industry. However, for all their ignorance and dirt and foolishness and distress, and perhaps, perhaps, the birds, thrown with a sense of personal responsibility in the matter, that they are the only of Nature.

And what, however, concerning the very origin of these dependencies of Nature? It is impossible not to believe that the best of the foxed Tricopius and Arapahoes and Cheyennes and Flatheads and Crows and all other ill-conditioned tribes there be does not equal in value to himself the same sort of young Looney's life. Therefore it would seem that there must be a proper, honest policy somewhere between the individual who wiping out which the frontiersmen count on, and the pepper-and-salt wiles of Mr. Colyer. The history why shall I say it will bring peace to the trader's conscience of all travellers who have seen the fading of home, and have carried the consciousness of him as a nightmare ever since.

I feel that I should ask pardon of the young reader for this most unbusinesslike episode and of the professionalists for the catalogue of these observations. But the Indian is not what I have drawn him, and it is not as we might sooner with the perplexing problem of what to do with him if our national policy, whether of peace or war, contemplated the actual capture, and not a fragment of the brain of the unfortunates on the one hand, and on the other, the order of the brain of the unfortunates on the other. For my own part, I believe that the only one out of the thousands of the West who are high-spirited young Looney, that Darwin himself, on seeing them, would be constrained to accord them slow and belated courtesy to inform through the various spirits of four, before they should give the negative and unexcusable excellence of the poor but they slaughter.

And, if the game is the very worst of things, the end of an unfair exhibition of their tendencies, why, I have seen the very best piece as well, and I found it very disappointing. I spent some time with a Catholic mission among the Potawatomes and I carefully botanized among the transported wild shoots. The school was a triumph of wit. The young boys were in formal jackets and trousers, inexpressible uglier than their black rags or their old, more native, dulled signs were fanned down by big black coats, and combined by their and their own for the multiplication table, and in every way dreadfully put down by their own. They were heterodox. I do not remember that they blasphemed in the school. They even divided fractions and their behavior struck me into amazement and astonishment. I thought I should like to see a young / and so. But they were only a few puppets pulled by a string. The school meant absolutely nothing to them. They had not an idea. If you should show a fraction they had a better "devil" than the wooden figures they all wore. I saw a splendid example of the impossible achievement, which shows a superior and endowment. All the mathematics was rubbed out of the poor little puppets. The geographical was written on them, it was rubbed out, as it were, and a



begin with. Moreover, thieving rises into a notable industry, when the alternative of idle hands is this sickening barbarity. But you do care for all their ignorance and dirt, and foulness and disease; and you are pricked for weeks afterward with a sense of personal responsibility in the matter, that clings like the shirt of Nessus.

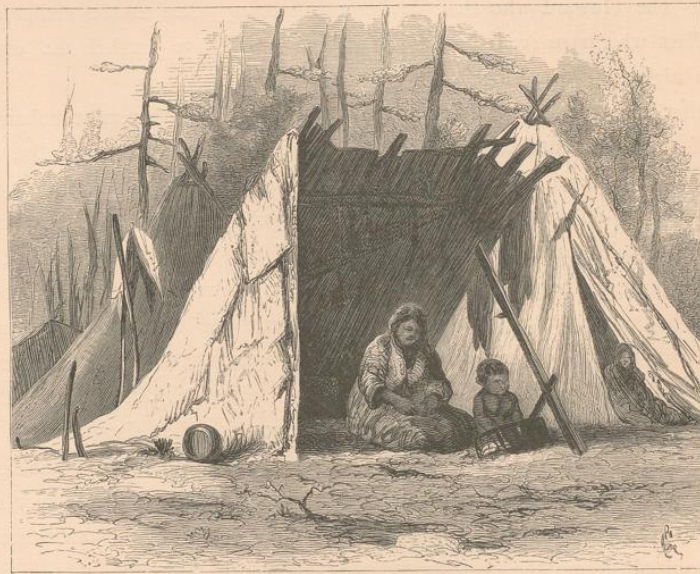
And, with whatever contemptuous pity you regard these step-children of Nature, it is impossible not to believe that the sum of the united Trascopins and Arapahoes, and Shoshones, and Pahutes, and Crows, and of all other ill-conditioned tribes there be, does not equal in value to humanity the single unit of young Loring's life. Therefore, it would seem that there must be a proper Indian policy somewhere between the indiscriminate wiping out which the frontiersman insists on and the peppermint-candy wiles of Mr. Colyer. The Howard who shall devise it will bring peace to the tender consciences of all travellers who have seen the Indian at home, and have carried the consciousness of him as a nightmare ever since.

I feel that I should ask pardon of the polite reader for this most unhandsome episode, and of the sentimentalist for the callousness of these observations. But the Indian *is* just what I have drawn him, and it seems as if we might sooner settle the perplexing problem of what to do with him if our chameleon policy, whether of peace or war, contemplated the actual creature, and not a figment of the brain of the philanthropist on the one hand, and of the border-settler on the other. For my own part, I believe that not only are not all the aborigines of the West worth one high-hearted young Loring, but that Darwin himself, on seeing them, would be constrained to accord them slow and multiplied centuries to "mount through the various spires of form" before they should reach the negative and harmless excellence of the poor fish they slaughter.

And, if this phase is the very worst of savage life, and an unfair exhibition of their tendencies, why, I have seen the very best phase as well, and I found it very disappointing. I spent some time once at a Catholic mission among the Potawatamies, and I carefully botanized among the transplanted wild shoots. The school was a triumph of drill. The young barbarians, in formal jackets and trousers, inexpressibly uglier than their native rags or their yet more native dull-red skins, were frowned down by big blackboards, and confronted by verbs and definitions and the multiplication-table, and in every way dreadfully put upon by star-eyed Science. They were letter-perfect. I do not remember that they blundered in an answer. They even divided fractions, and their behavior struck me into amazement and admiration, as Hamlet's affected the queen; for it is a thing *I* can't do. But they were only as so many puppets pulled by a string. The lessons meant absolutely nothing to them; they had not an idea. *Why* you should divide a fraction, they had no more notion than the wooden rosaries they all wore, whereas *I* see a possible propriety in the impossible achievement, which shows a superior mental endowment. All the individuality was ground out of the poor little puppets. After the geography-lesson was written on them, it was rubbed out, as it were, and a



grammar-lesson was set down in its place; and then the sponge of the next text-book erased every trace of noun and verb, and the surface was blank for the catechism or hymn, or whatever came next. When school was dismissed, the little martyrs did not fly to play, as lusty white boys fly. They moped away by themselves, holding no commerce with each other, too broken-spirited even to stare at the visitors or to show any eagerness as to the appropriation of pennies very liberally bestowed. Some of them lay on their backs and looked at the sky, and the rest mooned about so vacantly that it was impossible for any thing else to be so slow and indifferent except a snail. When they grow up, it looked as if they would either go back to the wild life or settle down on



Indians on the Columbia.

the debatable border with the most scampish of the white squatters, and poison their dull blood with the coarse but necessary excitement of bad whiskey. No, it is useless; education does not agree with the Indian blood, and, when you try to make this red-handed Ishmael put on *our ways*, he merely loses his own, and is more lazy and not less vicious.

Above the Dalles the forests disappear; nay, every leaf vanishes, and for miles on miles the banks are covered with thick brown grass, wherein not even a mullein-stalk springs. The scenery is tame, and the most eager tourist seldom ventures above Wright's Harbor, two hundred and fifty miles from the sea. Steamers ply, however, for four hundred miles, and then, after a portage along impassable rapids, an odd little boat

runs up the Snake River, in Idaho. When the great railroad shall connect the head-waters of the Missouri with the head-waters of the Columbia, the six hundred miles of track will open an incalculable wealth to trade, and the most magnificent wilderness of the world to travel. But at present, what with ubiquitous savages, and perils of cold and hunger, and lost trails, it is as well to pause at Celilo, not far above the falls. There, having inspected "the largest warehouse in the United States, being over eleven hundred feet in length, and built to receive the Idaho freights," as the station-master informs you in a solemn recitative, and there being nothing else in or of Celilo that unanointed eyes can behold, you are speedily ready for your train. And so back you go, leaving the falls and salmon and savage, leaving desert and whirlpool and whirlwind, at your back, and not reluctantly returning to the common-sense and conventions of decent and sober Dalles. All the Dallesese, I remember, were "assisting" at a Sabbath-school festival when we arrived, and, going to bed on the boat, we seemed consequently to have inhaled a whiff of New-England air, and to sleep the better for it.

To come down the river in the early morning, with the clear eastern light behind you, is almost finer than to sail eastward, with the glow of the sunset over mountain and stream. Certainly Mount Hood lay more stately calm and fair, quite apart, rising lonely from a far, upward-going plain, white, glittering, perfect. Mount Adams and Mount Jefferson, also, seemed to win a charm from the presence of the pure morning; and we had not in the least understood Mount Rainier until this second coming before it. Under the blue heavens it rose in soft and tender liftings, till its triple crown overtopped Mount Hood itself. From Puget Sound, the view of it is grander, but not so lovely; and, as we watched it, it seemed even more worthy to be remembered than sweet St. Helen's.

There are actually many hundreds of persons, no better than ourselves, who are allowed to live all their years in the presence of these five mountains; but we did not see the human likeness of the Great Stone Face anywhere, and we observed that worries, and sorrows, and sickness, and even death, came to them as to us. So, when it seemed best, we were content to leave the enchanted river behind us, and to come back to the familiar East, where, if work and care and pain awaited us, duty as surely waited for us, too. And, as we reluctantly sailed away from the friendliness we had found, and from the majestic forests and the gracious mountains, we seemed to hear in the ripple of the waves these words of a most sweet philosopher: "Let us remember within what walls we lie, and understand that this level life, too, has its summit, and why from the mountain-top the deepest valley has its tinge of blue; that there is elevation in every hour, as no part of the earth is so low that the heavens may not be seen from it, and we have only to stand on the summit of our hour to command an uninterrupted horizon."