

Missing

P 121-2

tains. It is about twenty-five miles wide, and extends the full length of the county. It supports large forests of timber, including fir, pine, spruce and tamarack. Along the larger streams are narrow valleys, where the soil is exceedingly fertile, and where wild redtop and several other grasses grow, affording excellent hay and pasturage for live stock. Many places in the mountains are susceptible of cultivation, yet but few settlements have been made. In the summer time sheep herders and stockmen resort to this region with their stock, for here they find valuable pasturage for sheep, horses and cattle.

East of the Blue Mountains is Grande Ronde Valley, a circular grassy plain, thirty miles in diameter. It is one of the most fertile valleys on the Pacific Slope, well watered, and very productive of fruit, grain, vegetables and hay. Wheat often yields from forty to sixty bushels to the acre, and oats and barley from sixty to eighty. Grande Ronde River flows in from the Blue Mountains and follows an exceedingly crooked channel through the valley. 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 much of the valley into a natural meadow. 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 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 valleys in winter.

The Eagle Creek Mountains are very rugged, and valuable only for timber and grazing, so far as their surface is concerned, but they are known to contain gold, silver and copper quartz ledges, which have yet to be sufficiently developed to ascertain their true value.

A section of the county as yet but thinly settled is the beautiful Wallowa Valley. The valley proper is some forty miles long and about twenty wide, including the arable foothills. It is occupied chiefly by stockmen, and is for the most part unfenced, though there are a number of fine farms, gardens and orchards. In general it is a high, rolling country, with a colder climate than any other portion of Union County, excepting, of course, the mountainous regions. It is an excellent stock country, and the inhabitants are largely occupied in stock raising. The hardiest vegetables are grown, and various kinds of grain in most localities mature and ripen, but often more or less injured by frosts. Although the country has been settling up very rapidly during the last three years, there is yet room for many thousand immigrants.

Another locality is the great Innaha Canyon. It is best described as a huge crack in the surface of the earth. The bed of the canyon is about 1,500 feet lower than the

Wallowa Valley and the table lands, which lie on either side of it. A clear stream of water runs swiftly through it, and in many places there are small tracts of very fertile soil. The climate is semi-tropical, and the cactus grows in abundance. Several families have taken up their homes there, and have found the soil and climate well adapted to the culture of grapes, peaches and many other varieties of tender fruits. Snow seldom falls in this canyon, and stock fatten upon the green bunch grass which comes and matures before the snow is fairly off of the high lands adjacent. The Innaha will, in the near future, be noted for its delicious fruits and early vegetables. To the east and north of Wallowa Valley lies a belt of open, rolling hills similar to the celebrated wheat lands at the western base of the Blue Mountains. This belt is forty miles long and about twelve wide, fully one-third being good arable land, and nearly all of it subject to location under the land laws.

There are several small valleys in the county. One of these, Indian Valley, situated north of Grande Ronde Valley, is quite thickly settled, and is a rich grain producing section. Pine Valley is a very beautiful place, nestling high up in the roughest part of the Eagle Creek Mountains, very much isolated, but containing at present about one hundred families. Eagle Valley and Lower Powder River, in the southeastern part of the county, are places occupied by but a few people, who are engaged in gold mining and stock raising. North Powder is a new place, which promises to become an important railroad depot. It is supported by a large farming community which has settled along the valleys of Wolf Creek, North Powder River and Clover Creek. There is room in this vicinity for many families to find good homes. The Big Creek country, in which is the little community of Jamestown, is also a growing one, and offers good opportunities for settlement.

Bunch grass ranges border the valleys on all sides, making the county one of the best stock regions on the Coast. More than one-half of the farming lands are yet open to settlement under the homestead and pre-emption laws. Saw mills to cut the heavy timber of the mountains, and grist mills to grind the wheat of the valleys, already exist. The Baker City Branch of the O. R. & N. Co. passes through Grande Ronde Valley, and stock, grain, butter, cheese, etc., can be shipped to markets either east or west.

Union is the county seat and largest town, having a population of 800. It is situated in the southern end of Grande Ronde Valley, and has good water power. A large flouring mill, furniture factory, sash and door factory, tannery, brewery, soda water factory and planing mill constitute its industries. La Grande, on the western side of the valley, has a population of 600, and contains two saw and planing mills, soap factory, furniture factory, flouring mill and United States Land Office, and will soon have railroad machine shops. Island City, on the river, has 250 people, a large flouring mill and a planing mill. Oro Dell, at the entrance to Grande Ronde Canyon, has a flouring mill and planing mill. Many