

foothold north of the Columbia river. I will now cite one instance showing the behavior of the company's representatives towards American immigrants. In the fall of 1844 a large party of Americans arrived and camped at Washougal, on the north side of the river, above Vancouver. The party included a number of the most prominent figures in pioneer history, among them being George Bush, from whom Bush prairie, in Thurston county, took its name; Mr. Jesse Ferguson, who, I am glad to say, is now with us on this platform, and Col. Michael T. Simmons. Bush was a colored man, but very intelligent and thrifty, and a generous character; he had rendered valuable financial aid to some of his fellow travelers on the journey, and he always commanded the respect of those who knew him. He came to Oregon, expecting to enjoy greater privileges than were accorded to people of his race in Missouri. It was his intention to accompany his friend Simmons to the Rogue river valley, in Southern Oregon, and settle there, but he found himself proscribed by an act of the provisional legislature, forbidding negroes and mulattoes from living in Oregon. Simmons, for one, was not willing to desert him under the circumstances, and he decided to reconnoiter Puget sound, with a view to changing the destination of his party and settling in this region, should the country appear to be inviting. Acting on this impulse, he applied to the Hudson Bay people at Vancouver to rent a house for his family to live in during the winter. He was received with courtesy, but he did not get the house. The company's agent would have treated him generously, as they did all newcomers, if his destination had been anywhere south of the river, but they refused flatly to shelter his family unless he would abandon the idea of coming to Puget sound. Simmons at once comprehended their reason for their attitude, and his resolute spirit was aroused. The fact that the company objected to the presence of Americans on the north side of the river was in his estimation an additional reason for executing his purpose. He resolved to come, and come he did. For lack of provisions and facilities he failed in his first attempt to cross from the Cowlitz river to the headwaters of Puget sound, but undaunted, he persevered, and finally, in the fall of 1845, he and his party overcame all obstacles and made the first settlement at and near Tumwater. All honor is due to Simmons and Bush and Ferguson, and the intrepid pioneers of their class, who rendered services to our country of the greatest importance, by refusing to be crowded out of any por-