



Payette valley is irrigated by a number of ditches taken from the river. Two large canals, to be twenty miles in length and carrying 25,000 inches of water each, are under construction. The soil of this sage-brush land is exceedingly fertile when irrigated, and the section to be redeemed by these and other canals embraces about one hundred square miles of the finest land in the territory.

The country north of the Clearwater river is 2,500 feet above sea level, and its climate is naturally cold and frosty. Ten years ago it was regarded as worthless for agricultural purposes. It was sneered at as a very good summer camping ground for squaws digging camas. It was not only isolated and far from market, but it was practically inaccessible. Its wagon roads followed up the bed of the precipitous gulches to the table lands. To-day it supports a population of 50,000. It is an exclusively agricultural population, and despite the rigors of its climate they have given the country a continental reputation for fertility and productiveness. It ships annually millions of bushels of wheat. There is a continuous line of unbroken settlements from the Clearwater river to Spokane Falls and beyond, a distance of over one hundred miles. The climate is cold and frosty, but the soil is rich and the sturdy arm of Caucasian industry has utilized it for productive purposes, until it is now the granary of the northwest and a mighty commonwealth of American home builders. Villages, churches and schools dot every country cross-roads. A great trans-continental railroad, with its far-reaching branches, traverses it in every direction. Towns and cities spring up and flourish as if by magic in this rich and productive country, and its inhabitants exhibit a truly American determination and enterprise in their ceaseless efforts to develop its latent resources that are attracting the attention of capitalists and home seekers from all parts of the republic. This is the country north of the Clearwater river. South of the Clearwater there is also an area of agricultural land quite as rich and extensive as that to the northward. The country south of the river is the more desirable of the two for settlement and occupation. Its altitude is lower and its climate more genial; it is well watered by running streams and ever-living springs; the grasses and native vegetation grow spontaneously and with almost tropical luxuriance on its prolific soil; the mountain ranges which shelter it are fringed with fine forests of timber; it is drained by a river navigable for forty miles above its mouth; it is within easy distance of the markets of the world, and is accessible at all seasons of the year. With all these advantages it is a country given over to the loneliness of desolation. You can ride for sixty miles without seeing a man, bird or beast. With an area and soil capable of supporting a dense population, it is as unproductive as the

great American desert. Where should be the homes of American freemen the virgin soil cries in vain for the plow. Where towns and cities should be built no living thing greets the eye. All this vast region of three quarters of a million of acres, which should support a dense population, is lying as uninhabited and unproductive as upon the day of its creation. Let our readers fill in the details of what we have outlined and study the moral it contains. Upon one side of Clearwater an active, ambitious, progressive population in the full tide of civilization and enjoying the high noon of prosperity which always attends the active development of a new country. Upon the other side of Clearwater a region no less fertile, no less productive, but lying just as the Almighty left it ten thousand years ago. Upon one side the country rejoices and expands in the genial sunshine of civilization. Upon the other it is crippled by the dry rot of desolation and decay. The one encourages enterprise and invites immigration; the other retards it. The one is the public domain; the other is the Nez Perce Indian reservation."—*Nez Perce News*.

The great Shoshone falls, of which we gave an illustration in July, have been purchased by a party of capitalists, who design building there a large hotel and making it a resort as predicted at that time. Roads are being laid out, building sites surveyed, and preparations made for throwing open this great wonder of nature to tourists the coming spring. A big hotel is to be erected, an elevator will make the passage from the high bank of the river to the base of the falls an easy task. Boats to connect between the upper and lower falls will be placed in the river and also suitable boats to ferry the river. There is no limit to the water power, and a portion of this will be used to operate electric lights for the \$75,000 hotel, illuminate the fall, and it may be, supply electricity for places remote from the falls. The improvements to be made will be so arranged as to add interest to the great wonders and not in any instance mar their beauty or in any way detract from the work of nature, but rather to add thereto. By thorough advertising, Shoshone falls will become second only to Niagara as a resort, while in some other respects it will out-rival it. This enterprise of private gentlemen who have secured the property will be aided, of course, by the Oregon Short Line company, which will at least have an interest in carrying people to see the wonders, and it is probable a branch road will soon be constructed from the town of Shoshone to the banks of the river at the falls.

SHOSHONE COUNTY

Was an organized county in Washington territory before Idaho had being as a distinct political community, and was represented in the legislature of Washington territory during the years 1861 and 1862. Early in 1863 the territory of Idaho was organized with the capital at Lewiston, and here the first and second sessions of the Idaho legislature were held. The first permanent occupation by white people of the region now covered by Shoshone county, was in the autumn of 1860, when what was then known as the Oro Fino placer gold mines were discovered. The fame of these "diggings" soon spread far and wide, and thousands from the older placer mines of California and Oregon congregated in the new El Dorado. The county embraced at the begin-

ning nearly the entire region watered by the numerous tributaries of the north and south branches of the Clearwater. A portion of the county lies north and east of this water shed, taking in a portion of the Cœur d'Alene range of mountains and some of the country drained by the tributaries of the Cœur d'Alene river. The surface of the entire region of which we write is high, and for the most part rugged and mountainous, with numerous streams of every size, below that of the main river, penetrating the mountains through channels that for long sections of their course have so little fall that much difficulty was experienced in many cases to get the water to flow with sufficient rapidity to wash the gold from the earth and gravel by the first rude process applied by the miners. All the river and creek bottoms, and the flanks of the mountains, are covered by a dense growth of the finest pine, fir, cedar, hemlock and spruce timber. The lumber interests alone in that old county, when fully developed, will constitute a source of great wealth. On the plateaus near the south branch of the Clearwater, there are extensive bodies of fine agricultural and grazing lands, which have recently been surveyed and which are rapidly being appropriated by settlers. The mines on the Oro Fino creek and its tributaries have been continuously worked since 1860, and though the long series of successive excitements and the constantly decreasing output, have continued to diminish the population from year to year, the good old county has continued to hold its head up bravely under all adverse circumstances, keeping up its county organization, maintaining its financial credit and keeping its representation in the legislature; the comparatively few people remaining there showing a wonderful faith in the old camp, and a determination to stay with it to the last. One peculiarity of this old placer region is that though numerous rich and extensive placers have been found and worked, and though the entire region has been exhaustively prospected for gold bearing quartz lodes, very few of these have been found, and fewer still that have been made to pay the cost of working. But there have been great excitements from time to time caused by rumors of rich quartz discoveries. What will long be remembered as the "Robinson ledge," and which has long since been classed among the exploded humbugs and myths, with which prospectors have often deluded themselves and others, was mentally located at different times in many different parts of the county, where it was persistently but vainly searched for by eager prospectors. And since the gold found in the district is of the character known as coarse gold, with indications of not having been washed down from a great distance, future labors of the prospector may reveal the existence of rich quartz lodes, and who knows that the "Robinson ledge" itself may not yet be found? It is a remarkable fact that in ouriferous mountain regions, particularly where the country is covered with dense forest, no matter how long the country has been occupied, or how thoroughly it may be explored and prospected, new and rich discoveries are always possible and continue to be made. The recent discoveries of rich placers in the Cœur d'Alene mountains will give a fresh impetus to prospecting, and will be certain to bring to light other placers long hidden in the recesses of the Cœur d'Alene and Bitter Root mountains. These discoveries and the almost certain prospect