

vantages of the shortest route and the mon river, as they are now doing those least streams to cross. It is this fact of the Cœur d'Alene.

which renders Sprague such a good location for a foundry and machine shop. There is, also, a good prospect of another transcontinental route passing through, or near, Sprague within two years. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the richness of the mines. It is conceded by The Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern that on Salmon river is building across the mountains from Seattle, and has expressed an intention of going through the Big Bend country, which they will undoubtedly do, as it is on a direct eastern route, and being the case, it is evident that the railroad town which becomes the base is the finest body of agricultural land of supplies for the mines must derive a within reach of that road, and is within great benefit from that fact, grow rapidly and prosper amazingly. easy reach of the new mines. The topography of the country is such that a line of this kind, especially if it is to form part of a through line crossing the Bitter Root mountains, would cross the Northern Pacific in the vicinity of Sprague, and it is a fair presumption that the company would prefer to pass through the city to crossing at some point where no business could be had. It is supposed by many that this road is to form a portion of the Manitoba system, which will be completed from St. Paul to Butte this fall. Major Rogers, engineer of the Manitoba, has spent the spring and summer in a reconnaissance of the region lying between the Rocky mountains and Puget sound, looking up the most practicable route for a railroad, crossing the Bitter Root mountains, the Palouse and Big Bend countries and the Cascades to Puget sound. This line, when definitely located, must pass through, or near, Sprague, for the reasons given above. It would seem, from the considerations mentioned, that Sprague has excellent prospects of soon becoming a railroad center of considerable importance.

The railroad outlook is a cheerful one. This is the most advantageous initial point for a branch line of the Northern Pacific into the Big Bend country. Last fall the citizens of Sprague organized the Sprague & Big Bend Railroad Co., and made a preliminary survey of a route to Condon's near the Columbia, with a branch to Davenport. They found a practical route, with easy grades, through a fine agricultural country which would supply a paying local traffic. By building this line the Northern Pacific would place itself sixty miles nearer the mines and tap one of the most extensive and productive agricultural regions in the Columbia basin. Whether the Northern Pacific builds such a route or not, there seems to be no doubt that the O. R. & N. Co., when it decides to extend a line to the new mines, will do so by the Sprague route. Endicott, twenty miles to the south of Sprague, is the nearest town on the line of the Palouse branch of that road, and the best situated as a starting point for the mines. The most natural and available route from that point is by the way of Sprague and the line surveyed by the citizens to the northwest. Pressure in Portland, and a due regard for its own welfare, will no doubt compel the O. R. & N. Co. to thus tap the mines of Sal-

There are several other towns in the county, such as Davenport, Harrington, Mondovi and Sherman. The former lies north of Sprague and has a population of about 300. It is the terminus of a branch line surveyed by the