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THE COLUMBIA RIVER AND PUGET SOUND.

By CHARLES NORDHOFF.



VIEW ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER.

IN less than forty-eight hours after you leave San Francisco you find yourself crossing the bar which lies at the mouth of the Columbia River, and laughing, perhaps, over the oft-told local tale of how a captain, new to this region, lying off and on with his vessel, and impatiently signaling for a pilot, was temporarily comforted by a passenger, an old Californian, who "wondered why Jim over there couldn't take her safe over the bar." "Do you think he knows the soundings well enough?" asked the anxious skipper; and was answered, "I don't know about that, captain; but he's been taking all sorts of things 'straight' over the bar for about twenty years, to my knowledge, and I should think he might manage the brig."

The voyage from San Francisco is almost all the way in sight of land; and as you skirt the mountainous coast of Oregon you see long stretches of forest, miles of tall firs killed by forest fires, and rearing their bare heads toward the sky like a vast assemblage of bean-poles—a barren view, which you owe to the noble red man, who, it is said, sets fire to these great woods in order to produce for himself a good crop of blueberries.

When, some years ago, Walk-in-the-Water, or Red Cloud, or some other Colorado chief, asserted in Washington the right of the Indian to hunt buffalo, on the familiar ground that he *must* live, a journalist given to figures demolished the Indian position by demonstrating that a race which insisted on living on buffalo meat required about 16,000 acres of land per head for its subsistence, which is more than even we can spare. One wonders, remembering these figures, how many millions of feet of first-class lumber are sacrificed to provide an Indian rancheria with huckleberries.

On the second morning of your voyage you enter the Columbia River, and stop, on the right bank, near the mouth, at a place famous in history and romance, and fearfully disappointing to the actual view—Astoria. When you have seen it, you will wish you had passed it by unseen. I do not know precisely how it ought to have looked to have pleased my fancy, and realized the dreams of my boyhood, when I read Bonnevill's *Journal* and Irving's *Astoria*, and imagined Astoria to be the home of romance and of picturesque trappers. Any thing less ro-