

their reach, yet not affording them even a momentary support. I should like to have seen the rugged cliffs relieved here and there by the softness of smooth lawns, and some evidences that man had conquered even this rude and resisting nature. But for a century or two to come the traveler will have to do without this relief; nor need he grumble, for, with all its rugged grandeur, the scenery has many exquisite bits where nature has a little softened its aspect. Nor is it amiss to remember that but a little way back from the river there are farms, orchards, cattle, and sheep. At one point the boat for a moment turned her bow to the shore to admit a young man, who brought with him a wonderful bouquet of wild flowers, which he had gathered at his home, a few miles back; and here and there, where the hill-sides have a more moderate incline, you will see that some energetic pioneer has carved himself out a farm.

Nevertheless it is with a sense of relief at the change that you at last approach a large island, a flat space of ten or twelve hundred acres, with fences and trees and grain fields and houses, and with a gentle and peaceful aspect, doubly charming to you when you come to it suddenly, and fresh from the preceding and somewhat appalling grandeur. Here the boat stops; for you are here at the lower end of the famous Cascades, and you tranship yourself into cars, which carry you to the upper end, a distance of about six miles, where again you take boat for Dalles City.

The Cascades are rapids. The river, which has ever a swift and impetuous current, is nearly two miles wide just above these rapids. Where the bed shoals it also narrows, and the great body of water rushes over the rocks, roaring, tumbling, foaming—a tolerably wild sight. There is nowhere any sudden descent sufficient to make a water-fall; but there is a fall of a good many feet in the six miles of cascades.

These rapids are considered impassable, though I believe the Indians used sometimes to venture down them in canoes; and it was my good fortune to shoot down them in a little steamer—the *Shoshone*—the third only, I was told, which had ever ventured this passage. The singular history of this steamboat shows the vast extent of the inland navigation made possible by the Columbia and its tributaries. She was built in 1866 on the Snake River, at a point ninety miles from Boise City, in Idaho Territory, and was employed in the upper waters of the Snake, running to near the mouth of the Bruneau, within 125 miles of the head of Salt Lake. When the mining excitement in that region subsided there ceased to be business for her, and her owner determined to bring her to Portland. She passed several rapids on the Snake, and at a low stage of water was run

over the Dalles. Then she had to wait nearly a year until high water on the Cascades, and finally passed those rapids, and carried her owner, Mr. Ainsworth, who was also for this passage of the Cascades her pilot, and myself safely into Portland. We steamed from Dalles City about three o'clock on an afternoon so windy as to make the Columbia very rough. When we arrived at the head of the Cascades we found the shore lined with people to watch our passage through the rapids. As we swept into the foaming and roaring waters the engine was slowed a little, and for a few minutes the pilots had their hands full; for the fierce currents, sweeping her now to one side and then to the other, made the steering extraordinarily difficult. At one point there seemed a probability that we should be swept on to the rocks; and it was very curious to stand, as General Sprague and I, the only passengers, did, in front of the pilot-house, and watch the boat's head swing against the helm and toward the rocks, until at last, after half a minute of suspense, she began slowly to swing back, obedient to her pilot's wish. We made six miles in eleven minutes, which is at the rate of more than thirty miles per hour, a better rate of speed than steamboats commonly attain. Of course it is impossible to drive a vessel up the Cascades, and a steamboat which has once passed these rapids remains forever below.

At the upper end of the Cascades a boat awaits you, which carries you through yet more picturesque scenery to Dalles City, where you spend the night. This is a small place, remarkable to the traveler chiefly for the geological collection, which every traveler ought to see, belonging to the Rev. Mr. Condon, a very intelligent and enthusiastic geologist, the Presbyterian minister of the place. You have also at Dalles City a magnificent view of Mount Hood, and Mr. Condon will tell you that he has seen this old crater emit smoke since he has lived here.

There is no doubt that both Mount Hood and Mount St. Helens have still internal fires, though both their craters are now filled up with ashes. There is reason to believe that at its last period of activity Mount Hood emitted only ashes; but there are still found traces of volcanic ashes, attributable, I am told, to this mountain, as far as 100 miles from its summit. Of Mount St. Helens it is probable that its slumbering fires are not very deeply buried. A few years ago two adventurous citizens of Washington Territory were obliged to spend a night near its summit, and seeking for some cave among the lava where to shelter themselves from the storm, found a fissure from which came so glowing and immoderate a heat that they could not bear its vicinity, and, as they related, were alternately frozen and scorched