

We are now in the midst of the "4-Lake" country, one of the first to attract settlers to the Spokane county. Extending west toward the "Grand Coulee," and north towards the "Big Bend" and Colville country, there are large bodies of productive lands, with here and there narrow patches of rocky land, on which sheep are extensively herded, and with the rich soil surrounding giving full opportunities for diversified farming. Sample of cereals from this country, now on exhibition in Portland, show a very high grade of wheat, oats and barley. The sprightly, growing, little towns of Davenport, Mondovi, and Sedalia, flourish west of Cheney. Hundreds of thousands of acres have been sold in this region by the railroad land office at Cheney, and thousands of fertile acres await purchasers.

Leaving Cheney, we soon enter the timber, and in an hour hear the murmuring cadence of Spokane Falls, the finest town-site in the Pacific northwest. Inspired by its beauties of location, and having reached one of the main points for which we started, we will lay aside all extraneous matter and give the solid facts concerning the growing and attractive

SPOKANE COUNTRY.

Until the advent of the Northern Pacific Railroad the Spokane country was a *terra incognita* to all others than residents of Eastern Washington, and it was not an uncommon thing to meet people in Oregon, and California even, who asserted that the terms Sahara or Arid Plains and Spokane were synonymous. And to this day, notwithstanding the avalanche of newspaper correspondence, hundreds and thousands of people who are on the lookout for new homes, have but a faint perception of the real situation of this section, and, naturally enough, are athirst for every item of really reliable information concerning it. At the outset, after personal inspection, we feel justified in the opinion that, in what we say as to the Spokane country, we feel that we are doing a real service to incoming settlers, as well as discharging a duty due our readers.

It is true that this is written while the industries and resources are, comparatively speaking, undeveloped, and their capabilities of expansion untested; but no thinking man can observe what has been accomplished already and duly

considering how small a fraction of the capabilities has been utilized, without the conclusion that the future here is very bright. To this may be added that the present is an "off year," and what produces a favorable impression now will do better next year. The railway era in this country has compelled a very rapid development and expansion of resources, and a new age has dawned for this part of the Northwest. The farmer, merchant and business man has been brought into rapid, easy, and really cheap communication with the other sections of the great Northwest. A market has in this way been supplied. The railway progressive spirit has penetrated all the ramifications of trade and commerce, the hardships of the pioneer effort have disappeared, some of the luxury and ease of the older settled states have steadied the privations of the frontier, and prosperity is seen in every city, town and hamlet, indeed it is indexed in every face one meets.

Perhaps the capabilities, resources, and probable future developments of Spokane county have been less written about and are more imperfectly understood than any other particular portion of the territory.

Until July, 1881, there was no railway communication, and the traveler by stage caught no glimpse of the rich valleys and the broad and fertile plains.

Spokane county is the most easterly of the territory, and there is but one county—Stevens—lying between it and the British possessions. Its area is 10,000 square miles—much larger than many eastern and middle states—and presents not only a variety of climate, but soil. Its chief attractions to the emigrant are, pleasant, healthful climate, a soil that in productiveness compares more than favorably with any in the Union. Specimens of wheat, oats, barley, timothy and buckwheat, gathered from the fields in the immediate vicinity of Spokane Falls, and placed on exhibition at the Mechanics' Fair, in Portland last year, were awarded the diploma. Those now on exhibition at the Bureau of Immigration, in Portland, are exceptionally fine. It has been established by statistics from the Agricultural Bureau, at Washington City, that this territory stands at the head of the list in wheat production, the average being 28½ bushels. By improvement (and there is much room

for it) in the methods of cultivation, the average will be increased. In many places, within ten miles of Spokane Falls, which yielded an average of forty to fifty bushels to the acre, sixty bushels have been raised in the Colville valley, still further north. The average yield of oats is about seventy bushels, though on Peone plateau, ten miles northeast from Spokane Falls, full 100 bushels have been produced. The soil of this county is possessed of the constituents insuring lasting qualities. The average depth is fully three feet, even on the slopes, excepting of course the washed banks of water courses. In the gravel there is mixed a black loam, rich as it can possibly be; and in general terms, the soil possesses all the mineral salts necessary to the perfect growth of the cereals. The clods are easily broken, and the ground quickly crumbles on exposure to the atmosphere.

One of the strange, and, by the emigrant, not quite understood things, is the fact that while Spokane county has a long, dry season, no irrigation is necessary, the crops have never failed, in fact are always assured. It is plain enough to those living here. The farmer does not depend upon the clouds or streams; he always has the warm air currents, surcharged with vapor, coming in from the Pacific, and the moisture with which these are laden is held in suspension during the day, and diffused over the entire country during the night, being condensed by a cooler atmosphere into the form of a mist. It is as good, or better even, than a light shower. In the middle of the day in July or August, you can find moisture sufficient within a few inches of the surface; plenty of it deeper down. This is the secret of the success of grain crops in all eastern Washington.

And so, when it is remembered that farms are being created every week, that to-day grain is growing where last season herds were roaming, that there are tens of thousands of acres of railroad and government lands waiting for the simplest and cheapest taking, when the vastness of the area of Spokane county is realized, that the Northern Pacific main line traverses the county, and that this and many branches projected will develop every acre, that the soil and climate furnish the finest vegetables and cereals known to commerce, that their shipment is rapid and cheap, that