



AN IDAHO RAILROAD ROUTE.

From recent articles in many of our exchanges we glean the fact that new railroad lines are being projected, and further railroad communication is being talked about from a number of different points throughout Idaho, but none of these touched upon a perfectly feasible and practicable thoroughfare through Central Idaho. We refer particularly to the Wood river route. We have now the beginning of it in the branch line which has its initial point at Rhoshone, on the Oregon Short Line railroad, and traverses the fertile valleys of Little Wood river, Silver creek and Big Wood river, convenient to the rich mining districts in the adjacent mountains, to its present terminal point at Ketchum. We would like to see this road continued from Ketchum up the Wood river valley to the Galena mining district, thence over the divide to the Salmon river valley. This route through the pass in the mountains was located and surveyed by the Union Pacific company about ten years ago, and found to be perfectly practicable. The road, after reaching the Salmon river valley, would have tributary to it the extensive mining camps of the east fork of the Salmon river, Sawtooth, Vienna and Atlanta. Continuing down Salmon river valley, it would find itself in close proximity to the well-known placer mining camps of Stanley basin and the valuable quartz mines in that vicinity. Leaving Stanley basin, the road would run up the valley of Valley creek and penetrate the rich mineral districts of Seafoam and Sheep mountain, which are now practically inaccessible for many months in the year, owing to their isolated situation. Continuing, this road would give access to the lately discovered rich mineral region known as the Deadwood basin, at the head of the Payette river, and also to the comparatively new mining district of Alton. This route would open up the vast unexplored mineral region of the middle fork of Salmon river, and take in in its course the famous gold mining region of Idaho county and westward to the boundary line of the territory.

A railroad such as we have outlined, would, we believe, penetrate the heart of the richest mining region in all Idaho, besides passing through the finest forests of pine, fir and spruce in the territory. Besides developing a great area of rich mineral and timber country, such a road would pass through the grandest scenery in all America, not excepting that along the great scenic route of the Denver & Rio Grande. Gliding along through the beautiful valley of Salmon river for more than thirty miles the magnificent castellated domes of the Sawtooth range would be in sight, presenting new and grand pictures at every point of view. The loftier peaks of the more distant ranges, softened and made indistinct by a purple haze, form a dark background to the sharp pinnacles and massive domes of granite which seem like towers of some gigantic castle close at hand. Many of them, dazzling white, in the broad sunlight look like polished marble, and at sunset assume all the charming colors of an opal, gradually shading into the deep violet hue of an amethyst, irresistibly bringing to mind the description of that city "the foundations of whose walls were garnished with all manner of precious stones." At the base of these mountains, and often lying in cosy nooks near their very tops, also lie numbers of those beautiful, placid lakes, for which this part of Idaho is becoming so justly celebrated.

They are like sparkling gems nestling on the bosom of the grand old mountains, and furnishing an ideal spot for a summer's camp for the artist or sportsman. If this region becomes accessible by railroad, it will be thronged in summer by true lovers of the beautiful in nature, as well as by those to whom the minerals and timber will have golden attractions. The scenery in the vicinity of the Sawtooth mountains and Red Fish lakes has more than once been compared to that of Switzerland and the Alps by travelers who are familiar with both, and one peak of the Sawtooth range is said to lack only the smoke and vapor rising from its top to be the exact counterpart of Mount Vesuvius.

No doubt when the magnates of the Union Pacific railroad located the route up Wood river and across the mountains into Salmon river valley ten years ago, they had in view the future importance of this vast section of Central Idaho, and we are glad to be able to state that there is now some disposition on the part of this great corporation to take steps toward carrying out the great and beneficial enterprise it had under contemplation years ago.—*Ketchum Keystone*.

H. A. H. Dunford, a prominent English civil engineer, in a pamphlet just out, proposes to use dynamite in the northwest passage through the Arctic. He says: "As for the proposal that we can open a sea, we must remember that the ice is not of great thickness, that we have a powerful explosive that is perfectly effective when frozen and that every mass of ice detached in the course of the stream flowing southward, will float away. The advantage to be gained by the opening of the sea and amelioration of climate can scarcely be overestimated, rendering possible colonization of the shores of the Arctic and the growth there of civilized communities, and opening a direct route to the Pacific coast of America and Asia. Thus would be opened up lands suitable for colonization within easy reach of Great Britain, and which in a great part belong to the British Empire, valuable fisheries and a considerable and increasing trade."

A company has been organized for the purpose of working the placer claims located last fall on the school section adjoining the town of Marcus, on the Columbia river, in Northeastern Washington. Machinery in the shape of an engine and force pumps will soon be on the grounds to raise water from the river for placer purposes. This same section of land in the early days produced many thousands of dollars' worth of yellow dust, and at that time all the water obtainable was from the melting snow in the early springtime. Without doubt there are rich diggings there yet, and if water can be successfully raised from the mighty Columbia, more will be heard of them.

Mr. Hardy Dial, one of the parties interested in the Glenn's ferry coal discovery, says they sent samples of their coal to an experienced coal assayer, who pronounced it to be a very fine grade. They tunneled into the bank about ten feet where the vein was eighteen inches thick. Four men are now engaged in sinking a shaft which will tap the vein about fifty feet from the croppings. This will soon be completed and will settle the question as to the quantity.—*Mountain Home, Idaho, Mail*.