

# GEM OF THE MOUNTAINS

### Over 8,000,000 Acres of Government and State Lands Open to Settlement in Idaho—Rapid Development of State.

THE word Idaho is derived from the Indian word, "Edahoe," signifying "Gem of the Mountains," and surely the appellation is appropriate when applied to this beautiful portion of Christendom, where the handiwork of a gracious Providence has so richly blessed the 100,000 souls who live under the blue canopy of Idaho's cloudless heavens. About this state in the Rocky Mountain region, little known to the world till very recent years, we shall endeavor to speak in this article for the holiday number of The Oregonian.

The rapidly developing State of Idaho comprises the territory between British Columbia on the north, Utah and Nevada on the south, Montana and Wyoming on the east, and Oregon and Washington on the west. At present, the state is divided into 21 counties, as follows: Ada, Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Blaine, Boise, Canyon, Cassia, Custer, Elmore, Fremont, Idaho, Kootenai, Latah, Lemhi, Lincoln, Nez Perce, Oneida, Owyhee, Shoshone and Washington. The capital of the state is located in the delightful City of Boise.

The state extends about 410 miles north and south, with a width varying from 44 to 306 miles, containing 86,294 square miles, or 55,223,169 acres, an empire in itself, the hidden wealth and undeveloped resources of which are almost incalculable. The population of Idaho, according to the last Federal census, is placed at about 162,000, more than twice what the census of 1880 gave it, and the influx of people from all parts of the country to this beautiful land of happy homes, general prosperity and promise is tremendous. The eyes of people in every portion of the Western Continent are turned towards this garden spot of the intermountain region, to which many of the restless, discontented people in the over-populated and unproductive sections of the South and East are wending their way over the hills to this bright and shining star in the galaxy of the National federation of states.

All over this great country, in every hamlet and every city there are those who have learned something about the bounty of nature within the confines of our proud commonwealth, something about the most excellent climate, the pure mountain air and the beautiful, sunny days that inspire, strengthen and uplift the human race—that portion of it, at least, whose gear fortune it has been to reside in Idaho. This state is looked upon as something of a paradise by the Nation's Western marching yemenary. Surely the climate is one of the most delightful and healthful to be found in the world, not second to that of sunny Italy. It is cool in the summer and mild in the winter, making it a most desirable place to live. Cloudy days are exceptions, and sunshine is the rule. Our state has about 260 clear days during the year, and never had a cyclone. Floods and destructive storms are almost unknown here. Seldom does rain fall during harvest time, and there is practically no loss of crops from that source. As to health, Idaho has no equal in the world. Even Southern France and Algeria take rank below this favored inland empire. In this particular Idaho stands pre-eminent, having the lowest death rate of any state in the Union. From a statement of the average temperature it will be seen that Idaho compares favorably with the other states of the Union, but with her peculiar conformation, her location and geological formation, the influence which they exert from a sanitary point, Idaho stands high. The statistics of mortality in the United States confirm this statement. Florida, California and Colorado, states endowed with genial climates, and where there is almost perpetual spring and summer, famed for their healthfulness, where the most eminent of the medical profession in the East have directed multitudes, do not compare with Idaho from point of climate. Florida has a mortality about three times as great as this state, California nearly five times and Colorado nearly three times as great. After considering these facts, it is easy to understand that Idaho is the healthiest region in the world, and this is one of the great reasons that people are coming this way.

From a bird's-eye view of Idaho one sees the state as a vast wedge-shaped plateau with an attractive and productive surface of beautiful valleys and fertile lands, and with snow-capped mountains, varying in altitude from 7000 to 10,000 feet, the mean elevation being about 4700 feet. And flowing through the country are mountains, entraining hills and fertile valleys are countless streams of pure, cool water, rushing down the slopes to the low lands, there to do its work in irrigating and then on its course to the great western ocean.

Under the rugged surface of our virgin state are the richest minerals and rarest gems awaiting the coming and going of man to claim and utilize them. Wherever within the borders of our growing, young state progressive man has worked the soil, nature's bounty has made quick and bounteous response in the fruits of judicious tilling of the land, and everywhere there is an air of thrift and enterprise, and there is a wholesome condition in the industrial realm of the state. In many parts of the state there are famous hot springs, the water from which is used for medicinal and heating purposes. And we have the famous Twin and Shoshone Falls, the latter being one of the great wonders of the West. Shoshone Falls are not surpassed by the famous Niagara, and thousands of people visit the scene every year. At Twin Falls an effort is being made to utilize the power in a great irrigating scheme, and we are sure the promoters will meet with a high degree of success in the undertaking.

Idaho has scores of rivers and creeks, and in almost any part of the state the best water-power can be found, excellent for factories and mills without number. The chief rivers are the Snake, Clearwater, Spokane and Pend d'Oreille. Nearly all of the streams find their way into the Columbia; the rest into the Great Salt Lake Basin. Idaho can boast of several beautiful lakes, among them being Bear, Payette, Coeur d'Alene, Pend d'Oreille and Priest Lakes, and on them much pleasure boating and fishing are indulged in by the hundreds of people who swarm around them in the summer.

There are about 64,000 square miles of fertile valleys in this state, that is, in the most important ones, and there are numerous other small, beautiful valleys nestled in the hills, where settlers can establish ranches and have happy homes. The chief valleys are as follows:

There is no state in the Union that offers greater inducements to the prospective settler than does Idaho. This is true because our interests are so diversified and so extensive as to afford opportunity for people with limited means to start out to gain a livelihood in various ways without going far away from home. So a person on a farm, after gathering in his crops, or even while they are growing, can go to the mines, sheep camp or cattle ranch or saw mill, to be found in close proximity to the farm lands of the state, where he can make a goodly sum of money and continue his work on the farm on a larger scale and with greater success.

The great timber region and grain belt of the north are claiming the attention of thousands of people, and homes are there springing up by the hundreds. The forest area of the state is computed at 7,000,000 acres, containing trees of enormous size and of high quality, the principal kinds of timber being fir, white pine, cottonwood, cedar, spruce and tamarack, some of the trees measuring 10 feet in diameter. Our state had exhibits at the

Chicago and Buffalo Expositions that astonished every one.

Ours is certainly a horticultural state. The fruits of the middle and northern countries are the best the world has ever seen, samples of which took first prize at the world's fairs at Chicago and Paris. The fruit industry here has assumed vast proportions, and Idaho is looked upon as one of the best horticultural states in the Union. The fruits of Idaho are noted for their extraordinary beauty, size and quality. The people of the East who come to this section are astonished at what our state produces in this line. The apples, pears, peaches, apricots, prunes, plums and cherries and many other kinds of fruit, which grow in abundance here, are luscious and far above the average. The average yield of four-year-old trees is about as follows: Apple, 200 pounds; cherries, 25 pounds; peach, 150 pounds; pears, 150 pounds; plums, 150 pounds. There are orchards in the state that produce nearly 60,000 bushels of fruit annually, and we sell some have a fruit crop failure. And it is

gratifying to know that our fruits find their way to the markets of the world, where they are received with great favor.

**Mining, Stockraising, Agriculture.**

The wonderful mining districts of the Coeur d'Alene, Salmon River, Tumbler Mountain, Buffalo Hump and Snake River sections are attracting the attention of people in every section of the country, and Eastern and Southern capitalists are coming westward to invest in these mountains of gold, silver, lead, iron and copper, the richest deposits of the precious metals to be found in the United States. Over 60,000 people are engaged directly or indirectly in mining in this state. The gold and silver output in Idaho the past year was about \$7,000,000. A vast amount of lead and copper are mined, Idaho producing 50 per cent of the lead mined in the United States. Some of the richest deposits of metals have been worked only to a limited extent, owing to a lack of transportation facilities, and where rail and wagon

Name and location	Length, miles	Breadth, miles
South fork of Snake River, Eastern Idaho	30	3 to 4
Snake River, Northern Idaho	20	1 to 2
Bear River Valley, Eastern Idaho	30	3 to 5
Snake Valley, North fork, Eastern Idaho	20	1 to 2
Blackfoot Valley, Northern Idaho	20	2 to 5
Idaho	20	5 to 11
Wood River Valley, Central Idaho	10	1 to 2
Camas Prairie, Coeur d'Alene, Pend d'Oreille and Priest Lakes, Western Idaho	80	2 to 5
Payette Valley, Western Idaho	20	2 to 5
Weiser Valley, Western Idaho	40	2 to 5
Idaho	70	3 to 6
Pahsimari Valley, Northeastern Idaho	10	1 to 5
Northern Camas Prairie, Northern Idaho	30	20 to 25
Potlatch Valley, Northern Idaho	25	5 to 10
Palouse Valley, Northern Idaho	30	5 to 10
St. Joseph Valley, Northern Idaho	5	5 to 10

There are in the state nearly 7,500,000



SCENES IN THE LEWISTON COUNTRY, IDAHO.

Old Spaulding House  
Oldest Publishing House in Northwest

HARTLETT PEARS  
3 TO A YARD



E Street, Lewiston, Idaho

Lewiston and Clarkston Bridge.



Steamboat Loading Wheat at Lewiston

PHOTOS BY  
FAIR & THOMPSON  
LEWISTON, IDAHO.

roads are opened up, there mining activity begins. Many new and valuable mines have been reached in the past year in this way.

Stockraising is carried on on a large scale, herds and bands containing thousands of sheep, cattle and horses are found on the ranges in every part of the state. There are 25,000,000 acres of grazing land in Idaho, which is covered with various kinds of grasses of highly nutritious quality. There are over 60,000 head of cattle, 150,000 head of horses and mules and 2,538,662 head of sheep, of an aggregate value of \$20,000,000. Stockraising in Idaho has passed the experimental stage. It has proven a success all along the line. In this state we have Summer and Winter ranges, and these are taken advantage of by all enterprising stockmen. There is money made in stockraising in Idaho, and many judicious people are going into the business on a large scale. It is the poor man's opportunity to make money, and rapidly. Many of our wealthiest men have made their money in stockraising, and have moved into the cities and built fine homes.

In agriculture, this state does not take second place with any other state in the Northwest as to productiveness and quality. It is difficult to make the Easterner believe that irrigated lands in this state produce 50 bushels of wheat to the acre, 75 to 80 of oats, and 500 of potatoes, but that is just what it does, repeat. Reports of such yields come from every section of the state where agriculture is carried on on scientific principles. There are about 15,000,000 acres of land that can be irrigated and cultivated in Idaho, land that is highly productive, on much of which good crops are raised without irrigating. Much of this land is now under canal, and fine farms are seen opening up in almost every direction. It is an easy thing to prepare a piece of land for cultivation, as there is nothing on it but sagebrush, and that is removed with little expense. And a farmer here becomes wealthy in a short time, because he can raise three crops of hay and two crops of many other things each season. Of course, irrigation is more reliable, and every settler loses no time in getting water onto his land. That is the proper thing to do, for then he will not take chances of having crop failures. Irrigation is a "sure thing."

Most of the central and southeastern portions of the state agricultural lands are under irrigation, the water being taken from the Bear, Snake, Boise, Payette and Weiser Rivers, and the supply of water is abundant, sufficient to irrigate all the land in these vast valleys. And our delegation to Congress is working for an appropriation by that body to build storage reservoirs in the arid sections of the state, those that are not now sufficiently reached with water from the streams. The value of agricultural products, in Idaho in 1900 was \$6,732,383, a splendid showing for a mountain country and a new state.

There are 44 banks in the state. There are 14 national banks in operation, having a capital of \$55,000, about \$20,000 in outstanding circulation and \$1,530,000 in United States bonds. There are also 19 state and 12 private banks, and a Trust & Loan Company. They are all in a flourishing condition and highly solvent.

**Public Schools and Churches.**

In all there are 78 public schools with 107 teachers, shaping the destiny of the rising generation. In these institutions

the facilities are the very best and the educational interests of the commonwealth are carefully looked after by those in charge. Occasionally Idaho ranks high among the states of the Nation, and it is a pleasing fact that there is less illiteracy in Idaho than in most of the states of the Union. The State University at Moscow, the Normal Schools at Albion and Lewiston, and the Academy at Pocatello, as well as several private colleges and academies, are as good as can be found anywhere in the West, the state having spent vast sums of money on her schools. Her public school system is advanced and modern, and fully abreast with that of any other state in the Union. Congress donated to the state 2,500,000 acres of land, the proceeds of which go into the public school fund of Idaho. The funds thus accumulated are so wisely and well managed, pursuant to provisions of the constitution and Federal statute, that only the interest can be used, hence there is a perpetual fund that generations yet unborn will receive the benefit of. The free text-book system prevails throughout the state, and is entirely satisfactory. The public school buildings in the cities and country districts are exceptionally good, modern and supplied with the latest apparatus, many of them containing excellent libraries.

About all of the religious denominations are represented in Idaho. We have the Mormon, Roman Catholic, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Christian, Lutheran and Protestant Episcopal, and the membership is large and increasing. Many fine church edifices have been erected in various parts of the state, and the denominations are in a flourishing condition. A large number of auxiliary societies are also doing good work in their respective fields.

**State Bonds Sell at a Premium.**

The value of its property is an important thing to call attention to when one is writing about a state. The equalized valuation of all taxable property in Idaho was \$47,651,113 85; in 1901, \$51,440,753 13, and the valuation of property is increasing at an amazing rate. The state has a very small debt, and the school fund owns \$73,000 of Idaho's \$443,000 outstanding bonds. The credit of the state was never better than it is now, and its bonds sell at a large premium. All the state's institutions are in a prosperous condition, and everything is moving up all along the line of activity in Idaho.

In the state there are 468 postoffices, and all are doing a flourishing business for the Government. There are 73 periodicals, of which six are dailies, five semi-weeklies, 11 weeklies and two monthlies. This is a large number for so young a state, and these in a large measure account for the small percentage of illiteracy within our borders. Even the Oregonian, with its civilizing and uplifting influence, finds its way into many homes and business houses in this state. Idaho is high up on the ladder of literary attainments, practical thought and action, ability and progressive spirit.

We have a model state government, and many of the older states would do well to use ours as a pattern. The Governor is chosen for a term of two years, and legislative sessions are held biennially, limited to 90 days. The Senate has 21 members and the House 46, and we have one Representative in Congress. At present the state administration is Democratic, and Captain Frank W. Hunt, the genial, whole-souled patriot who went to the Orient to fight Filipinos, is the chief executive. The Capitol, Soldiers' Home and the Penitentiary at Boise, the insane asylum at Blackfoot, the university and the normal schools as above stated, are of modern architecture and fine ones in every particular. They reflect great credit on the state.

**Wonderland of the Northwest.**

In conclusion, let me say to your thousands of readers that Idaho is truly the "Gem of the Mountains"; that in fact she is everything that has been claimed for her; that she is all that the term implies, the beautiful wonderland of the great Northwest. Here within this sunny empire of the mountains are immeasurable possibilities, the immense resources, the variety of soil and climate, the capacity to sustain a great population, and in her hardy, progressive people not alone the ability but the determination to grasp all these varied opportunities, and by dint of brawn and brain transmute them into evidences of progress and material wealth. Her resources are not yet developed, but the future will show Idaho to be one of the richest and best in the sisterhood of states. Her hidden wealth in hills and mountains and her possibilities on the farm will make her development most marvelous and permanent. Indeed, Idaho is a pearl in the diadem of Rocky Mountainland, and her future is as bright as the noonday sun. The praises of this haven of peace and plenty are on the tongues of our people everywhere, and happiness is abroad in the land.

M. S. PARKER.  
Caldwell, Idaho.

## "AN OREGON TREASURE BED"

### History and Condition of the Famous Sterling Placer Mine.

Under the caption "An Oregon Treasure Bed," Sunset, the Southern Pacific magazine, presents the following account of the Sterling placer mine, near Jacksonvillle:

"The richest mine in Southern Oregon, and one of the most interesting hydraulic mines on the Pacific Coast, is the Sterling mine, near Jacksonvillle, owned by H. E. Ankeny and V. Cook. A drive of little more than an hour from Jacksonvillle brings one to a cluster of houses, which is all that remains of Sterlingville, where, on the day of Lincoln's second election, 600 voters were cast.

"Only a little while before that election day in 1864, Mr. Sterling and two companions discovered a rich prospect. Although news could not travel then as fast as now, tidings of gold have always spread rapidly. Within a few days Sterlingville sprang into life, and has had an up-and-down existence ever since.

"The mine is an old channel bound in on the sides and on the gravel cement and hard formation. The successive owners of the mine have worked up this channel nearly seven miles, one owner having taken the gravel to the mill and work on the mine became slack, and Sterlingville was almost deserted. The present owners took hold of the mine with new vigor, and it has since proved each year to be more valuable.

"A 27-mile ditch, through which 300 miners' inches of water of Applegate creek are turned out to the gravel-bearing gravel of the channel, is in itself a very interesting and important piece of engineering. Two giant pipe lines turn water through seven-inch nozzles on to the gravel cement, and dissolve it rapidly into the sluiceway, the gold being caught in the cracks between the blocks of wood which form the bottom of the sluiceway. A large stream is also turned in from above the mine, and by these three streams, accompanied by frequent blasting, the mining is simply performed.

**Natural Gas Near Bandon.**

What seems to be natural gas has been struck in Curry County, about 15 miles south of Bandon. Workmen engaged in digging a well on the ranch of William Bittion discovered the escape of gas at a depth of 20 feet, and the quantity increased with the depth of the well. The gas appears in jets, with a gentle sizzle as it breaks through the rock, and burns freely until the workmen tamp it in. The odor is identical with that given off by gasoline. The formation is recurring strata of black shale, with intervening strata of a grayish rock, of which later an occasional boulder or nodule is found. Serpentine is also present. The black shale readily cracks and takes on a pearl gray shade on exposure to the air and light, while the gray formation seems to be impregnated with oil, as it is greasy to the touch and burns freely,