

considerable advantage to the producers to be able to ship that way. The transportation rates are the same to tide water in either direction, but from the sound ship charters are less than by way of the Columbia river, so the farmers realize more on produce sent to market by way of Puget sound. Mr. Hunt has been able to get important subsidies from the people of the country penetrated by his lines because of the material advantage which is afforded by their construction and operation on an independent basis, and during the recent changes in the control of the railway situation of the northwest many people became fearful that the system in which they had placed so much confidence was about to pass into other hands and become an agent of extortion. There has never been any real probability of this, however. The writer was one of a party, including President Hunt and Henry Villard, that recently passed over the Hunt lines. The trip was for information only, and it was evident that the system is entirely independent of any hampering alliance with either of the companies having an interest in the development of the Inland Empire. Mr. Villard was much interested in what he learned of the road and the country through which it passes. "That is beautiful," said he, contemplating the scene from one of the stations. "I thought I knew all about this country before, but this trip is a revelation to me. It is a wonderful country, and I would not believe that such advancement had been made if I had not seen it with my own eyes." The

people along Hunt's lines need have no fear that they will be delivered into the hands of the enemy after encouraging in every possible way the new enterprise. The road is a profitable one as it is, so there is no inducement to adopt a policy, which, at best, would be uncertain in its results. As one item of the business, it may be stated that Mr. Hunt expects to carry from the Inland Empire this season about six million bushels of wheat alone.

Mr. Hunt has been very successful in building a railway system of more than ordinary merit. The tracks and rolling stock are as good as the best, the management is enterprising and efficient, and the people of the section through which the lines pass feel friendly toward the company. The Northern Pacific Elevator Company has built elevators at nearly every station on the road, and the railroad company has provided cattle yards at convenient points for shipping. Though there are no government lands along the lines still open for settlers, those who have maintained vast stock ranges are now willing to divide them and go to farming, which yields more profit, and are glad to find purchasers and neighbors. Farms may be obtained in desirable locations at from \$15.00 an acre up. All the conditions are so attractive that people are now pouring into that section in great numbers, and it will not be long before the whole country is brought under the plow and the broad plain will be one of the most richly productive regions under the sun.