



THE INTERNATIONAL CITY.

Blaine, the International City, of Washington, touches the British boundary where that line meets the waters of Semiahmoo bay, or that portion of the bay locally known as Drayton harbor. The international boundary line forms the northern limit of the town. Excepting Point Roberts that is the most western land along the line. Across the harbor to the south is the small town of Semiahmoo, situated on the sand spit of the same name. From the time of the first settlement in that country Semiahmoo spit has been well known because it was the best and for many years the only boat landing on the bay. The spit juts sharply out into deep water, and probably its extremely limited area has been the only thing that has prevented the building of a flourishing city there. There are settlers all about the eastern shore of the harbor, most of whom have lived there many years, deriving their sustenance almost solely from the soil, the water and the forests. In two or three places there are collections of a few houses, the habitations of ranchers and fishermen. But on the northeast side of the harbor is the only incorporated city of that region—Blaine. That site has been occupied by white men—a portion of it, at least—for the past fifteen years or more. But the country had not reached a stage of development that suggested the building of a city until five years ago, when a plat was made and called Blaine, after the present secretary of state, who was that year a candidate for the presidency. As is always the case where the only outside communication is by boat or tedious stage ride overland, the growth of the town was slow at first. It could not come closely enough in contact with the business world to spur it on. It was merely the outgrowth of the gradual settling of the country that made a trading point there a necessity. But recent developments in railway building in that region have given another aspect to industrial affairs, and the new town is shaking off its swaddling garments and taking a confident gait toward commercial importance.

Blaine has a good harbor, which makes it a point of advantage for railways traversing that region to touch. The grade is now finished and the iron is being laid on the Fairhaven & Northern railway, which will complete a continuous rail line between Vancouver and New Westminster, British Columbia, and Seattle by way of Blaine. But Blaine will be much more important than merely a way station on this line. The British Columbia end of the road will be under a different name and management, though arrangements have been perfected that insure its harmonious operation with the line on this side of the boundary which it meets there. So Blaine must be the international transfer point for all through business conducted by the railway, and as this road is designed to afford an American outlet for the Canadian Pacific the volume of business which it will handle will not be small. Then the situation of the town at the border and on navigable water will make it an important transfer point between railroads and boats. Freight arriving overland requiring transshipment by water to cities on the mainland or islands washed by the broad waters of Puget sound, the Straits of Fuca or the Gulf of Georgia, can be most advantageously transferred at the International City, especially if consigned to points on the opposite side of the border from where it originated. These conditions are likely to draw much

commerce to Blaine. The Fairhaven & Northern has been given 500 acres of land at Blaine on the condition that it erect its car shops and round house there. The Canadian Pacific has a large tract for terminal and ship building facilities on the shore of the harbor immediately adjoining the city. These two roads together forming the connecting link between American and the Canadian transcontinental railways, will bring to Blaine two round houses, car shops, two custom houses and the business incidental to being a railway divisional point.

Last fall a new railway organization, known as the Drayton, Lynden & Spokane Falls Company, secured the right of way for a road from Drayton harbor to Lynden, on the Nooksack river, the chief interior town of Whatcom county. It is now understood that this right of way will be used by the Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern, over which the Great Northern will reach the coast. In that event Blaine will be a terminus of the Great Northern system, which, it is understood, will not be content with one tide water terminus. The patronage of this great railway system will alone be sufficient to build a flourishing commercial city. And, taken in connection with the fact that the Great Northern and the Canadian Pacific consult each other's interests in many respects, this move to connect the two systems on the coast is very significant. The purpose of the Spokane Falls & Northern to build to the coast is well known, and since its failure to obtain a charter for building in British Columbia it will be pushed through on this side of the line to Blaine. This line will not work in the interest of either of the others, but will be a vigorous competitor and will do much to enliven the business situation. Construction work on the last named road is in progress from the east, and it is being pushed at a rapid pace.

Besides the consideration of terminals for these railway lines, there is the question of the development of the interior country, which is of no less importance. The railways will open the region to settlers and furnish means for getting out the rich product. There are rich mineral deposits upon which no development work has been done. Bog iron is especially abundant. There are coal and iron ores in the hills. The best of building stone abounds. Brick clay of good quality is plentiful and bricks would find a live local market in the building operations being pushed in the city. The larger portion of the country is covered with a dense growth of valuable timber, principally red and yellow fir and cedar, which always command a good market. The manufacture of the timber into a merchantable product will furnish employment to many hundreds of laborers, and most of the work can be prosecuted to best advantage in town. The rich alluvial valleys and shore lands of that section offer attractive locations for the enterprising husbandman now, and as the timber is removed from the uplands the farmer's fields will expand, for all the soil is very fertile, and the variety in quality and character of the surface permit diversified farming on any scale desired. Stock raising is also a paying industry. It can not be conducted in the same manner as on the bunch grass plains east of the Cascades, but the raising of choice beef animals for the coast market is a source of much profit to the farmers, and dairying is an adjunct capable of almost indefinite expansion. The heavy growth of natural, nutritious grasses on the edges of the tide lands and