

THE WOOD RIVER MINES.

AS an example of what can be accomplished in a brief time in the mining regions of the West, the famous Wood River mines are deserving of special attention. Compared with placer mining the development of quartz ledges is a slow process, and yet in five years the region under consideration has been transformed from an uninhabited wilderness to the home of from 6,000 to 7,000 people, living in three well built towns, and producing this season \$6,000,000 worth of bullion. Truly, we are living in a fast age. The country is moving forward with giant strides, the Great West leading the van. The almost magical transformations of this region, the rapid creation of wealth, the sudden springing up of prosperous towns and cities, and the establishment of great industries are astonishing, even to those whose enterprise is mainly instrumental in causing them. To others such results, accomplished in so brief a period, must indeed seem marvelous.

The term "Wood River Country" embraces the region lying along Wood River, and the outlying and tributary country, nearly all that is valuable of Alturas County, Southern Idaho. Through the lower end of the county runs the Oregon Short Line, from which a branch ninety-six miles in length extends up Wood River into the mining region. At the junction of this branch with the main line lies the town of Shoshone, a prosperous business point, containing about 900 people. It contains a number of good stores and has an excellent weekly paper, the *Journal*. Its location makes it the actual gateway to the Wood River mines. It is distant from Portland 622 miles. Here are located the shops of the Oregon Short Line, and from here visitors to the celebrated Shoshone Falls take the stage. The surroundings of Shoshone are not very inviting or encouraging to the agriculturist, but a journey of twenty miles up the branch line brings the traveler to the beautiful and fertile valley of Silver Creek. It is about twelve miles square, well watered, and nearly all settled up, though, no doubt, a few good locations might yet be found. No finer land can be found anywhere.

The road next enters the main Wood River Valley, which is thirty miles long and one-half to fifteen wide. The road passes in succession through the towns of Bellevue, fifty miles from Shoshone, Hailey, five miles further north, and Ketchum, the terminal point. Each of these towns is the centre of quite an extensive mining region, and each contains a number of mills and smelters, besides being the shipping point for large quantities of crude ore, which now goes to Denver, Omaha and Kansas City, but which could be diverted to Portland, provided the latter city possessed the facilities for its reduction.

Bellevue, the first one reached by the railroad, is a town of 1,500 inhabitants, and is located on the east branch of the river. Across the river is the small town of Broadford, a general miners' headquarters, and practically a portion of the main town. Bellevue has a splendid brick school house, and in many other ways exhibits signs of prosperity. It draws its principal sup-

port from the surrounding mines, the chief of which are the Queen of the Hills, Minnie Moore, Queen Victoria, Monday and Oswego. The most successful is the Queen of the Hills, owned by the Bellevue Idaho Mining Company, whose head office is in Salt Lake City. Of this company John A. Hunter is President; Boyd Park, Vice-President; J. C. Conklin, Treasurer and General Manager; F. O. Horn, Secretary; J. A. Lusk, Superintendent. The company has about \$50,000 invested in the mine and concentrating works, an engraving of which is given on another page, and employs sixty-five men. The mine has been worked three years and the concentrator one year. It is paying a monthly dividend to the owners, and enough ore is in sight to insure dividends for some time to come. The concentrator works forty tons of ore per day, and three hundred tons of concentrations per month are shipped to Denver, where a ready market is found. The ore averages 70 to 75 per cent lead, with from 80 to 100 ounces of silver per ton. Some of these gentlemen, with other parties, are opening up the Triumph, near the famous Parker mine. The Overland is also a very promising mine on the east Fork of Wood River. It is opening up finely and shows even a higher grade ore than the Queen of the Hills.

Five miles north of Bellevue is the town of Hailey, the largest in the valley and county seat of Alturas County. It contains a population of 2,500, and is the great centre of the Wood River and Sawtooth mining regions, financially, politically and socially. It contains three excellent papers, the *Times*, *News-Miner* and *Idahoan*, each publishing both a daily and weekly edition. The town is admirably located in the very centre of the quartz region, and its enterprising merchants draw trade from all parts of the surrounding country for a radius of a 100 miles. Within half a day's drive are the farms and stock ranches of Camas Prairie. Hailey has a fine brick court house that cost \$40,000, an efficient fire department, complete water works system, telephone connection with surrounding towns, two saw mills, smelting and concentrating works, numerous good stores, shops, etc. There are several good hotels, and one is in course of erection that will cost \$30,000. Hailey contains more brick buildings than any other town in that region. There is a small bank, but the town offers a splendid opening for a bank of sufficient solidity to command the entire confidence of the mercantile and mining interests.

Seven miles west of Hailey is Bullion, exclusively a mining camp, situated in a gulch. In this vicinity are some of the richest mines in the Territory, such as the Bullion, Mayflower, Jay Gould, O. K., Eureka and Idahoan. The last has paid three dividends in thirty days. Two promising claims, Red Cloud and Cyclops, have recently been purchased by a gentleman with plenty of capital to work them. Just back of Hailey is Quigley Gulch, in which are the Ophir group of mines. There are four claims showing high grade galena. On Deer Creek, just above Hailey, are the Montana, Silver Moon, Mountain View, Wolfstone and Davitt mines, all promising ones. The Narrow Gauge group has pro-