

THE DALLES AND VICINITY.

The Dalles, Vancouver and Astoria are the three historic towns on the Columbia river. They are the oldest towns in the northwest and about them cluster most of the important events in the early history of this country. The Dalles is the farthest up the river of the three. It is located at the foot of the greatest obstruction in the channel of the Columbia, from which the city takes its name. The Canadian voyageurs and other westward bound pilgrims of the early day experienced more or less serious inconvenience in being obliged to make a portage around the dalles of the river, and the aborigines of that locality were always troublesome. Their thievish propensities were abnormally developed. With the exception of the comparatively small obstruction at the cascades the river was free from the dalles to the sea, and where The Dalles was built seemed an advantageous point to establish a settlement. In 1838 the Methodists located a mission there, and the Catholics two years later did the same, both of which have been maintained to the present time. During the Indian war of 1855-58, The Dalles was the base of military operations, and a military post was established on the lightly timbered slope back of where the town is located. After about a decade the post was abandoned, but during its continuance it served an important purpose. When the interior country became sufficiently settled to render commercial channels necessary The Dalles became an important point on the river and as the volume of business increased the town at the lower end of the portage grew and at length became a live commercial city. The building of the Oregon Railway & Navigation line up the Columbia gave the town an additional prominence and pushed it ahead in a business way. The railway shops were located there as the most convenient point on the division. The wide stretch of fertile country to the southward became attractive to settlers and the vast quantities of produce from that section sought shipment by way of The Dalles. Thus it became a market of the first importance.

The Dalles is the seat of justice of Wasco which is one of the largest counties in Oregon and has a great variety of physical features and productions. The county lies east of the crest of the Cascade mountains, including within its limits that famous old peak Mount Hood, and its northern border is washed by the Columbia river. At The Dalles the river is 1,500 feet wide and of an average depth at low water of eighty-five feet. In the eastern part of the county the rise back from the river is quite gradual but in the west it is abrupt where the stream cuts its way through the heart of the rugged mountain range.

The mountainous section is covered with valuable timber. It would seem to be a difficult problem to get the timber out of so rugged a country but it is solved very easily. Saw mills are put in operation in the mountain fastnesses and the lumber is "flumed" out to the city at very small expense.

The Dalles claims the distinction of being the largest primary wool market in the United States. The annual shipments from that section aggregate about 5,000,000 pounds. Wool is marketed at The Dalles from interior points 200 miles distant, and that is the greatest wool raising section of the state. Since the first of this year about 125,000 sheep pelts have been shipped from the city and a large number of hides would also have been marketed but for the extremely low price which made it hardly worth the while to bother with them. The live stock shipments this season will aggregate about 300 cars. About 200,000 bushels of grain are sent away and a flour mill with a capacity of 100 barrels daily is kept running on the local product. Probably a quarter of the grain supply comes from Klickitat county, Washington, on the opposite side of the river, and a good deal of other farm produce from the other side finds a market in The Dalles. A steam ferry plies on the river, rendering communication across the stream easy.

A short time ago The Dalles issued bonds to the amount of \$100,000 for funds to improve its water works plant. The credit of the city was so good that the bonds brought \$101,100. The work of improving the water service is now in progress. The city has macadamized streets, a good sewerage system and electric lights. A franchise has been granted for an electric street railway. The Dalles has excellent educational advantages. In addition to four public schools buildings, in which fourteen teachers are employed, there is the Wasco Independent Academy and a Catholic boarding school for girls. The city has half a dozen churches. There are two weekly

newspapers, three hotels and three banking houses, two of the latter being national. The business buildings are of brick and stone and of modern styles of architecture. One of the finest theaters in Eastern Oregon is located in The Dalles. The value of building improvements made during the past year in the city exceeds \$250,000. All the public buildings are creditable structures.

Just across the river from the city of The Dalles is the town of North Dalles. It is on a gentle slope rising to a shelf at a moderate elevation above the river, affording as fine a location for a town as could be found anywhere. There have been a few houses on that side of the river for a number of years but the movement lately indicates the establishment of a flourishing city on the north side of the river. The road affording an outlet to the greater portion of Klickitat county, Washington, reaches the Columbia at that point. The location is so favorable that a large shoe manufacturing concern is about to erect a factory at North Dalles that will employ 500 hands and will turn out 125 cases of boots and shoes daily when completed. Construction has already been begun and a portion of the plant is under contract to be in operation in February. This one factory will be sufficient to give employment to the inhabitants of a good sized town. The land has been platted though it is not yet on the market. Some idea of the factory may be obtained from the engraving on another page of this paper. A steam ferry plies between North Dalles and The Dalles rendering communication at all times convenient, and the advantages in favor of the former place as a pleasant residence locality are likely to make that attractive for those who do business on the Oregon side of the river. The property all around the town plat is valuable, which contributes not a little to the desirableness of the platted portion itself. Its growth must be rapid and by the time the

shoe factory is completed it will have 1,000 inhabitants.

Immediately below the dalles of the river there is a considerable enlargement of the stream and what is known as Terminal bay indents the Washington shore. It has an area of several acres of deep water and seems calculated by nature for accommodating the river commerce that must make the portage around the obstruction in the channel of the stream. The boat railway, which the government proposes to construct between the navigable portions of the Columbia at that point, will commence at Terminal bay and run up the river some nine miles to the open water above Celilo falls. A bill appropriating \$2,800,000 for that enterprise passed the United States senate at the last session of congress, but as usual with appropriations of that character it did not become a law in the congress in which the measure was



THE VOOT BLOCK, THE DALLES, OREGON.

formulated. No other feasible scheme for circumventing that obstruction so navigation has been proposed, however, and the plan will surely be adopted and carried into operation before long. This one enterprise will be sufficient to sustain a city on Terminal bay. A town has been platted there and called Grand Dalles. The Farmers & Merchants' railway, designed primarily to afford better portage facilities than are now enjoyed, and also intended to reach a tract of productive country that has not had adequate transportation, starts from Grand Dalles. The iron on this road is now being laid and trains will be running early next year. This company also contemplates running a line of steamers to Portland. The Hunt road is being located along the river on its way to Portland, and will pass through the newly-platted town. The river is so narrow at the dalles that it can be easily bridged there, and railways contemplating crossing the stream are anxious to get control of that point for a bridge, and congress has granted the right to erect such a structure there. It is likely that The Dalles, Klickitat & Goldendale road will soon construct a line through Klickitat county to a connection with the Northern Pacific at Kennewick. This line is definitely located and will have terminal facilities and shops at Grand Dalles. The Great Northern has also asked for terminal grounds there. The town promises to be the greatest railroad center in Eastern Oregon. The location is most admirable for a city, and the transportation lines aiming for that point insure its commercial prominence. The townsite is level, it has picturesque surroundings, and is so located that it will command a large volume of the business of the inland empire.

The engravings presented on another page of this paper give a good idea of the river, looking southwest from Grand Dalles, and shows some of the improvements that have been made about both the old town and the new sites. The buildings compare favorably with any in the state.