

HAILEY AND WOOD RIVER VALLEY.

One of the most noted sections of the new state of Idaho is the Wood river valley, which has attracted much attention as a mining region for the past ten years, for five of which it has enjoyed the advantages of railroad connection. It lies in Alturas county, of which the thriving city of Hailey is the county seat. A year ago, on the first of July, 1889, Hailey suffered one of those sweeping conflagrations that nearly every western city encounters, and the greater portion of its business blocks were destroyed. Undaunted by the catastrophe, and having an abiding faith in both the present and future of their city, the people went resolutely to work to repair the damage and build better and greater than before. The result of their efforts is seen in the city as it exists to-day, with its busy streets lined with substantial blocks of brick, stone and wood, its excellent public buildings and its many ornamental residences.

Hailey enjoys many elements of prosperity, chief among which are its mines, which first attracted attention to that region, and led to the construction up the valley of a branch road from the Oregon Short Line five years ago, which road has accomplished much in aiding the development of the valley. Wood river is 140 miles long and has many tributaries, on nearly all of which quartz leads of gold, silver, and silver-lead are found and being worked, the great center of the industry being Hailey. At this point splendid water power exists and is being developed to a large capacity, and the cheapness of this power, combined with the facilities for obtaining wood, machinery, etc., and for railroad shipment, render Hailey the natural point to which ores can be brought for reduction. Prospecting and developing work has proved the existence of a series of silver-lead ore districts from the base of the range northward to the divide between the Wood and Salmon rivers, a distance of forty-five miles, and almost continuously from Bay Horse district westerly to the south tributaries of the Boise river. This great silver-bearing region is twenty to fifty miles in width and 130 to 140 miles in length, and takes in such noted districts as Smoky, Sawtooth, Lava creek and East Fork, besides all the Wood river tributaries named above. This region has produced, in the past eight years, not less than \$18,000,000 in silver and lead, and is now producing at the rate of \$2,500,000 a year. This output is rapidly increasing year by year, and future years may, and probably will, see the product of Leadville exceeded by that of Wood river. Wood river contains a great many mines of various degrees of importance. There are no Anacondas, no Granite mountains, no Ontarios, any one of which would make a camp, but which would require the utmost resources of a rich corporation to manage, but there are hundreds of veins of moderate size and fair average richness. In this respect Wood river is almost without a peer. As already noted, Wood river is a region of many mines; so many, in fact, that if one ceases production it does not materially effect the aggregate.

The great Camas gold belt, which stretches from Resurrection district, fifteen miles south of Hailey, to the head of Rock and Camp creeks, and on westward along the north side of Camas prairie to Rocky Bar and Atlanta, is believed to be the most extensive belt of free milling gold ores in the west. As above outlined, it is about one hundred miles long and from two to ten miles wide. The principal developments are about ten miles west of Hailey, where the Camas No. 2, Trump, Junction, Jumbo and others have been sufficiently worked to uncover great fissure veins from ten to fifty feet wide carrying ore worth \$15 to \$50 a ton. The Camas No. 2 ledge on top is one hundred feet wide with three streaks of quartz. The one next

to the hanging wall is from ten to sixteen feet, the middle one sixteen feet, and the one near the foot five feet. These streaks of quartz will average, so assays say, about \$32 gold. Of the 12,000 tons of ore worked by a small and imperfect mill in 1887, there was left over 10,000 tons of tailings that assay from \$9 to \$20 per ton, and this was practically repeated in 1888 and 1889. The bullion produced aggregates over \$100,000, or an average of about \$6 40 per ton of ore stamped. This, from rock that assays \$32, shows a great waste in milling, owing partly to a scarcity of water and partly to the inferior machinery and process.

Hailey is not alone dependent upon mining for its prosperity, for stock raising and farming have become important industries. In Wood river valley and those of its tributary streams are thousands of acres of as fertile land as can be found anywhere. No better farms exist than can there be found, and these are generally made the base of extensive stock industries, the stock grazing upon the open ranges that lie adjacent to the valleys and will for years remain unoccupied by any save the cattle men. For nine months in the year stock fatten on the native grasses. Cattle, sheep and horses require but little prepared food here, and scarcely any shelter, the bunch-grass of the hills just south of the main mountain range affording splendid food all through the year. Thus the farmer can keep a nice band of stock on government uplands in sight of his home and free of expense. As a dairy region this is unsurpassed, while the market for butter is excellent. In winter a prime article of ranch butter is worth from forty to fifty cents per pound, and will average thirty to forty cents the year round. Climate, pasturage and water combine to render dairying a very satisfactory pursuit. Cows cost comparatively little for their keep, and the product of butter or cheese is a clear gain, the increase in stock paying expenses. Good dairy cows can be purchased at \$30 to \$40 a head.

Fifteen miles west of Hailey, and reached by excellent roads, lies Camas prairie, one of the best and most extensive agricultural sections in Idaho. About 2,500 people now live on Camas prairie, but it can easily support ten times as many. The soil is a deep, rich loam, and does not require irrigation. The yield of cereals, hay and vegetables is phenomenal. This district alone will always be an element of increasing prosperity to Hailey. Fruit culture in the Wood river region is growing in importance. Experience has demonstrated that the fruits of the temperate zone are produced in quantity and quality unsurpassed, and many orchards are now approaching a good bearing condition, while many others are being planted.

The climate of Wood river valley is both delightful and healthful. The winters are not long nor excessively severe, nor does a great amount of snow fall, while the summers are cool, dry and extremely pleasant. A few miles from Hailey are noted hot springs that are rapidly becoming a favorite health resort. A splendid hotel has been erected at the springs at a cost of \$100,000. In any aspect that Hailey may be considered, it presents a most inviting prospect, and its continued steady growth may easily be predicted.

The Gibson exploring party, now in the Olympics, discovered a well-defined vein of bituminous coal of fine quality near the head of Morse's creek, fifteen miles from Port Angeles.

The shops of the Great Northern railroad have been located at Fairhaven, Washington, and work has been commenced on their construction.

Sea Haven, Washington, will have a \$10,000 wharf built.