

## THE YAKIMA COUNTRY.

**N**ORTH YAKIMA is the name of a flourishing young city of fully two thousand inhabitants, situated in the south-central portion of Washington Territory, on the west side of the Yakima river, near its confluence with the Natches, and in one of the most promising valleys of the west. It is not yet four years of age, but from the commanding position which it occupies with reference to the surrounding rich country its growth thus far has been rapid, and all indications point to still greater prosperity in the future.

The circumstances of the location and settlement of North Yakima were such that its growth was assured from the beginning. The old town of Yakima is situated near the borders of the Yakima Indian reservation. This was a village of some five hundred inhabitants when the Northern Pacific railroad was located through that country, and though the line passed near this town, there were reasons which made it advisable to establish a commercial center farther up the river on a more eligible site and at a point more accessible for the then slowly developing industries of the section to the northward. The present site of North Yakima was selected for the new metropolis, it being four miles nearly due north of the old town of Yakima. In order to get the new town established quickly and on a substantial basis, the Northern Pacific company presented lots for business and residence locations and paid the expense of moving to the new situation to all who chose to avail themselves of the offer. The result was that most of the people and buildings of the old town of Yakima were moved, in several instances without interruption to business, to North Yakima, which soon was invested with the powers and functions of a city. It was established almost in a day and immediately began a healthy and promising growth which has continued to the present time, with constantly increasing vigor. In laying out the new city the plat was made on a generous plan, the east and west streets being a hundred feet wide, and those extending north and south eighty feet, and the alleys are twenty feet wide. The streets are lined with rows of shade trees and with streams of living water which flow nine or ten months in the year. It is rare that such complete preparations for a beautiful city are made previous to its settlement, at the time when most details of the plan can be best arranged.

North Yakima now has sixty-five business establishments, which did a business aggregating more than \$2,500,000.00 during 1888. There are two national banks in the city with a combined capital of \$127,000.00, and carrying deposits aggregating \$155,-

000.00. The assessed valuation of property in North Yakima last August was \$625,000.00, which is about one-third the actual value, and the total tax levy for all purposes was three per cent. of this one-third valuation, equal to one per cent. of the actual or market value of the property. With this extremely low rate of taxation municipal improvements are carried on, placing the town in the front rank of western cities.

Among the most important enterprises now contemplated is a water works system and an electric light plant, both of which will be in process of construction by the time this number of *THE WEST SHORE* reaches its readers. The water will be supplied from a point on the Natches river less than two miles to the westward of the city. The Natches flows directly from the great glaciers of Mount Rainier and is cold and pure. The works will be operated by water power ordinarily, but will be supplied with an outfit for steam power to use in case of too cold weather in the winter time to use the water wheel. There will be four miles of iron mains within the city limits and twenty-five hydrants for fire protection. The electric light plant will be operated by the water works power. In addition to the large number of poplar, cotton wood and box elder trees that now line many miles of streets in the city, twelve hundred silver maples and locusts will be set out this spring.

In order that there may be a definite conception of the region under consideration let the reader understand that the Yakima country, of which the city of North Yakima is the central and chief commercial center, comprises that part of Washington lying between the Cascade mountains on the west and the Columbia river on the east, drained by the Yakima river and its tributaries. It includes thirteen rich valleys, besides a large area of table land and hilly timber land, and also takes in a considerable portion of the broad plain of the Columbia. The main stream that drains this region is the Yakima river which takes its rise in two or three small lakes near the very crest of the Cascades and meanders down the mountains and through the valleys in a southeasterly general course, joining the mighty Columbia a few miles above its confluence with the Snake, which comes from the opposite direction. From source to mouth this is a rapid stream, having an average fall of fully twenty feet to the mile. It receives a number of tributaries from both sides so that when it emerges from the foot hills and enters the great Columbia plain it is a river of no mean volume. Flowing through a dry region its waters are not the periodic washings of the country but they come from the snows and springs in the mountains and are unusually pure.

One of the principal merits of this Yakima coun-