

whole region. The soil is the black loam common to all the Northwestern country. The native grass is the famous "bunch grass," which in this particular region attains such a luxuriant growth as I have never seen excelled. The Cold Spring prairies are devoid of timber, the sources of supply being the timber belt of the Blue Mountains twenty miles to the southeastward. The surface water is confined to the numerous springs which gave the name to the country; but an unfailing supply is found in wells varying from thirty to sixty feet in depth, the depth of wells in this country depending upon that of the soil, which, in some instances, has been found to be sixty feet in depth before bedrock was struck. As a rule, a stream of running water is found fifteen feet below the bedrock, and in no instance has the supply ever failed. Under the provisions of the Timber Culture Act some tracts have been devoted to the growth of timber, with fair success, considering that the people know so little of the cultivation of timber, and that the possibilities of the soil are only just becoming known.

When I first became acquainted with the Cold Spring country the number of settlers could be almost counted upon the fingers of one hand. Eight years ago lands that now comprise some of the best farms in the county could have been had for the locating. At that time the Cold Spring country was occupied exclusively by sheep men, who were interested in spreading discouraging reports about its quality. It was said, and for many years was believed, to be an inhospitable desert of sage brush and sand; but as the settlements extended more and more to the northward the soil was found to be rich, and deeper than in any other part of the county. The work of developing the Cold Spring country began about five years ago. The first settlers were poor men, and they had to undergo the vicissitudes which fall to the lot of the pioneers in every latitude. To-day the country presents an aspect of prosperity. County roads have been laid out, and are enclosed in endless lanes of substantial fences. On every hand are evidences of the thrift of the farmers and the fertility of the soil, in the substantial improvements which are going on, in the fine new barns and commodious residences, and, in some instances, high stepping trotters and stylish buggies. We have a soil of great depth and inexhaustible fertility, upon which, even with the most slovenly style of raising "volunteer" crops, the farmer assumes a yield of fifteen bushels to the acre; while with crops farmed on the summer fallow system, a yield of thirty bushels to the acre can be safely counted on. The wheat raising craze is here in full blast, and that it has paid to raise wheat exclusively appears to be self-evident, and the acreage devoted to that purpose is increasing every year. The conditions of soil and climate are eminently adapted to it, and under the summer fallow system there is no possibility of failure of crops.

The system of farming for wheat exclusively is, however, not a good one in the long run, but it has its advantages in enabling poor men to make a start in improving their ranches. With a fair price for the product, it is no uncommon thing for a man to make enough from one

crop to clear expenses and pay for the land besides. One of its worst features is that it creates the impression that our soil is good for nothing else, whereas, with proper cultivation, there is no soil in the State more prolific in its yield of fruits and vegetables. Potatoes are large and many to a hill. Melons, squash, onions, tomatoes and corn need only to be planted to attain a fine growth without further care. I have known grape vine cuttings planted in a badger hole to flourish until eaten by sheep. Tobacco can also be raised here, but it needs attention. "Garden truck" grows spontaneously in so far that the only aid required is to seed and gather the fruit. It is literally a soil that will "laugh" an abundant harvest if "tickled with a hoe." When its merits shall be fully tested under a more diversified system of farming than now prevails, it will be the modern Canaan, a land flowing with the "milk and honey" of its cereal and vegetable productions.

One feature of the country is worth noticing. There are no rocks to be seen—not an acre of waste ground. Even on the highest points, where an extensive view can be obtained, there is not a spot discernible which is not covered to a greater or less depth with soil. It is a country rich in all the elements required by steady progression, and it will in time be the home of a dense population.

There is still some vacant Government land subject to entry and purchase by the usual methods. The best locations, of course, were naturally taken by the first comers, but there is much left that is good. The time is coming when Uncle Sam will no longer be able to give a farm to all applicants. In point of fact, vacant farming lands are already scarce, and are becoming more and more so each year, as reference to the records of all the Land Offices proves; and when an opportunity occurs, such as is offered here, those who have the qualities of good settlers, and are anxious to obtain homes on this fertile part of the public domain, should hasten to avail themselves of it before too late. The reason why this Cold Spring country is not fully settled up is because it is the newest of all the agricultural settlements and has never been "boomed." Until last year there were but one or two organized county roads leading this way, and although surrounded by railroads, so that the most distant part is not fifteen miles from a station, yet we are somewhat isolated. We have, however, a fine quality of settlers who have established their homes here, and built at every country cross-roads a district school house, and are earnest in similar matters of intellectual advancement, while we are surrounded on the east, west and south by a network of towns. Walla Walla is only twenty-eight miles northeastward, while to the east are the towns of Milton, Weston, Centreville and Adams, each about fifteen miles from the very heart of the Cold Spring country. Distant about eighteen miles from Cold Spring is Pendleton, the county seat, the principal rendezvous for Cold Spring people. Located in such a neighborhood, it will be easily seen that the Cold Spring country offers inducements to settlers that cannot be