

one of the most experienced miners in the state, says he has never seen so good a prospect and believes that within the next few weeks the Hidden Hand will be proven all that its most enthusiastic friends anticipate. It is easily worked, the ground is soft, the vein large, and the galena which shows up in numerous places will go from eighty to 108 ounces of silver and from seventy to seventy-six in pure lead. There is plenty of timber and an abundance of water. In short, it is one of the most inviting mining districts in the state, and when these mines are proven permanent, as they will be, the town of Deer Lodge will get the benefit of a suburban mining camp of wealth and population. The mines are easy of access, as a railroad can be built the entire eight miles to the foot of the mountain without encountering a serious grade. Numerous prominent mining men have visited the Hidden Hand and all are expecting a great strike in the near future. The prospect was so favorable from the surface that it seemed almost too good to believe; but instead of growing poorer, as some feared, it has been steadily getting better. Every miner on the work is in high glee.

From the recent message of Mayor Clough to the city council of Spokane Falls, the following facts bearing upon the condition of the city are taken:

The total cost of the water works system has been \$219,130. It includes upwards of eight and one-half miles of water mains of various dimensions, 33,000 feet ranging from six to twenty-inch pipe, eighty-seven fire hydrants, three double-cylinder Holly pumps of an aggregate capacity of about 10,000,000 gallons per day, turbine water wheels, brick pumping station, together with all the necessary appliances for operating. The receipts from water rents for the fiscal year exceeded the expenditures by nearly \$18,000. During the year ending April 15, 45,813½ feet of street were graded, at a cost of \$166,937.15. The net city indebtedness is \$163,643.40. During the past year six street railway franchises have been granted, being for cable, electric motor, steam motor and horse car systems, aggregating a little more than ten miles within the city limits, and during the year the Spokane cable railway and the Ross park electric railway have been completed and put in successful operation. Several miles additional track have also been added to the Spokane street railway. In conclusion, the mayor says: "The foregoing statement of the condition of our municipal affairs can not fail to prove highly satisfactory to the people of this city; further, that they can not, I believe, fail to realize the fact that the city council has a great amount of work to perform, for which just compensation should be made, instead of having to work without any pay."

The contractors for the Spokane Falls & Northern extension to the Little Dalles of the Columbia have nearly completed their work. The grading is finished, the trestles built, and as the track laying is done by the recently invented track laying machine, it is expected that trains will be running through to The Dalles by June 15. A surveying party is about to start for an exploration of Kettle river, with the object of finding a pass westward by Wannacutt lake and Ruby City to the coast. If permission can be obtained the road will cross the international frontier into British Columbia at several points for a short distance, as the route is easier in that way. If permission is denied the road will be built entirely on the American side. The line to the Little Dalles will be used in connection with steamboats to form a line to Revelstoke, on the Canadian Pacific, and also to connect with the line that company is building from the Columbia to Kootenai lake to open up that

mining region. Eventually the road may be extended from the Little Dalles to a railroad connection with the Canadian Pacific.

The two best developed mines in the Castle mountains show a greater amount of silver lead and silver ore than any mining property in Montana, or, in fact, the whole world. The Yellowstone mine at a depth of 110 feet contains twelve feet of lead carbonates; at 160 feet the ore is twenty-two feet wide; at 220 feet the vein is thirty feet wide. The ore averages in lead and silver \$50 to the ton. The Cumberland mine, one mile and a half distant, in the same belt, contains a vein of lead carbonates thirty-eight feet wide at a depth of 320 feet. Such a magnificent showing as these two mines exhibit has no parallel in Montana. The country between these two mines has every appearance of being equally as good, which, when developed, will make Castle one of the greatest mining camps on earth. They want a railroad, and this, we are assured, they will have.—*Helena Independent.*

This year is destined to be a great one in mining. Already the prospectors are out in the hills following up the snow and carefully scanning a large extent of country. The rise in the price of silver has had a wonderful effect in stimulating the mining industry, and there is now a greater interest manifested than ever before. Every man who has a prospect is anxious to develop it, and those who have none are more than willing to secure some. Quartz and ore are beginning to arrive from all sections and the assaying business is picking up lively. It is a little early yet for prospecting in the high mountains, on account of the snow, but in three or four weeks it will have disappeared before the summer sun, and hundreds of new discoveries will be made and developed into mines.—*Helena Independent.*

The Blaine, Semiahmoo & Birch Bay Electric Light and Street Car Co. has been granted a franchise which gives the company the right to build a twelve-mile electric light system from Blaine to Birch bay, including Drayton and Semiahmoo. The money for this plant, which will cost \$40,000, has nearly all been subscribed and the work of building will be begun at once. The franchise also grants the privilege of building fourteen miles of electric motor line from Blaine to Birch bay, including Drayton and Semiahmoo. The estimated cost of this line is \$400,000 and the work of construction will begin at once.

The Northern Pacific has guaranteed the bonds of the Yakima Canal & Irrigation Co., and \$300,000 worth of the bonds have been placed in Wall street. The canal will be 110 miles long and cost \$1,000,000. The channel will be twenty feet wide at the bottom, thirty feet at the top and four and a half feet deep. With this ditch it is expected to cover 200,000 acres of arid land that will be mainly tributary to North Yakima. A survey of the ditch has been completed, and the work of construction is to be commenced in thirty days.

A thirty-year franchise has been granted to an electric motor company to operate a line of street railway at LaGrande, Or. The line will run from Oro Dill through the new town to the old town. Work must be commenced by June 15th and completed by November 15th, 1899.

The Selah valley ditch, in Yakima county, which is twenty miles in length and has cost in the neighborhood of \$75,000, was finished last week.