

THE BELT CREEK REGION.

An Enchanting Pen Picture of Eastern Cascade County.

This is the most picturesque part of Cascade county, where the skies are ever blue and the fields are ever green. Following the course of the Belt, a typical mountain stream fed by the melting snows of the mountain tops and living springs from their sides, its cold, sparkling waters come dancing down through the narrow mountain gorges, tumbling over rapids, catching a thousand iridescent lights, gliding with rippling laughter between grassy banks in the low lands or stopping a moment in some shady pool to coquette with a troop of speckled beauties hidden there. No region was ever more favored by the water nymphs than this, and as though Nature meant to smile exclusively upon this lovely valley, an almost impassible mountain barrier rises abruptly on the farther side of the Belt, hedging us in with a background of landscape in its noblest form only found in mountain regions. To the dweller of the plains—

"It is a grandeur never felt, a glory never sung; Above, on hill and mountain top, are God's great pictures hung."

Often this mountain barrier rises abruptly from the stream in perpendicular cliffs of rock from two hundred to five hundred feet in height beside which the world renowned "Falisades" of the Hudson dwindle into insignificance, and for beauty of form and coloring like Superior's "Pictured Rocks" are like a "Mother Goose" illustration compared with one of Turner's master-pieces; sometimes the tessellated pillars are capped by turrets that seem chiseled by some master-hand; again through an arched aperture that suggests the Gothic in architecture, opens a gem-starred cave of no mean proportions, hung with graceful stalactites and reflecting every color of the rainbow to the weird light of a single torch.

GENERAL OUTLINES.

Sweeping away to the eastward and off toward Highwood mountains lies the garden of Cascade county. The surface is undulating, broken here and there by picturesque coulees trimmed at their edges by fir trees and watered by living springs. The soil is a rich black loam, rich in both mineral and vegetable substance as the sturdy grain stalks and enormous vegetables will testify.

ABUNDANT CROPS.

Wheat, oats, rye and barley are grown to perfection. Sixty bushels to the acre of wheat is considered a small yield favorable seasons, and a yield of a hundred bushels has been reported, but this is exceptional. No fertilizers have as yet ever been used in this country, and the crops show no deterioration, although sown to wheat for successive seasons. The yield of oats is double that of any other country known; likewise the other grains. The past season has been exceptionally dry and yet upon the benches (the driest sections) wheat yielded thirty and forty bushels to the acre, oats fifty and sixty. Compare this with Dakota and the season varying but little. We had a light rain the first of July. Dakota had none. That was the only difference, and from one of the best farms in Southern Dakota the owner writes: "From three hundred acres of wheat I threshed only one hundred and fifty bushels; did not thresh any other grain at all."

VEGETABLES UNSURPASSED.

Old-timers who claim to have been in Montana thirty years say the past season was by all odds the driest they have ever known, yet very fine vegetables have been grown here the past summer without care, save the planting. Irrigation is practically unknown. Potatoes dropped in the furrow on virgin sod as late as June yielded fairly well, good size and fine quality. Those planted earlier on ground previously broken were simply immense and the yield phenomenal. This would seem to be the natural home of the cabbage and cauliflower: either grows to perfection without being started in doors or in a hotbed. Sowed in the hill, dry as it has been, scarcely a seed failed. Field peas are a very successful crop and coined into pork after the early harvest are a big investment. Carrots, beets and turnips do finely without any such care as gardeners usually bestow upon them.

RICH NATURAL MEADOWS.

Feed has been good all season. In more favored seasons it is simply magnificent, cattle luxuriating knee deep in the choicest grass nearly the whole year round, but this year grass was light. Plenty was cut of good quality, but more ground than usual had to be gone over. Cattle and sheep men from Jefferson, Madison and Gallatin have been obliged to get their stock out of there to winter, as there was no grass at all after the dry season. It is quite different here. More stock has been brought into this section to winter than ever before, but there is little range unoccupied. No room for large herds that were wont to roam at will over a thousand hills and swell the

purse of the "cattle king" who spent his money hundreds of miles away. Plenty of room for the honest grainger, that will bring his family, develop the resources of the country and be constantly adding to, instead of only taking away from it. And they are coming. Where one year ago there were no human habitations to be seen for miles and miles but an occasional dirt covered hovel adjoining cattle sheds or a sheep corral surrounded by unmistakable signs of bachelorhood, now you find newly built cottages fenced in and planned for family use and comfort. And the families are here. Dairies, poultry yards, vegetable and flower gardens have come with them, and as the general expression is, are here to stay.

HEALTH AS WELL AS COMFORT.

Persons of weak lungs and other chronic complaints especially of the liver and kidneys have left the vitiated air of the extreme east far behind them and sought relief in the high altitude of Minnesota's matchless plains. Disappointed there, they have crossed the Dakota line thinking that pure air must surely reign in that zephyr swept Eldorado. All in vain. Between blizzards in the winter and malarial fevers in summer life soon became a burden and many a man has sold his birthright (to free land) left every thing behind him to follow the star of empire westward but scarcely one who stops here for a season ever migrates further.

VARIED RESOURCES.

Agriculturally this is the best land between the Mississippi and the Pacific. As a stock country this is the best in the world. Mineraally it has but one rival, and with shipping facilities, which the new railroad will give and the impetus to development, it is expected that we will certainly take the first place. Hundreds of tons of good ore that have been taken out of the mines under the most discouraging conditions lie dumped at various points all through the Belt mining district, which comprises thousands of acres, testifying to the wealth that lies hidden beneath the surface. Mining experts state that the best ground has not yet been prospected owing to the remoteness from shipping points and the ruggedness of the country. New mining camps are being opened every week and every new camp means a ready market for a articles of husbandry.

MINERALS ABOUND.

Gold, silver, copper, lead, coal and iron, not to mention the precious stones, are all found in large quantities in different ranges and on the different streams tributary to the Belt. More fortunes will be amassed right here in the next twenty years than in any other part of the United States, and the opportunity for poor men to find work or for the rich to invest their surplus capital is excellent and will continue to be for years to come.

HONEST WORK REQUIRED.

Work in this country, however, means work. No soft jobs abound. The pay is good, double what one can get east, the cost of living reasonable. But nice young men with soft hands and softer heads who all expect to get a position as book-keeper, manager, collector or "helping Jack," will find that every industry is well officered, every cent of invested capital is already "managed." Those who seek honest work will find it and find opportunities to "work up" if they prove capable. Better than that, abundant room to get a choice bit of land which Uncle Sam cheerfully gives to all who seek a home or a choice mineral prospect requiring only determination and healthy muscle to develop it.

THE CLIMATE.

What shall we say about the climate? It is undoubtedly true that more eastern people are deceived in that one respect than in all others. Possibly there has been no intention to deceive, but the fact is, this is no summer land of soft breezes and voluptuous airs.

The breezes here are always cool. How could they be otherwise? Born on mountain tops, whose peaks tower away up into cloud-land, and whose summits are crowned by the eternal snows, wandering through groves of scented pine and fir, whose odors are fraught with life-giving balsams that would rival even "Brown's Elixir." The air here is always fresh, crisp and thoroughly, wholesomely invigorating, never sultry. That is what makes the summers, the "heated term" of lower altitudes, so enjoyable. It is always cool and comfortable in the shade the warmest kind weather.

Ninety per cent of the days throughout the year are bright and sunny. We have very little wind. When it does blow the most agreeable place is indoors. The fall months are truly delightful. Warm, sunny days repeated for weeks almost without variation of temperature; cool nights, often freezing a little; few storms; some snow, but not cold, and soon melting away. The temperature lowers a little during December, but the days are mostly bright and sunny. January is our winter month. Then the farmer wants a big wood pile, shelter and hay for his stock if it is domesticated, and not much out door work to do, though stockmen have to be out then, if ever, and they seem to survive it well enough. In February the spring plowing begins, wheat is sown and one may calculate that spring with

pers, lilies, wild roses, daisies, mountain laurel or syringa, Oregon grape, quite as beautiful as English holly, asters and golden rod. Then the half is not told, making an array of native flowers that an eastern horticulturist would go mad over and adding an inexpressible interest to this lovely valley for the botanist and every lover of flowers.

A FIELD FOR ALL.

A country whose spontaneous productions are as rich and varied as this holds many a bow of promise to the earnest seeker and whosever will may come and feel sure of a reasonable return for any expenditure he may make. We will welcome the shrewd prospector, the independent rancher, the honest grainger, the intelligent botanist or geologist, the artist, the tourist and pleasure seeker, all will find a niche waiting to be filled and if the niche doesn't quite fit on first trial, in the words of Fanny Fern, "pad it and make it fit."

GREAT NORTHERN MACHINE SHOPS.

The machine shops of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba railroad, which will soon be generally known as the Great Northern, will be at Great Falls. The location has been selected on the railroad company's land. Work will be begun on the buildings soon.

These machine shops will be built on a tract of land on the west side of the Missouri. This land, which is in all view of the town proper, is bounded on one side and by the Sun river on another. It is adjacent to the railroad yard and has ample area for the most extensive buildings.

These machine shops will be provided with machinery of the most improved description. The skillful artisans will repair engines, build freight cars and do the general iron and wood work required for a railroad system extending from the great lakes to the Pacific.

The location is deemed the best which could be selected. It is about midway between St. Paul and the Pacific coast, rendering it convenient for the repair of any rolling stock that may be worn out or disabled between these places.

The location is also on the direct line between Butte and the Boston & Montana smelter and refinery, which by consuming upwards of 2,000 tons of ore daily, will render necessary a great number of locomotives, cars and general railroad equipments. This immense traffic renders it imperative to build the works here, as experience has shown that great economy is effected by having workshops near the focus of such extensive traffic.

These works will give employment to great numbers of carpenters, blacksmiths and machinists. In due time it is expected that their capacity will be so increased that locomotives, passenger coaches and sleeping cars will be constructed here in great number for the Great Northern and other railways. The facilities for such works are not excelled by those of any place in the United States. Great Falls will derive great benefits from the establishment of these works, which will be the greatest between Chicago and the Pacific coast. The workmen will form a valuable addition to our resident population and they will increase considerably the trade of the city.

Montana has copper, silver and lead ores in limitless quantity. Large profits can be made by reducing these ores. Here rests the strong position of Great Falls. In no part of Montana are the conditions so good for the economical reduction of ores as here. Hence, it follows as a matter of course, that this is the place where the ores will be brought for reduction. Mine-owners are not governed by whim or sentiment. In establishing smelters, they go where the ores can be reduced on the best terms and no point in Montana can offer such advantages as Great Falls. Two immense smelters are located here and others will follow.

OUR RAILROAD FACILITIES.

Great Falls is well provided with railroad facilities. It is the western terminus of the St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba railroad, commonly called the Manitoba. This railroad system is well known as one of the greatest in the west. It radiates from the twin cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, whence it extends to Duluth and West Superior, on the east, and to the growing towns of the Dakotas on the west. In its northward course the Manitoba system traverses the interior of Minnesota and the rich lands of the Red River valley, as well as the Canadian province of Manitoba. It thus connects Great Falls with the main arteries of trade. At St. Paul the Manitoba meets the great trunk lines that extend to Chicago or St. Louis and Kansas City, while at Duluth and West Superior the Manitoba connects with the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic, as well as with the great steamers which navigate the chain of lakes from the Zenith city to Buffalo, where the Erie canal provides a direct waterway to the seaboard at New York.

Great Falls is also the northern terminus of the Montana Central railroad, which is part of the Manitoba system. This railroad connects Great Falls with Helena the Montana metropolis, and Butte, the greatest mining camp on earth. The Montana Central follows the Missouri in great part, on its way to Helena, traversing fertile districts. It goes through the Boulder valley on its route to Butte, passing through rich mineral districts and lands which will in time prove productive. At Butte the Montana Central connects with the Montana Union, which in turn connects with the Union Pacific on the one side and with the Northern Pacific on the other.

These railroad connections will be followed early in 1890 by the construction of a railroad from Great Falls to the Pacific coast. This great trunk line will be part of the Manitoba system, or more properly of the Great Northern system, in which the Manitoba and its allied lines are merged. Along the route of this great iron highway are rich mineral and agricultural regions, now almost inaccessible to the prospector or farmer. Its route will include portions of Idaho and the rich, well watered state of Washington, which is favored with growing cities and that great inland sea, called the Mediterranean of America.

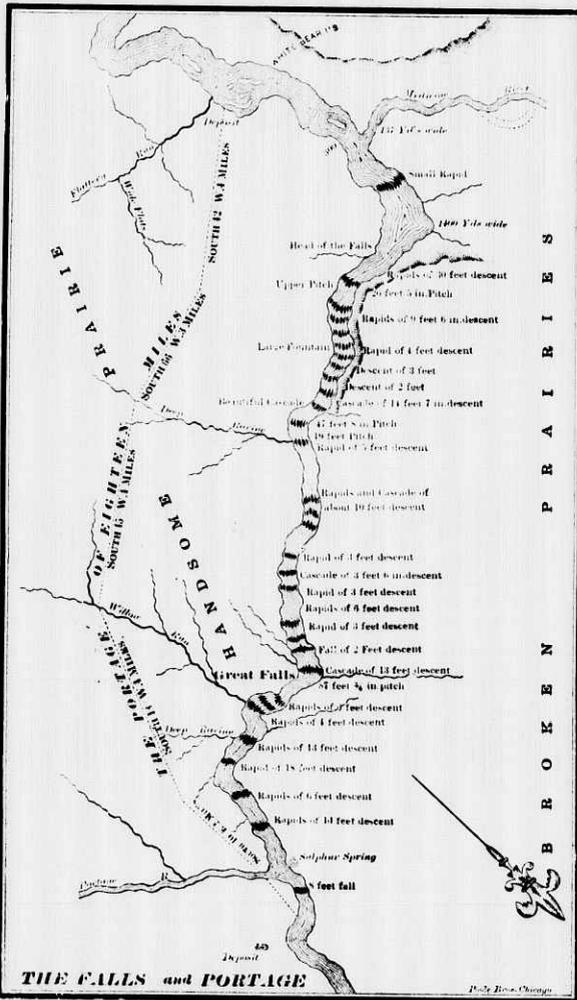
Great Falls is connected with Sand Coulee and its extensive coal fields by a railroad 14 miles long. This road ensures abundance of coal for factories and general use, for it reduces the cost of freight, which is so important a factor in the development of coal deposits.

The city is also provided with a short line which connects it with the works of the Montana Smelting company and the Rainbow falls of the Missouri. This road enables the smelter of that company to procure direct from the mining regions ores and fuel and to ship readily to the east the bullion which its furnaces produce.

Early in 1890 the Belt mountains railroad will be in operation. This railroad has been built to connect Great Falls with the mining regions of the Belt mountains, including the well-known camps of Barker and Neihart. This railway opens up a broad tract of productive land and is heading toward the Judith region which greatly needs railroad transportation. A charter has been obtained by Donald Grant, the great railroad builder, for the Great Falls and Canada railroad which will connect this city with the coal fields at Lethbridge and thence with the Canadian Pacific railroad system. This railroad will be built early in 1890. On its way to the British line it will provide railroad accommodation for a fertile region much of which is still open for settlement.

It may be seen from the foregoing details that Great Falls has within a few years attained high rank as a railroad centre. Miners and manufacturers, farmers and business men will find that the railroad builders have provided them with facilities which they can turn to account with gain to themselves and to the whole country.

Constitutional government has been conferred on us, and for the first time we undertake the management and control of our own affairs. * * * I am content to congratulate you and the country upon the acquisition of another commonwealth of such magnificent proportions and great possibilities. The grandeur of wealth with which prodigal nature has endowed her, and the intelligence and aspirations of her people pre-verify my prediction that, financially and politically, Montana will be a column of strength in the national fabric, supporting with sturdy might her share of the public burdens and forming an element of national greatness which can but redound to the honor and glory of the republic. We were uniformly prosperous as territory and starting out under such favorable auspices our progress ought to be phenomenal. —From Gov. Toole's Message.



This is an Exact Fac-Simile of the Map Made by Lewis and Clarke, who Explored the Upper Missouri River Under Instructions From President Thomas Jefferson in 1804 and 1805.

all its ethereal mildness is at hand, to be interspersed with an occasional snow-storm which only brings a day or two of needed rest. We are just as liable to have snow as rain, up to the first of June, but it is impossible to understand the difference between a snow-storm here and in the east, until one has had the experience himself. The extreme healthfulness of this region, the spontaneous growth of flower, fruit and vegetable are all guaranteed by the climatic conditions.

BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS.

Some years ago, before the N. P. R. R. was completed, E. V. Smalley made a trip through northern Montana and in writing it up in the Century magazine devoted much space to the flora of this part of the state. Smalley's forte is pen pictures, and it seemed that he must exaggerate. Not so. From the middle of April until the last of October, our valley is literally flower-carpeted. Among the first to bloom is the cow pea, a brilliant yellow flower growing in clusters and covering the hillsides with their brilliant glory. Another very showy flower is the wild tulip, while dear to the heart of every genuine down-easter is the modest little spring beauty, the dainty violet, in blue, white, yellow and mauve, and the graceful anemone. Scores of unknown, unnamed beauties are interspersed, while later in the season come wild geraniums, clematis, primroses, larkspur, lady slip-