

each side. On the north the valley is terminated by the mountains coming into close proximity to each other, being only separated by the gorge through which the Grande Ronde River flows. Either in winter, spring, summer or autumn it is a magnificent picture when viewed from any of the surrounding heights. The river, which bears the same name as the valley, flows in from the Blue Mountains on the western side. It takes a straight easterly course until it reaches the hills on the eastern side, thence it takes a northerly course, becoming very sluggish, and follows an exceedingly crooked channel. There are many smaller streams running down from the mountains, and along the foothills copious springs break forth, thus affording an abundance of water, which converts most of the valley into a natural meadow. In the southern part many of the springs consist of warm mineral waters, often used for medicinal purposes. The largest of these springs has been named the Hot Lake, for the reason that the water rises from the ground in quite a large stream and then spreads out, forming a small lake, covering about three acres. The water where it rises from the ground is at boiling heat. Timber is conveniently near in the surrounding mountains. The climate is subject to greater extremes than that of Umatilla County west of the Blue Mountains, though the winters are not extremely severe. Snow seldom lies on the ground more than three weeks, and, as a general thing, cattle remain out all winter, only occasionally, as during the past season, requiring care or feeding at any time. Though there is considerable agriculture, stock raising and dairying are the leading industries. Thousands of cattle, sheep and hogs are raised, the cattle grazing on the fine grass of the rolling hills and up the mountain sides, and the sheep in the mountain valleys in summer and the lower valley in winter.

La Grande is the oldest of the six towns which lie in Grande Ronde Valley, and was formerly the county seat. It is admirably situated in the foothills of the western side of the valley, and is well protected from the prevailing winds, which in the winter time blow from the south. It commands an excellent view of a large portion of the valley, and is well supplied with water, which is conducted from neighboring springs in mains. The O. R. & N. Co. have laid out an addition to the town, and intend to build round houses, machine shops and other improvements, and make it the central depot for the whole valley. Here is located the United States Land Office for the counties of Umatilla, Union, Baker and Grant. Two good schools and the Blue Mountain University supply most excellent educational facilities. There are three churches—Episcopal, Baptist and Methodist. The *La Grande Gazette* is a well-conducted weekly newspaper, devoted to the interests of the county. The Masons, Odd Fellows and Workmen have thriving lodges. Besides the usual number of prosperous stores, there are two saw and planing mills, a soap factory, furniture factory and steam flouring mill. The present population is about 600.

Union is the county seat and largest town in the

county, having a population approximating 800. It is prettily situated on Catherine Creek, in the southern end of the valley, sixteen miles from La Grande and thirty-six from Baker City. Its water power is very valuable, though at present but partially utilized. There are a new flouring mill of 100 barrels daily capacity, a furniture, sash and door factory, tannery, soda water factory, brewery, planing mill, town hall, national bank, six general merchandise stores and a number of other stores, shops, etc. A number of stores are built of brick, as are also the public school building and court house. The educational, religious and social influences consist of a good public school, three churches—Methodist, Presbyterian and Episcopal—lodges of Masons and Odd Fellows, and two excellent newspapers. The *Mountain Sentinel* is a thoroughly established paper, enterprising and ably conducted. The *Oregon Scout* is a bright and newsy semi-weekly, whose initial number made its appearance in July last. The streets are broad, the private residences are neat and attractive, and both rent and taxes are low. Not far from the town good copper mines are being developed. The town has been growing rapidly during the past five years, and under the impulse given the valley by the railroad must increase at a still greater ratio during the next few years.

Island City is situated on Grande Ronde River, in a most beautiful location, about five miles from La Grande. It has a population of some 250 and is growing rapidly, being a comparatively new town. It lies in the midst of a rich farming community, of which it is the commercial centre. Its chief industry is the manufacture of flour, the town having sprung up around the mill, which was the first structure erected. There are also a planing mill, four stores, a hotel and various other business enterprises, also a good school and religious organizations. The river supplies an abundance of water power which might be still further utilized, and the "Island" is a perfect garden spot, in summer producing flowers and fruit in great abundance.

Oro Dell is a small town situated at the mouth of the Grande Ronde River Canyon, two miles north of La Grande. For many years it has been a trading point for the farmers in the neighborhood and teamsters on the road. It possesses an excellent water power, which has been improved by W. J. Snodgrass, who has erected a dam across the river, with a fall of about sixteen feet. His old dam and a grist mill and planing mill were destroyed by the floods of 1882. The mills are being reconstructed upon new and improved plans, and this little town will soon be the centre of a manufacturing community which will be a source of wealth to the county.

The most beautiful spot in Eastern Oregon is the Cove, four miles from Union. Here a village has grown up around a grist mill, but the name is applied to a large farming country which runs back from the main valley into the mountains, this fact giving it its name. It is exceedingly fertile, thickly settled and well improved. It contains more dwellings than any farming community of its size in Eastern Oregon. All kinds of fruit grow