

The general surface of the county, is that of an undulating plain, with an ascending slope to the foot-hills and ranging up into the mountain peaks of the Cascades; from whence descend long ridges, with intermediate valleys, and all of which furnish down grade routes for wagon roads, from all parts of the county, and which converge and finally meet at the common focus—Salem, the county seat, and capital of the State. From any part of the county, the observer can take in a vision of several snow clad peaks, and other lofty features of the Cascade range; while the deep green of the forest covered hill-sides and the variegated plains and slopes dotted with farms and villages, all combine to make a landscape of unsurpassed beauty and loveliness.

The county is most centrally located in the Willamette valley, and traversed by the main north and south thoroughfares of the State, and for these reasons has ready and easy communication with all other sections.

#### FISHING, HUNTING AND SUMMER RESORTS.

The time was when the deer came to the settlers quite regularly to be killed for venison; but now they have to be hunted. Fine fat deer are yet occasionally picked up in the thickly settled regions, and even within sight of the State Capitol; but for the most part, the sportsman has to go back to the foot-hills, and range up towards the mountains to get plenty of sport and fine game. And when in the deer range, he can pick up occasionally a black bear; and going still further into the mountains get an elk for his pains. In all parts of the county grouse, pheasant and quail are abundant, and in their season wild ducks and geese may be found in great quantities in the swamps and lakes. The streams in all parts of the county furnish exciting sport in angling for the gamed trout, which may be pursued from the sluggish waters of the prairie regions back into and up to his mountain home, as the snows disappear and the season opens into spring and summer.

But few wild pests yet remain to annoy the flocks or herds; and these are confined to the coyote wolf and the cougar.

In summer resorts, the people of Marion county find every opportunity for recreation and out door pleasure,

with invigorating exercise and mountain air, for the building up of health, and driving away dull care, at both: Silver creek falls, and Mehama on the Santiam river. And to these places, annually as the hot weather approaches, may be seen wending their way in all manner of vehicles, and every description of camp equipage. The invalid and tired worker from the towns and the overworked farmer's family from the country; all meeting at these delightful mountain resorts on a common level without the cares, superfluities and shoddy pretensions of a Saratoga or Long Branch. And while Marion county is one of the healthiest regions in the world, it seems to be a law of our being in all countries, that rest and recreation shall be given to the tired body at such intervals as shall preserve its life in vigorous action for the longest period of continued effort.

At these summer resorts, the campers are blessed with great torrents of pure, clear, crystal, ice cold water, sparkling with mountain trout, while the hills and forests invite the sportsman with plentiful game of every description.

#### NATURAL RESOURCES.

The natural resources of the county may be described under the head of prairies, timber, minerals, soils, water and water power.

The area of prairie region is probably less now than it was prior to the settlement of the country by the white man; for it was the practice of the Indians to annually burn off in every autumn, the dead grass, so as to kill out all young shoots of trees and shrubs. For they could take game much easier in the prairie than in the timber; and it was to facilitate their hunting operations, that they desired to check the encroachments of the forest. While there are many detached and scattering prairies in the county, the principle one are Salem prairie, French prairie, and Howell prairie. Salem and Howell prairies are exceedingly fine bodies of farming land, well drained and having deep rich soil. The same may be said of much of French prairie, (named because of its first settlement by Canadian Frenchmen); but a large proportion is flat and injured by stagnant moisture, which can only be cured and converted into first class land by a general system of thorough drainage. In saying this, it is not intended to convey the idea

that any portion of French prairie is swampy, for it is not, but simply flat and does not shed the surface water readily, and for this reason, farming operations and growing crops are hurt by excess of moisture.

Much of the Waldo hill region was once undoubtedly prairie, but in the course of time was overspread with oak and fir brush. The same may be said of the oak hills south of Salem. These rolling hills, are among the best, if not the very best farming lands in the county, and in Oregon. While the first settlers had the advantage of getting prairie locations, thereby saving them much hard labor, the later settlers who are clearing farms out of the small fir and oak brush, seem to have secured equally good soil, and are equally prosperous. The yield of wheat from both these prairie and hill farms, ranges from twenty-five to forty bushels to the acre, according to the cleanliness and care in cultivation. We cannot now call to mind a finer landscape, or more glorious prospect, than is to be obtained from the hill a mile or so south west of Col. Ralph Geer's delightful home in the Waldo hills.

Marion county is most abundantly supplied with timber, and sawed lumber is quite cheap in all parts of the county. Along the swales, streams and low lands we find ash, alder and maple; while in the Waldo hills, and the Mill creek and hilly region south of Salem, abundant supplies of oak, and all over the country in scattered groves, great quantities of the finest quality of red and yellow fir. But the timber wealth of the county is in the Cascade mountains, where all the timber varieties of the fir, and some species of pine, with fine cedar abounds. The great importance and wealth of this timber can hardly be overestimated. The timber itself will in a few years prove a mine of wealth, employing thousands of men to work it up, and bringing in millions of dollars; for the timber resources of the United States will soon be exhausted, and Oregon forests will be drawn upon, not only for the wants of the millions of people on the Pacific, but also to supply the great interior treeless plains between the Cascades and the Rocky mountains. The forests, too, need protection from the wasteful fires so as to preserve the springs and water courses from being dried up, and