

Ocean. Thus are those two great oceans separated by a single portage of two hundred miles! The practicability of a speedy, safe, and easy communication with the Pacific, is no longer a matter of doubt or conjecture; from information not to be doubted, the Rocky Mountain at this time, in several places, is so smooth and open that the labor of ten men for twenty days would enable a wagon with its usual freight to pass with great facility from the navigable water of the Missouri to that of the Columbia: the actual distance from river to river several hundred miles from their source, that is, from the great Falls of Missouri to the fork of Clark's river, is one hundred and forty-nine miles; the distance, therefore, of two hundred miles is to good navigation on the Columbia, which is the only river of any magnitude upon that whole coast, north of the Colorado of California, though there are several good harbors, secure and safe for vessels of any size.

The region of country from the ocean to the head of tide water, which is about two hundred miles, is heavily timbered, with a great variety of wood well calculated for ship building, and every species of cabinet or carpenter's work; though there is a heavily timbered country thence for two hundred miles further, yet it is of a lesser growth, and quality not so durable; at that point commences the plain country, when the soil becomes more thin, and almost without wood, until it arrives at the table lands below the mountain, though the soil of this region is not so good as in any other part of this great valley, yet it produces grass of the finest quality, and is emphatically called the region favorable to the production of the horses, this noble animal so far surpassing all others in usefulness, courage, and swiftness, is here produced in greater perfection than even in Andalusia, or Virginia. But, independent of all the wealth which may be derived from the fur trade of that river, and the Missouri, the security too which the peace of this country would find in the influence which the American traders would obtain over the native, is, the increasing commerce in the Western Ocean. There is no employment so well calculated to make good seamen as the whale fisheries, which are known to be more profitable on this coast than any other, at the same time the oil is far preferable to that taken on any other coast, being clear and transparent as rock water. Whilst so many of our citizens are industriously engaged in the various branches of trade in those seas, more valuable to this country it is believed than any other, whilst all nations who have claims upon that coast, and some who have none, are anxious to occupy some position upon it, even at a vast expense, to enable them to participate in its benefits, we have neglected to extend to it any portion of our care, though it appears, from the best information, that there is at this time eight millions of property owned by citizens of this republic in the Pacific Ocean.

Russia, whose dominions on the Asiatic coast, occupy nearly the same position upon that side, which ours do on this, has long been well informed of the great and increasing value of that commerce; and whilst she has been no where visible, not even to the powers of