

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF WASHINGTON TERRITORY.

NATURAL DIVISIONS, CLIMATE AND NATURAL HISTORY.

The special natural features common to the whole Territory, are the Cascade mountains and the Columbia river.

THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS.

The range of mountains known in California as the Sierra Nevada, extends through Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. Here named Cascades, because of the innumerable beautiful cascades which emerge from every crevice, at every height, and sometimes even pour over the summit of the steep bluff sides of the gorge, through which the majestic Columbia forces its way to the Pacific ocean. With the exception of its lofty snow-peaks, Rainier, St. Helens, Baker, and Adams, but few points in this Territory attain an altitude above the snow-line, about 5,000 feet. The chain bears slightly northwest and southeast. The several rivers passing through of taking their source in these mountains afford eligible passes for the construction of roads.

THE COLUMBIA RIVER

enters the Territory from the north, traverses its whole breadth, constitutes almost its entire southern boundary, and with its tributaries drains nearly the whole Territory. It rises in the Rocky mountains, in latitude $50^{\circ} 20'$ north, flows northward to $52^{\circ} 10'$ receiving Canoe river which has its source in 53° north. It then turns sharply to the southward, expanding in 51° into a chain of small lakes, receiving the waters of the Kootenai $49^{\circ} 30'$. Just south of 49° , the Pend d'Oreille, the great north fork (Clarke's) pours its waters into it; then flowing south it receive the Spokane, and turning almost due west, the Okanagan flows into it from the north. Still bending south of west the Methow, Chelan, Enteatwa and Wenatchee, flowing east and south from the Cascade mountains contribute their waters, when it turns southeastwardly receives the Yakima and then is joined by its great southern fork (Lewis) now called Snake river. It then flows almost due south receiving Walla Walla river about parallel 46° , then turns abruptly to the west, and with a general west course flows into the Pacific ocean. The Great South Fork, Snake river, rises in latitude 41°

north, as far east as 111° , west of Greenwich, while its mouth is 124° west. Thus the river of the west and its tributaries permeate a region embracing 12° of latitude and 13° of longitude. Its vast importance as a means of continental transit, is at once appreciated, by the statement of the fact that a portage of 450 miles is only required to connect the navigable waters of the Columbia and Missouri rivers. With comparatively inconsiderable portages in the Cascade gorge, above the Dalles, at Priests' and Buckland's rapids, and at the mouth of the Methow, the Columbia river is navigable to Kettle Falls, a distance of 725 miles from its mouth. As this distance is so largely caused by the big bend of the river, White Bluffs is the practical head of navigation. A road due north from that point thereby avoiding the Big Bend, would strike the Columbia near the 49th parallel, from whence it could be navigated northward about 150 miles, into the very heart of the richest mining regions of British Columbia. Again connecting by road the mouth of the Walla Walla river with the mouth of Powder river, (one of the main tributaries of the Snake) there is a reach of about 100 miles upon Snake river navigable for steamers.

NATURAL DIVISIONS OF THE TERRITORY.

The Cascade mountains traverse the Territory at an average distance from the Pacific Coast of about two degrees of longitude, dividing it into Eastern and Western Washington, widely dissimilar in climate, soil and products. The former consists of vast rolling plains, traversed by the Great Columbia and its tributaries. The soil is generally of good agricultural character, admirably adapted for wheat-growing and stock-raising, being a rich sandy loam spontaneously producing luxuriant bunch-grass. Along the many streams of this well-watered region, there is sufficient timber for fuel—on the hills and mountains an abundance for lumber.

Western Washington is densely timbered with fir, cedar, all the pines, oak, maple and alder—interspersed with small areas of prairie or open land. Many rich prairies, valleys and river-bottoms afford a fair proportion of excellent agricultural area. Although Western Washington must be regarded a timber country, yet agriculturally

considered, it has more than self-supporting capacity. It liberally produces all the cereals, garden vegetables, the hardy fruits and berries in the greatest variety and profusion. The great wheat-growing region is in Eastern Washington. There the Walla Walla, Yakima, Klickitat, Colville and other valleys furnish fields, which in their wheat producing capacity, both as to quantity and quality, equal California, Oregon, or Australia. There too, peaches, corn, melons and the grape luxuriantly flourish. Beef, mutton and wool are successfully raised in the whole of Washington. While Eastern Washington is unsurpassed for those specialties, west of the Cascades the products of the dairy attain greater success.

OREGON AND OTHER LANDS.

A few days since we heard a gentleman not long among us, who is conversant with the good qualities of many lands, assert Oregon to be the best State in the Union, and the best country in the world, except France, which hardly should be brought into comparison as it is the most highly cultivated of all lands in Europe or the world.

The natural conditions of soil and climate, the range and character of our products, and the extent and variety of the resources that await development, all combine to make our State and the whole Pacific Northwest most desirable as homes for present and future generations.

We deal with many of the great staples of commerce in the most satisfactory manner. Our breadstuffs combine the highest perfection with the most reliable and abundant yield and are eagerly bid for by the most exacting demand known to commerce. Our wool clip is increasing in quality so as to be distinctively known and appreciated as the product of Oregon, and we find Eastern manufacturers competing for its purchase as peculiarly suited for certain styles of goods of superior quality. Our flax, too, is attracting attention and commanding reputation as being of the best quality for the finest manufacture. Our fruits are the best (of many kinds, if not all) known in the temperate zones and as a dried product are winning golden opinions and prices in the world's most fastidious markets. As a stock country the whole Columbia river region possesses