

are among the finest in Oregon. In going over this list, it is apparent that the average price of improved farm land in the valley, and close to the railroad, is less than \$30.00, while the average for fairly improved farms in the western and southern portions of the state, but a little farther from the railway and towns, is less than \$18.00 per acre. Good farms in these localities are offered for less than \$12.00 an acre. These are rare opportunities for new-comers.

FLATHEAD VALLEY.—In Missoula county, in the northwestern corner of Montana, lie Flathead lake and valley, the latter being at the north end of the lake. The valley is reached by wagon, across the reservation, from the Northern Pacific, and by steamer on the lake. The following is the substance of an interview, in the *Butte Miner*, with Mr. Charles Nelson, a resident of that city, who had just returned from the valley: "Mr. Nelson is in ecstasies with the beauty of the country, and is a competent judge, having seen the garden spots of the West, the Boise and Salt Lake valleys, which he says are unworthy of comparison. He would not have believed it possible for a Northern country, like Montana, to produce such a paradise. He bought his ranch there last year, and put up a house and barn then. It is situated on the Stillwater. Nearly a dozen people are going in every day on a boat. The boat leaves the foot of the lake and lands passengers at Ashley, about fifteen miles up the river, at the head of the lake. The boat makes a trip only one way each day. It goes up on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and returns on the alternate days, lying up on Sunday. The captain told him that he had to let out about sixty feet of line when he casts anchor in the river, at its entrance to the lake.

"The gold excitement on Wolf creek, about twenty miles above the valley, will undoubtedly attract many people to the place this year. He was shown a vein of coal on Wolf creek which looked promising. The surveying party from the Manitoba is expected to reach there this spring, as soon as the snow can get off the range. In speaking of the products of the soil, Mr. Nelson said all kinds of garden truck were raised there last year. A neighbor on a ranch next to his raised a turnip weighing thirty-seven and one-half pounds. Last year the season was comparatively dry. As a rule, there is not much rainfall there.

"The Flathead country is low, two thousand feet above snow level. Last summer, the thermometer rose to one hundred and twenty de-

grees in the sun, but at no time was the heat sweltering, as there is always a breeze, which relieves the temperature. There was no frost in the ground last winter, and but sixteen inches of snow. The soil is loamy, from a foot to two feet and a half deep all over the valley. A flouring mill is going to be built on the Stillwater, and a force is at work on it now. A saw mill is one of the near certainties. It is expected that both will be in operation this summer. About seven hundred people are residents of the valley now. Stock is all looking well, and came through the winter unimpaired. It is eighteen years since the region was surveyed, but no claims were taken up until about four years ago. For those who like agricultural pursuits, Mr. Nelson knows of no section in Montana to compare with the Flathead country."

MASON COUNTY, W. T.—One of the thriving towns of recent development in Washington Territory, is Shelton, in Mason county. The town of Shelton was established and laid out a year ago. It is located at the mouth of Gouldeboro creek, where it empties into Big Skookum bay. It is distant about thirty miles from Tacoma, and is reached by boats from this city, Olympia and Seattle. During the past winter, and to the present time, twenty-four houses have been built and are occupied. There are now seven other houses in process of construction. The range of values for some of these buildings is from \$3,000.00 to \$6,000.00. Some of the business houses cost over \$5,000.00. There are now in the town, two hotels, two boarding houses, four saloons, one boot and shoe shop, two stores, two blacksmith shops and one newspaper. The Masons are clearing ground for a new Masonic hall, 30x60 feet. There is already a town hall for public use. There is also a post-office at Shelton, besides the offices of the county auditor, treasurer and probate judge. Mason county never has had a permanently established county seat, but measures will be taken at the next legislature, to have Shelton appointed as such. The Satsop railroad is now being built to connect Puget sound with Gray's harbor. Seven miles of the road are now in operation, on which are two locomotives engaged in hauling two hundred thousand feet of logs daily, besides doing general freighting for the settlers. There are six logging camps along the line of the road. There are seven miles of the road graded, and waiting for the rails, which were shipped from England and are expected to arrive within a week or so. The road will