

cordance with the report of these distinguished scholars, the Emperor of Germany, on the twenty-first of October, 1872, rendered his decision, that the line by way of the Canal De Haro was the one most in accordance with the treaty. This decision was accepted by the two governments, and the unsettled portion of the boundary line determined in accordance with it.

Thus, after the vicissitudes of more than three-quarters of a century of debate and negotiations, with the determination of this last detail, the Oregon Question reached its full and final decision.

JOSEPH R. WILSON.

223
 V.1 1900
 1847
 St Joe to Ft Vancouver
 Mattes 3*

REMINISCENCES OF HUGH COSGROVE

By H. S. LYMAN.

Hugh Cosgrove, an Oregon pioneer of 1847, and a representative of the men of some means, who established the business interests of the state, is of Irish birth, having been born in County Cavan, North Ireland, in 1811. Although now in his ninetieth year, he is still of clear mind and memory, and recalls with perfect distinctness the many scenes of his active life. He is still living on the place which he purchased, in 1850, on French Prairie, near Saint Paul. He is a man of fine physical proportion, being in his prime, five feet, eleven inches tall, and full chested, broad shouldered, and erect, and weighing about one hundred and eighty pounds. He has the finely moulded Celtic features, and genial expression of the land of Ulster, and enjoys the fine wit and humor for which his race is famous. His father was a farmer, but learning much of the opportunities in Canada, concluded to cross the ocean to improve the conditions of himself and his family. It was about that period when assisted emigration from East Britain was in vogue, and mechanics of Glasgow, Scotland, were loaned 10£ sterling for each member of the family, to take up free homes in Canada; the loan to be returned after a certain time. The Cosgroves-not being from that city, did not enjoy this loan, but determined to take advantage of the other opportunities offered all the immigrants, which were a concession of one hundred acres of land free, and an outfit of goods necessary to setting up a home in the new land.

Taking passage on a lumber ship, the Eliza, of Dublin, at a rate of 3£ each, and furnishing their own victualing, they made a speedy and prosperous voyage, some considerable glimpses of which remain in the memory of Mr.

Cosgrove, after the lapse of eighty years. He remembers well, also, the breaking up of the old home, the auction of the family belongings, and the general sense of hope and abandon with which they cut loose from the shores of the old world. None of the family, probably, had any considerable appreciation of the vast race movement to which they as units of society were answering, but felt keenly the bracing effect of increased energy and enthusiasm which that movement imparted.

In Canada they hastened to secure their possessions, locating the one hundred-acre lot of their own, in the hard timber woods out on the boulder-sprinkled soil of lower Canada, in the Dalhousie township, within five miles of Lanark, and obtaining a free government outfit at the government store at Lanark. Here young Hugh spent the most of his boyhood, helping to clear the farm, becoming an expert axeman, burning the hard wood, from the ashes of which was leached the potash that paid for the clearing; and also getting his education at the free school. He recalls these as very happy years, and the pride and joy that all the family took in owning their own home did very much to form his character on a more liberal and progressive plan than could have been had in old world conditions. At the age of twenty-one he was married to Mary, a daughter of Richard Rositer,—“a glorious good man,” of Perth. Learning at length that land of a better quality, less stony, was vacant “out west,” a move was made to Chatham, in Canada West, as then known. Having a “birth-right claim,” as it was called, to one hundred acres, and finding that he could make a purchase adjoining of one hundred acres of “clerical land,” the young farmer laid out his two hundred-acre farm, and made buildings to improve it. But learning that land was still better the farther west one went, he proceeded as far as the Detroit River.

But just at this juncture all things were thrown in confusion by the uprising of the “Patriots,” the extent of whose organization was not known. There was great alarm felt, and the Canadian militia were likely to be called out. Now the Cosgroves had been duly taught that “the Yankees” were terrible people, almost ready to eat innocent people from the old country. But now that the Canadian side looked warlike, Mrs. Cosgrove said to her husband: “Very likely now you will be called out with the militia, and I will be left alone; why not cross over into the United States, and begin there?” She was acquainted, moreover, with a family in Detroit. Mr. Cosgrove acted upon the suggestion, and this led into a very much larger field of operations.

They found life on the American side much more intense and extensive, and discovered that the Yankees, instead of being a species of man-eaters, were royal good fellows.

Having saved some money for a new start, he prudently looked about how to invest it so as to make increase as he crossed the line. He found at the custom house that duty on cattle was low. He bought cows, selling at \$10 each in Canada, which he disposed of in Michigan at as much as \$40 each,—his first “good luck.” This gave him some ready money to begin business.

Fortunately in disposing of his cattle he made the acquaintance of a Mr. Saxon, a business man of very high character, recently from New Jersey. He was, indeed, not only a strict business man, but strictly religious, and a crank in habits of morality, taking pains to advise young men against bad habits. By this Mr. Saxon, Cosgrove was interested in taking work, just being begun on the railway line from Detroit to Chicago, Illinois, then a landing place on the marshy shores of Lake Michigan. “Why not take a contract?” asked Mr. Saxon, who had

himself the work of locating a twenty-mile section of the road; and offered all assistance necessary in making bids, and was willing to guarantee Cosgrove's responsibility. By this great service a paying contract was secured of grading a section of road. The contract was profitable, and the ins and outs of business were learned—especially the art of how to employ and work other men profitably,—Mr. Saxon, the ever ready friend, frequently giving the young immigrant helpful advice.

Having saved something like \$5,000 from his operations, he was next visited by a coterie of eastern men who were coming west to mend their fortunes—to go to Chicago, and take a contract of excavating and filling on the great projected canal from Chicago to the Mississippi—a work only just completed at this day. It was then begun under state control. He soon discovered that he was the only capitalist in the number, and in order to save the job, bought out the main man, a Mr. Smith, who had a contract of \$80,000. This was finished to advantage, although the state suspended operations. Prices were excellent, some of the rock excavating being done at fifty to seventy-five cents, and rock filling at \$1.25 per square yard. Further contracts were taken, but in the course of time prices were forced down. In following up the railway development, a residence was made at Joliet, where he bought one hundred and sixty acres of land, on which much of the city now stands. But two things acted as a motive to make him look elsewhere. One was the malaria of the Illinois prairie; the other was the report of Oregon.

A newspaper man by the name of Hudson, of the *Joliet Courier*, who had come to Oregon, wrote back very favorable accounts of that then territory, especially praising the equable climate. A number of Joliet men, among whom were Lot Whitcomb and James McKay, read these

articles with interest, and finally made up their minds to cross the country to Oregon, a name that was to the old west about what the new world was to the old. Lot Whitcomb, a man of affairs, who afterwards made himself famous in Oregon as a steamboat man, thought Oregon would be a great place for contractors and men able to carry on large undertakings, as he heard that there were few such there.

In April, 1847, accordingly, a party of thirteen families were ready to start. Cosgrove had been trading during the winter, to get suitable wagons and ox teams. He preferred to make the eventful journey comfortably and safely, and lack nothing that forethought could provide. He did not belong to the poorer class, who had to make the trip partly on faith. Three well made, well built wagons, drawn each by three yoke of oxen—young oxen—and a band of fifteen cows constituted his outfit. He had young men as drivers, and his family was comfortably housed under the big canvas tops.

He now recalls the journey that followed as one of the pleasantest incidents of his life. It was a long picnic, the changing scenes of the journey, the animals of the prairie, the Indians, the traders and trappers of the mountain country; the progress of the season, which was exceptionally mild, just about sufficed to keep up the interest, and formed a sort of mental culture that the world has rarely offered. Almost all migration has been carried on in circumstances of danger and distress, but this was, although daring in the extreme, a summer jaunt, with nothing to vitiate the effect of the great changes in making out the American type.

The following particulars of the journey have the interest of being recalled by a pioneer now in his ninetieth year, showing what sharp lines the original experiences had drawn on the mind, and also being in themselves

worthy of preservation. However much alike may have been the journeyings across the plains in general features, in each particular case, it was different from all others, and no true comprehension of the whole journey, the movement of civilization across the American continent, can be gained without all the details; the memory of one supplying one thing, and that of another supplying another. The experiences of the Cosgroves were those of the pleasantest kinds, the better-to-do way of doing it, without danger, sickness, great fatigue, or worry, and with no distress.

After making the drive across Iowa and Missouri, in the springtime, when the grass was starting and growing, the Missouri River was crossed, waiting almost a week for their turn at Saint Joe, and then they were west of the Mississippi, with the plains and the Indian country before them. An "organization" was duly effected. Nothing showed the American character more distinctly than the impulse to "organize," whenever two or three were gathered together. It was the social spirit. There was no lack of materials, as besides this party of thirteen families, there were hundreds of others gathering at Saint Joe, the immigration of that year amounting to almost two thousand persons. A train of one hundred and fourteen wagons was soon made up, and Lot Whitcomb was elected captain. Mr. Cosgrove says, "I was elected something. I have forgotten what it was"—but some duty was assigned to each and all, and the big train moved.

Almost immediately upon starting, however, they were met by some trappers coming out of the mountains, who said, "You will never get through that way; but break up in small parties of not over fifteen wagons each."

It soon proved as the trappers said. The fondness of organization, and having officers, is only exceeded among Americans by the fondness of "going it on one's own

hook;" and this, coupled with the delays of the train, broke up Lot Whitcomb's company in two days. In a company, as large as that, a close organization was next to impossible. A trifling break down or accident to one hindered all, and the progress of the whole body was determined by the slowest ox. When Mr. Cosgrove separated his three fine wagons, and active young oxen, and drove out on the prairie, Captain Whitcomb said, "that settles it. If Cosgrove won't stay by me, there is no use trying to keep the company together." With thirteen wagons, and oxen well matched, all went well.

Indians of many tribes were gathered or camped at Saint Joe, and followed the train along the now well traveled road. They were polite as Frenchmen, bowing or tipping their hats, which were worn by some, as they rode along. They expected some little present, usually, but were well satisfied with any article that might be given; and the immigrants expected to pass out a little tobacco or sugar, or some trifle.

There was but one affair with Indians that had any serious side. This occurred at Castle Rock, an eminence out on the prairie, some hundreds of miles from the Mississippi. Here the train was visited, after making the afternoon encampment, by a party of about forty mounted Pawnees, clothed only in buffalo robes. They seemed friendly, asking for sugar and tobacco, as usual. But as they rode off, they disclosed their purpose—making a sudden swoop, to stampede the cattle and the horses of the train. The young men of the train, however, instantly ran for the trail ropes of their horses, and began discharging their pieces at the Indians, who, perhaps, were more in sport than in earnest, or, at least, simply "saucing" the immigrants; and wheeled off to the hills, letting the stock go.

But this was not all of it, as the Pawnees soon overtook

two men of the train who were out hunting, and, quickly surrounding them, began making sport, passing jokes, and pointing at the men and laughing to one another; and ended by commanding the alarmed and mystified hunters to take off their clothes, article by article, beginning with their boots. When it came to giving up their shirts, one of the white men hesitated, but was speedily brought to time by a smart stroke across the shoulders by the Indian chief's bow. When the two white men were entirely disrobed, the Pawnees again made remarks, and then commanded them to run for camp; but considerably threw their boots after them, saying they did not want them. Much crestfallen, the two forlorn hunters came out of the hills, "clipping it as fast as they could go" to the train, which was already excited, and thought at first that this was a fresh onslaught of the savages. The men of the train, however, were not very sorry for the young fellows, as they were notorious boasters, and from the first had been declaring that they would shoot, first or last, one Indian a piece before they reached Oregon.

The animal life, as it gradually was encountered, was a source of great interest. The gentle and fleet, but curious, antelopes were the first game. Mr. Cosgrove had two very large and swift greyhounds, which were able to overtake the antelopes. But the meat of these animals was not very greatly relished, being rather dry.

The wolves were the most constant attendants of the train, appearing daily, and howling nightly. These were the large gray wolves, much like our forest species; also, a handsome cream-colored animal, and the black kind, and most curious of all, the variety that was marked with a dark stripe down the back, crossed by another over the shoulders. Then the coyotes were innumerable, and yelped at almost every camp fire. Shooting at the

wolves, however, was nothing more than a waste of ammunition, and these animals were at length disregarded. Even the greyhounds learned to let them severely alone, for though at first giving chase ferociously, they soon found a pack of fierce wolves no fun, and were chased back even more ferociously than they started out.

The cities of the prairie dogs were interesting places, and the tiny chirp, a yelp, of the guardian of the door, became a familiar sound. Mr. Cosgrove recalls shooting one of these, finding it much like a chipmunk, only of larger size.

But the great animal of the prairie was the buffalo. The vast herds of these grand animals impressed the travelers of the plains quite differently, almost always giving a shock of strange surprise. One immigrant recalls that his first thought at seeing distant buffaloes, but few in number, in the sparkling distance, was that they were rabbits. With Mr. Cosgrove's party there were indications enough of the animals. Indeed, the plains were strewn with the buffalo chips, and it was the regular thing, noon and evening, as they came to camp, for each man to take his sack and gather enough of them for the camp fire; and coming to the Platte Valley they found the region strewn with the dead bodies of the thousands of the animals, which had probably come north too soon, and were caught in the last blizzard of the winter; but no live buffaloes were seen. But at length, as the train crested a slope, and a vast expanse of prairie opened in view, Mr. Cosgrove looked over, and seeing what seemed brown, shaggy tufts thickly studding the distance as far as eye could reach, he exclaimed, "We shall have plenty of firewood now! No need of gathering chips tonight!" He thought the vast Platte Valley was covered with stunted clumps of brush-wood. One of the girls was

near, however, and after looking, cried out, "See, they are moving!" Then first he realized it was a herd of buffaloes. Nor were they simply grazing; they were on the run and bearing down on the train. The cry of "buffaloes!" was passed back. It was not altogether safe to be in the path of such an immense herd, and the train was quickly halted, the wagon pins drawn, and a band of hunters quickly went out on horseback to meet the host, and also to get buffalo meat. The herd divided, leaving the train clear and the oxen standing their ground. One part went off to the hills; the other took the fords of the Platte, making the water boil as they dashed through. Enough were shot to stock the train; yet the herd was so vast that at least four hours elapsed before the last flying columns had galloped by—like the last shags of a thundercloud. What a picture—thirteen families with their oxen and wagons, sitting quietly in the midday blaze, while a buffalo troop, perhaps one hundred thousand strong, or even more, dashed past on either side. The best method of preparing the buffalo meat was by jerking it, over a slow fire of sagebrush sticks; the meat being sliced thin, and dried in the smoke in one night. At a later time, when buffalo had become as familiar as cattle, however, the train was stopped by one single monarch. It was just at evening, and the man detailed to go ahead to find a good camping place was out of sight. A shot was heard, however, and the startled train was halted, and the king-pins were drawn, all ready for any emergency; for it might be Indians ahead.

The picket soon was seen, riding at top speed, and crying as he came, "Don't shoot, don't shoot!" and just behind him was an enormous buffalo, charging the whole train. The animal did not stop until within a few rods, and then only with lowered head, and huge square shoulders. The difficulty of shooting him without inducing

him to make a charge, if not dropped, was at once apparent. But at length, at a signal, about fifteen rifle balls were poured into his front; and after a moment he began to reel from side to side; and then fell over. Even then no one dared to go and cut the throat, to bleed him; but after a time one cried, "I'll do it!" and the deed was done. It required several yoke of oxen to make a team strong enough to drag him to camp, and his estimated weight was twenty-two hundred pounds.

The last buffalo meat was from an animal that had just been killed by a party of trappers near the divide of the Rocky Mountains. As for deer and elk, none of these were seen on the plains. Birds of the prairie were abundant, especially the sage hens, as the more arid regions were crossed; but the flavor of this fowl was too high for the ordinary appetite. Rattlesnakes were innumerable, but no one of the train suffered from these reptiles except a girl. This occurred at Independence Rock. As the young lady was clambering among the crevices, she incidentally placed her hand upon a snake, which struck. Large doses of whiskey, however, soon neutralized the venom.

After crossing the divide of the Rocky Mountains to the headwaters of the Snake River, the numberless salmon of the streams become the wild food in place of the buffalo meat of the plains. At Salmon Falls there were many Indians of different western tribes taking the fish as they ascended the rapids. In consequence, the royal Chinook was sold very cheap; for a brass button one could buy all that he could carry away. Here occurred a laughable incident. The whole camp was almost stampeded by one wild Indian. He was a venerable fellow, dressed in a tall old silk hat, and a vest, and walked pompously as if conscious of his finery; his clothing, however, being nothing except the hat and vest. At his approach, the camp was

alarmed. The more modest hastily retreated to their tents; and some of the men, angry that their wives should be insulted, were for shooting the inconsiderate visitor. A young married man, whose bride was particularly scandalized, was greatly exasperated. But the object of the old Indian was merely peaceable barter. He carried in each hand an immense fish; and Mr. Cosgrove, seeing his inoffensive purpose, bade the boys be moderate, and going out to meet him, hastily sawed a button from his coat, with which he purchased the fish, and sent the old fellow off thoroughly satisfied.

On the Umatilla, after crossing the Blue Mountains, with all their wonders of peak and valley, as they were camped beside the river, the immigrants were visited by Doctor Whitman and his wife, and Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding. Mr. Cosgrove remembers them all very distinctly. Doctor Whitman he describes as tall and well proportioned, of easy bearing, and hair perhaps a little tinged with gray; and very affable. Mrs. Whitman was remarkably fine looking, and much more noticeable than Mrs. Spaulding. Mr. Cosgrove has especial reason to remember the missionaries, because, himself not being well, and this circumstance being discovered by them, he was the recipient of various little delicacies, of fruit, etc., not to be had in the train. A trade was also made between himself and Whitman, of a young cow that had become footsore, and could go no further, for a very good horse. Doctor Whitman, says Mr. Cosgrove, "was a glorious good man;" and the news of his massacre by the Indians a few months later, went over Oregon with a shock like the loss of a personal friend.

Mr. Spaulding gave notice of a preaching service to be held about six miles distant from the camp, and some of the immigrants attended. The coming of the Catholic

priests to that region was alluded to in the sermon, and they were spoken of as intruders.

At The Dalles there was a division of opinion among the immigrants as to the best route to follow into the Willamette Valley; whether over the mountains or down the Columbia by bateaux to Vancouver. However, this was easily settled for Mr. Cosgrove's family. Word having reached Vancouver that there were immigrants arriving, bateaux were sent up and in readiness. The price asked for the service was moderate, and the voyage was made quickly and comfortably. The wagons were taken to pieces and loaded upon the boats, and the teamsters had no difficulty in driving the oxen by the old trail, swimming them across the Columbia.

James McKay, a traveling companion, not being able then—though afterwards a wealthy man—to employ a bateaux, built a raft, which brought him through safely. Others went over the mountains.

On arrival at Vancouver, Mr. Cosgrove found a small house, with a big fireplace, which he rented, and housed his family, feeling as happy as a king to be under a roof once more. Here he could leave his family safely while he looked over the country.

By the time that he reached the Cascades, the early autumn rains were falling gently, and at Vancouver they were continuing; but they seemed so light and warm as to cause little discomfort; and the Indians were noticed going around in it unconcernedly barefooted.

At one time Mr. Cosgrove was eagerly advised by Daniel Lownsdale to locate a claim immediately back of his own, on what is now included in a part of the Portland townsite. But the timber here was so dense, and the hills so abrupt that he saw no possible chance to make a living there, and decided to look further.

Valuable advice was given by Peter Speen Ogden, then

governor of the fort. Mr. Cosgrove was quite for going down the river to Clatsop, so as to be by the ocean. Mr. Ogden said, however, "It depends on what you are able to do. If you want to go into the timber, go to Puget Sound; if you want to farm, go up the Willamette Valley."

Mr. Cosgrove decided that as he knew nothing of lumbering, but did know something of farming, that he had better proceed to the farming country.

Coming on up the Willamette Valley, he was met everywhere in the most friendly fashion; especially so by Mr. Hudson, the newspaper man of the *Joliet Courier*, who constrained him, "right or wrong," to turn his cattle into a fine field of young wheat to pasture over night. Hudson was living a few miles above Oregon City, opposite Rock Island, and was a flourishing farmer. He went to the California mines, and was very fortunate, discovering a pocket in the American River bed, in a crease in the rocks, so rich that he dared not leave it, but worked without cessation a number of days, ordering his meals brought to him, at an ounce of gold dust each, and took over \$22,000 from his claim.

Meeting Baptiste Dorio, of Saint Louis, on French Prairie, he proceeded with him to look up farm lands. At Dorio's a somewhat laughable incident occurred. It was, at that early day, the custom for all to carry knife and fork with them, and these were the only individual articles of table furniture. The meal, usually beef and potatoes, was placed on an immense trencher, hewed out of an oak log, and around this all sat, and each helped himself at his side of the trencher.

Mr. Cosgrove ate heartily of the fine beef, which, however, he noticed looked rather white. At the conclusion of the meal Dorio asked suddenly, "Which do you like best, ox beef or horse beef?" "I do not know that I

could answer that," said the fresh arrival, "as I have never yet eaten horse beef?" "Yes, you have," said the Frenchman imperturbably; "that was horse beef that you have just eaten,"—a piece of information that nearly ruined Mr. Cosgrove's digestion for the rest of the day.

He found the Canadian farmers ready to dispose of their places, and was besieged by many who had square mile claims to sell for \$100, or less, each; and with the fertile prairie, its deep sod, tall grass, and expanse diversified with strips of forest trees, or lordly old groves, he was very much pleased. Coming to Saint Paul he found entertainment at the Catholic mission, and by a Mr. Jones, who was employed then as foreman, he was furnished much valuable information. By the brusqueness of Father Baldu, in charge of the establishment, he was, however, rather taken aback. When he was ready to go, and went to the father to tell him so, with the idea of offering pay for his entertainment, the reverend gentleman simply remarked, "Well, the road is ready for you." Nevertheless, with St. Paul he was well pleased. There was a church and a school, and a good place to sell his produce. He therefore purchased the section adjoining the mission, paying \$800,—two oxen and two cows, and included in the bargain was the use of a fairly good house.

He had some stout sod plows of much better make than those of the Canadians, and at once, as the winter was open, began to break the prairie, and sowed forty acres to wheat. His family were comfortably established, but met rather a severe shock as they went to meeting for the first time. With feminine interest and delight his wife and daughters brought out their best dresses and bonnets, as they would at Chicago or Joliet. Mr. Cosgrove himself selected his best suit for the occasion—he had three with him, a blue, and a gray frock, and a swallowtail coat. The swallowtail and a rather high silk hat, and the other