



MOUNT HOOD.

board this steamer, and thus avoid an uncomfortably early awakening. Then when you do rise, at six or half past, you will find yourself on the Columbia, and steaming directly at Mount Hood, whose splendid snow-covered peak seems to bar your way, but a short distance ahead. It lies, in fact, a hundred miles off; and when you have sailed some hours toward it, the river makes a turn, which leaves the snowy peak at one side, and presently hides it behind the steep bank. The little steamer, very clean and comfortable, affords you an excellent breakfast, and some amusement in the odd way in which she is managed. Most of the river steamers here have their propelling wheel at the stern; they have very powerful engines, which drive them ahead with surprising speed. I have gone sixteen miles an hour in one with the current; and when they make a landing the pilot usually runs the boat's head slantingly against the shore, and passengers and freight are taken in or landed over the bow. At the wood-pile on the shore you may usually see one of the people called "Pikes," whom you will recognize by a very broad brimmed hat, a frequent squirting of tobacco juice, and the possession of two or three hounds, whom they call hereabouts "hound-dogs," as we say "bull-dog." And this reminds me that in Oregon they usually ask you if you will

eat an "egg-omelet;" and they speak of pork—a favorite food of the Pike—as "hog-meat."

The voyage up the river presents a constant succession of wild and picturesque scenery; immense rocky capes jut out into the broad stream; for miles the banks are precipitous, like the Hudson River Palisades, only often much higher, and for other miles the river has worn its channel out of the rock, which looks bare and clean cut, as though it had been of human workmanship. The first explorer of the Columbia, even if he was a very commonplace mortal, must have passed days of the most singular exhilaration, especially if he ascended the stream in that season when the skies are bright and blue, for it seems to me one of the most magnificent sights in the world. I am not certain that the wildness does not oppress one a little after a while, and there are parts of the river where the smoothly cut cliffs, coming precipitously down to the water's edge, and following down, sheer down, to the river's bottom, make you think with terror of the unhappy people who might here be drowned, with this cold rock within