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Beginning
THE LONG CHANCE
by PETER B. KYNE

W. H. BULL

WINTER OUT-OF-DOORS IN CALIFORNIA

SUNSET

THE PACIFIC MONTHLY

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The COLUMBIA RIVER ROAD



MT. HOOD, THE WITCH MOUNTAIN

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By JOE D. THOMISON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SLOCOM

WITHIN the deep shade of an obscure but charming nook, enclosed by the foliage of many hazelnut bushes, the leaves heavy with spray fog wafted from the cataract, my head leaning against the bark of a cedar the roots of which found moisture among the crevices of the baserock, I gazed through half-closed eyes upon the waters of Multnomah Falls. Eight hundred and forty feet from the top of the time-worn Columbia river gorge they plunged to the rounded punch-bowl at my feet. A warm summertime sun played on the world above me. Apollo's chariot had passed the meridian height and the afternoon rays made silvery the white foaming billows hurtling over the precipice and leaping wildly downward to the turbulent whirlpool beneath me. The moisture from the spray filled the niche in the Columbia's canyon with a fragrance, an earthy perfume, the kind that fills the soul of a weary man with gladness.

Such a picture in such an environment could only stimulate and inspire day-dreams. The rhythmic roar of the waters, now frightfully near, now seemingly far away, just as the gusts of wind that sweep forever around the base of the cataract chose to

bear the sound, was the same as might have been heard by the earliest North Coast pioneer had he sought a similar nook more than a half-century ago.

The caverns of the gorge's crags echoed with the whistle of a locomotive and a passenger train sped along its line of steel rails not 200 feet away. Faces of travelers, pressed to the car windows, gazed at nature's water ribbon for the brief moment of the passing of the man-made mechanism. How little they saw! Since the completion of the railroad lines along the waters of the Columbia, the passengers on the trains have looked upon the wonderful scenery of the route and breathed rapturous praises. Yet the peaks and pinnacles, the colored stones of cliffs and ragged-edged crags, the silvery foam of cataracts and cascading streams which rush down little canyons leading off from the big cleft made in the earth's surface by the Columbia, all have moved by their gaze like some too swiftly manipulated film of a moving-picture machine. The eye of man, always hungering for the wonderful, has craved more, and the schedule of the swift passenger service has not permitted it. This might be likened to a variety show of nature. The variety show of the stage may easily grow tiresome. Not so the green hills and the weather-stained brown rocks

of nature's theater—there's not enough, or rather not time enough to look at it.

Not another natural pass cleaves the range of the Cascades, at the crest of which loom some of the world's most picturesque peaks—Hood, Adams, Rainier, St. Helen's, The Three Sisters. And this is why the Columbia has been such a factor in commerce—it is one of nature's great highways. The earliest white man, the trapper lured to the region to secure the pelt of beavers, found the Indians traveling by its waters. Its steep banks resounded with the echoes of the songs of Dr. McLoughlin's French voyageurs in the days when Vancouver was the northwestern seat of the Hudson's Bay Co. and when the surrounding regions poured untold profit into the treasury of the gigantic British corporation. But for the service of the stream that little handful of men who established the provisional government of Oregon at Champoeg, those fathers of one of the Union's greatest commonwealths, would have found almost impossible the passage to the valley of the Willamette.

That the soil of Oregon was fertile and that climatic conditions were ideal were bits of news that spread with rapidity throughout the country, and the population of the communities grew wonderfully fast. Homeseekers piled their possessions on barges and bateaux at The Dalles on their journeys down the Columbia to the land of plenty, portaging at the Cascades, where Indian legend says that in ancient times the river ran beneath the arches of a great natural bridge, "The Bridge of the Gods." As the population of the territory grew and it was taken into the Union's family of sisters as a state, money was appropriated to construct a highway, in order that closer communication might be established with the East.

Naturally, the route chosen was along the Columbia, and until the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company's line of railway was completed in 1882 along the edge of the water at the foot of the gorge, the mails and passengers from east to west were transported over this wagon road. Direct from Boise to Portland the way of the pony express led across the prairie, the land of sagebrush and wandering herds of buffaloes, to The Dalles and down into the gorge of the Columbia.

When the railroad was completed the

track covered a portion of the highway, which immediately lost its usefulness. In the counties of Hood River and Multnomah, mountains rise abruptly from the edge of the Columbia's waters and there has been no resident to reclaim and maintain portions of the old wagon road. It has become overgrown with bushes a quarter of a century old, its bridges have rotted away and slides have obliterated portions of the retaining walls on cliff sides.

To thoughts of this old road the faces of the passengers on the speeding train brought me. And my dreams were filled with prophetic visions: for there is to be a resurrection of the pioneer highway.

In the days when the pony express tortuously bore the mails from Boise to Portland, Oregon was thought to be a far-away land of wilderness. But progress found the region of an exceedingly great fertility and the energies of men have been made to work wonders in the fostering clime. In all America Dame Fortune has not favored men and their children and the efforts of both more than in Oregon. Broad wheat fields have flourished, huge herds have grazed on her plains, orchards have blossomed and have borne apples second to none in the world's markets, and the pine and fir forest have added an inestimable wealth. Citizens of Oregon, both urban and rural, have prospered. The grandsons of the pioneer, who felled the trees, grubbed stumps and cleared the soil, occupy homes of modern comfort. But the country is new, everything bears evidence of this, and beside the modern mansion erected to take its place may be seen the hut of the homesteader, one roomed and of logs, left to commemorate the early toil of the pioneer.

Yet the generation that lives and rules today in the Northwest enjoys the latest modes of business convenience and pleasure that progress can suggest. And in the state of Oregon the motor-car has superseded to a great extent the buggy and horse, the hack and team. The larger cities, of course, have their many automobiles, but it is not alone the city man who owns a motor vehicle; his country cousin has found it a means of convenience to himself in his business and a source of pleasure to his entire family. The latest model car may be found threading the orchards of Hood River or journeying across the stock-farm district of Wasco county. The ranchers of the central

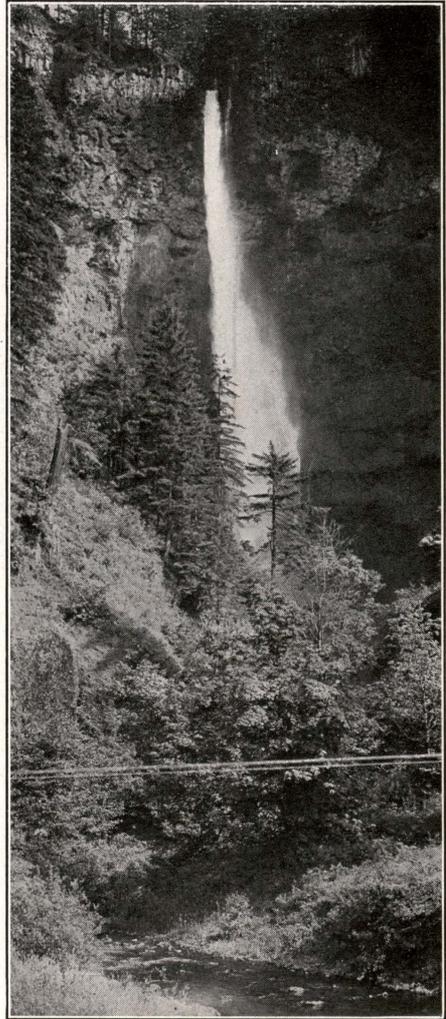
Oregon country speed across the open country from city to city faster than ever the cow-boy dreamed of spurring.

Thus the wonders of the prophetic vision that crept through my thoughts as I dreamed day-dreams beside Multnomah Falls! In a year's time that inspiring spectacle of nature will no longer be isolated. Already the citizens of Multnomah county are building a highway that they may travel on holidays and Sunday in a region which the God of Nature created with lavish hand. The new highway, or the resurrected road of pioneer days, will pass again at the foot of the wonderful falls, the spray eddying at the whirlpool base will be dashed in the very faces of the travelers. The spirit of the war chief Multnomah, leader of the Willamettes, which, it is said, sits beside the head of the falls which bear his name, has watched for a century the progress of the white man. First the pony trail; then the railroad; yet even before the locomotive came the Red Man's ghost had been puzzled by the smoke of the steamboats that crept up the Columbia. Now but few moons will pass before those spectral eyes shall marvel at a moving parade of automobiles skimming over the surface of a great boulevard that will thread the narrow base of the Columbia river gorge.

Citizens of Portland were made to realize the need of the Columbia river highway as soon as the practicability of motor vehicles was solved. For ten years or more the reconstruction of the obliterated portions of the highway and the building of a new road, where the railroad had converted the right of way, has been agitated. The expense of boring the new grade through the few short difficult places will reach into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. However, no one ever goes over the route but he becomes an enthusiastic booster, and ways and means are now being definitely devised.

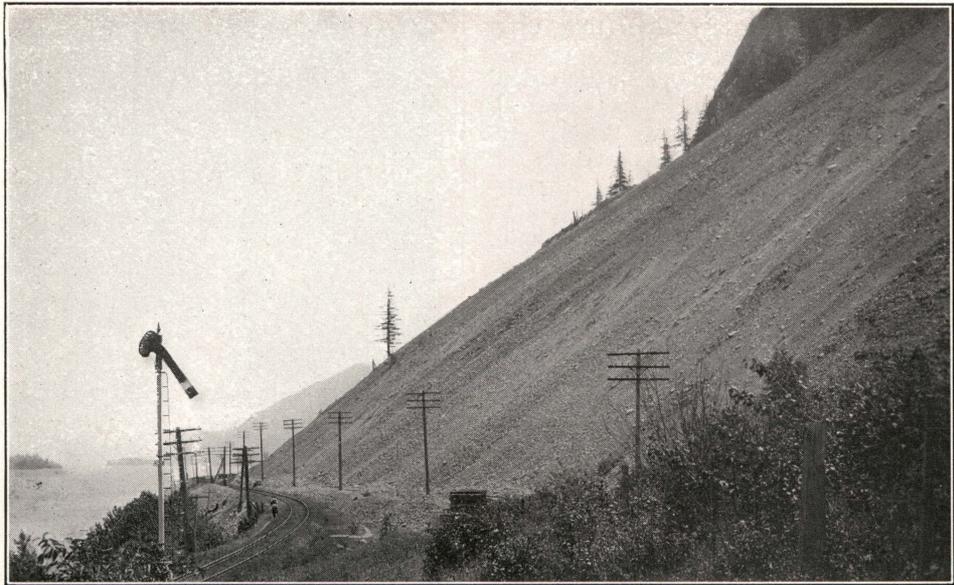
The greatest recent incentive given toward a hasty completion of the road was the donation of \$10,000 by S. Benson, a wealthy timber man of Portland, who declares that nothing will make him happier than to give of his fortune to make possible the boulevard that will lead up the Columbia from Portland to the orchards and grainfields of the eastern portion of the state. Mr. Benson gave the sum last spring with the proviso that it must be spent within a year on the highway.

One of the bugaboos of the reconstruc-



Multnomah Falls, at the foot of which passes the route of the Columbia River Road

tion of the way in Hood River county has been Shell Rock mountain, a mass of sliding stone almost a thousand feet high that has given unceasing trouble to the maintenance department of the railroad company. At this difficult point it was decided to spend the first donation. Governor Oswald West was made trustee of the fund. He detached a crew of his "honor men," prisoners from the state penitentiary who are placed on their honor and given the freedom of the open air, to aid in the construction of the state's highways. These men, who are



Shell Rock mountain has been a bugbear to railway company and highway-builder, but by the end of this year its obstinacy will have been conquered

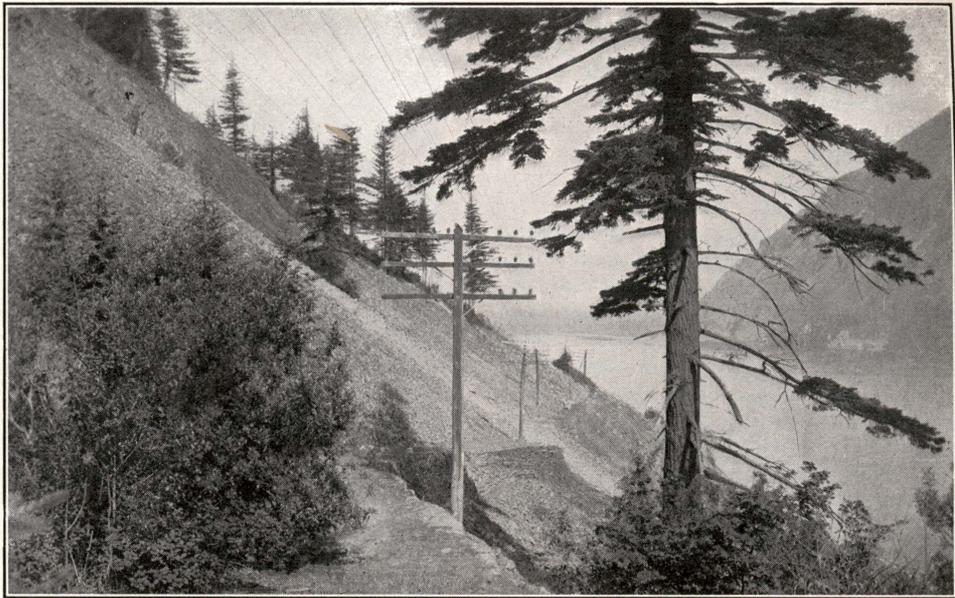
paying the penalties for crimes, are using their efforts, the labor of their punishment, in a way that will be beneficial to every citizen in the state. The work of encircling Shell Rock was entrusted to Murray Kay, Hood River county's engineer, who has had experience in making the surveys of transcontinental lines of railway. This work has been found far less expensive than estimated and it will have been completed by the end of the year. The base of the bugbear mountain will be conquered.

The old road, the surface of which still bears the marks of the early pony express, will remain a remnant, or relic, of the early days. Its retaining wall, a hundred feet above the newly-surveyed route, is now the home of chipmunks, porcupines and digger squirrels. It is the very grave of a road, and in springtime white dogwood blossoms and red and pink sprigs of thousands of wild currant bushes droop themselves above the tomb, while the purple foliage of the Oregon grape and the gold and yellow leaves of the vine maple pay nature's tribute to past usefulness in autumn.

The first spadeful of loose earth and stone was turned on the Shell Rock portion of the highway on Thursday, May 23rd, when the

convicts began their labors with a number of Hood River county officials and Governor West present for the initial construction. As the state's chief executive watched the "honor men" toiling away at their great task he said to the Hood River officials: "I would rather be instrumental in hastening the completion of this road than to be United States Senator the rest of my life."

The older residents of bustling metropolitan Portland are retiring from the active toil of life and choosing among the many neighboring localities spots for summer homes. Their cottages rise by the sea at Seaside and Tillamook, and now those who are seeking the most beautiful in nature are looking longingly at the little canyons that open into the gorge of the Columbia, where creeks rising from glacial sources back in the foothills come tumbling in cataracts over the precipice. There are scores of them along the route of the highway. What a drive for the motorist in twenty, ten, aye, even five years from now! Every available spot will have become the site of a villa, where in the early morning the fortunate possessor of such a home may view from his front veranda the sun, red-orbed, as it emerges from the mists of the river



It is the grave of a road, and bushes a quarter of a century old droop above the tomb, paying nature's tribute to past usefulness

which pours down to the sea its volumes of water from almost half a continent. Those who have looked at the Hudson and the homes along that waterway above New York know their attraction. But the scenery of the Columbia is wilder, grander, more gorgeous and of a different nature. At the top of the big cleft of the canyon, one may look out in the broad expanse of surrounding territory at the shimmering white peaks of four magnificent mountains.

The great goal of the road for Portland will be the luring scenery around the north base of Mount Hood. Indeed, as now planned, the Columbia river highway will form a link in a grand boulevard loop, for it is proposed to cut a way from the south end of the Hood River valley through to the highway that leads up the Sandy river from Multnomah county. The Federal Government has already cut a trail through the Forest Reserve here, a trail with a grade that in no place exceeds five per cent. The citizens have asked Congress for an appropriation to complete the road through the reserve, and Oregon federal legislators are urging that the fund be granted.

Thus a road will be constructed of about 175 miles in length that for the scenic region

it will open to the traveler cannot be surpassed in any quarter of the globe. The Portland motorist will be able to leave the streets of his city in the early morning, speed up the slight grade leading to the foothills and in a few hours be among the grandeur of the "Witch Mountain," as Hood is termed in Indian legend. The highway will skirt the base of the white peak for about fifty miles and the traveler will be able to look into the very crevasses of the wonderful glaciers. Then the road will wind around down through the Hood River valley, where within a decade every highway will be a broad avenue between the trees of thousands of acres of orchards. Through the Valley of Apples the way threads the country homes of the orchardists and finds the volcanic formations and basaltic crags of the Columbia. The improvement of roads forms the chief topic of discussion among the ranchers, forty per cent of whom are owners of automobiles—for they have realized their usefulness as vehicles of business and pleasure. Also, the agitation for the Columbia boulevard has imbued the central Oregon rancher with enthusiasm. Hitherto his opportunities to travel in his automobile have been limited on the north.

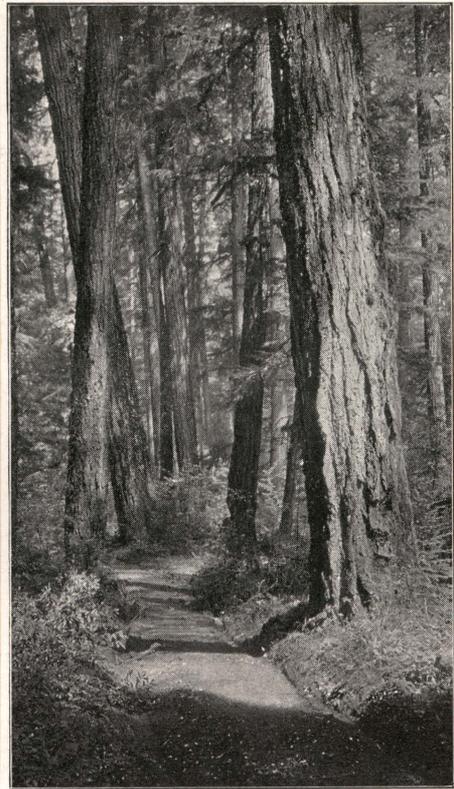
With the completion of the roadway he will be able to tour directly into Portland.

But the Columbia river road will not be a mere way of convenience to the people of Portland and vicinity. It will form the most beautiful part of a transcontinental route. From the Hood River valley the route will lead to The Dalles and on to the East over the old Oregon trail. And those who have traveled through and explored the country of central Oregon declare it will form a link in the favorite route of the motorist who desires to leave the North Coast for a tour of California; for but few, and no really difficult, barriers will obstruct the machine bound from the tableland region around Bend, whither the route will lead up the Deschutes river from The Dalles, into the Klamath basin.

The most beautiful creations of nature along the route are between The Dalles and Portland. Further east the region bears the wild awesome bleakness of the desert land, while in the Cascade range the expanse on either bank of the Columbia is evergreen, pines and firs having secured a foothold in every crevice.

The country through which the highway will pass abounds in legend and story, ever reminding the traveler of the disappearing tribes of red men. Near The Dalles are the Memaloose islands, where the waters of the river eddy around the burying-grounds of ancient warriors. Below Hood River are scores of crags and peaks, every one having a significance in Indian mythology. But none is more awe-inspiring than the abutments of the "Bridge of the Gods." They stand near the Cascades, where the government has constructed a system of locks to make possible a waterway around the treacherous rapids of the river, which run "on edge," to use the phrase of those who have attempted to sound the stream at this point. So narrow is the river here that a strong man might hurl a stone from one bank to the other, and the walls of the abutments rise almost perpendicularly from the water's edge. The bridge is supposed to have fallen at some early time before the white man had dreamed of the land of Oregon, when the volcanic mountains of the region were in violent eruption.

Who could not dream day-dreams in a region so full of the inspiring wonders of nature? The residents of the region are just beginning to realize the value of the mountains, hills and cascading streams as



An alluring pathway through Oregon's continuous woods

an asset. The intervening valleys are returning gratifying profits from the fertile soil and the hills are yielding up their fruit of lumber, but there are other tales to be told of what harvest may be reaped from the scenery, when roads, the best that road-builders' art can contrive, have penetrated the mountain districts.

The people who live among them, as they find the haunts of the mountain becoming more accessible, have learned their charm and are thankful to the god, or goddess, of fortune for having turned their passage through life to an environment where prosperity abounds amid a region so marvelous. All the country is becoming more and more attracted to the Northwest. Completed highways are making the hitherto isolated alluring spots accessible, but none of them will reveal these hidden charms to the sight of the traveler as delightfully as the finished Columbia river road.