

IN AMERICA'S NEW EL DORADO.

What a Member of The Bee's Staff Saw on a Tour in Central Wyoming.

SURPRISES THAT WILL ASTONISH ALL.

Vast Reserves of Oil, Coal, Copper, Gold, Silver, Asbestos and Sulfur—Wonders Insuring Fabulous Fortunes.



BE CERTAIN and sure of success—success in every sense of the word, is America's Wyoming!

Such is the irresistible, the overpowering impression which the intelligent traveler with eyes wide open, gains after a trip through this new-

ly made state.

A somewhat cheerless and barren tract of country today, so far as surface appearances go, but mark it well, on the early morning—

the early morning—of the life-time of a state is reckoned in Wyoming will prove to be the most valuable in all the flora of statehood, grown which—

Colombia, and that makes her the fruitful mecca of fortune seekers, the world over.

Unprejudiced, with every facility for travel that the country affords, and with a sincere desire to know the truth regarding the reports of Wyoming's reputed wealth of oil, mineral and fuel, a representative of THE BEE has just made a tour of the state.

Means of transportation in Wyoming are comparatively good until one approaches the heart of the state. Then begins a testing of the sight-seer's patience and endurance.

But, as the tourist who upon finding himself amidst the magnificence of Italy immediately forgets the arduous and peril-fraught work of climbing the Alps, so counted as nothing the tedious railroading, the mountain climbing, the sand wastes and the alkali water, when one discovers the magnificent scenery, the almost endless evidences of incalculable wealth which he finds under the matchlessly bright skies, and swept by the invigorating and appetite-forging breezes of Central Wyoming.

In little less than the same ratio of priceless importance as is the physical heart to the human body, so is found the geographical heart of Wyoming to the state in general.

As in darkest, innermost Africa it was that Henry M. Stanley made some of his most important discoveries, so, in barrenest, innermost Wyoming THE BEE man found the greatest of all her prospects, the most important factors of her future, and the richest prize holdings of all her mighty underground wealth, toward which the eyes of capital are now turning only to become riveted with spell-bound won-

der. Here it is that the richest ores are being uncovered, and here that mighty arteries of the finest quality of oil are being opened and are gushing forth.

Prior to my going over Wyoming I was a considerable expert in regard to minerals and oil, what surface indications are produced by their presence, and what indicates the good, bad and indifferent grades among them, and therefore was in a measure independent of hearsay.

In these lines regarding Wyoming the reader will look in vain for any effort in poetic, picturesque or dreamy effect. I promise you simply the plain, candid, unvarnished result of my observations in a state whose only poetry consists of noble scenes in mountains capped with eternal snows; a state whose picturesque-ness is made up of crags of finest iron ore, coal, marble and building stone; and whose dreaminess is found in a brain of dreamless, health-giving, brain-brightening sleep.

MILLIONS OF ACRES.

The state is 275 miles north to south and 300 east to west, forming a parallelogram which contains 65,000,000 acres of land, the mean altitude of which is 6,000 feet, it ranging from 3,000 to 11,000. Heavy forest cover over 7,000,000 acres of Wyoming, while about 15,000,000 have more or less timber. There are 100,000 streams almost used to some extent for irrigation, and a large additional number from which no ditches have been taken. In a word, the streams of Wyoming furnish water enough to irrigate 15 to 20 per cent of its area.

The last census gave Wyoming a population of 70,000, and shows that she has the smallest percentage of illiteracy of any political division of the United States. The people are generally young, vigorous, industrious, and of a much higher average than upon some occasions has been ungenerously suggested. There is an honor, a friendship between man and man in Wyoming that you will travel many and many a thousand miles in the east to find surpassed. A Wyoming man comes nearer being a pledge that will never be broken than the exchange of similar greetings among any class of men whom I ever met before in all my travels up and down the world.

Now this was a feature observed by myself, but one referred to over and over by scores of people whom I met from other and particularly far eastern states, and who had spent much time among Wyoming citizens.

Yes, integrity and squareness—call it what you will, is a prominent feature in Wyoming life.

In proportion to her population and developed resources Wyoming has the most, the most extensive credit of any state in the Union. The mercantile agencies of the United States will tell you that, as a rule, the individual credit of Wyoming men is rated higher than that of the average New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Illinois or Indiana men.

A FLATTERING RAILROAD FUTURE. Wyoming has a bright and exceedingly beneficial railroad future before her, and the buzzing wheels and shrieking whistles of this railroad future is already heard in many parts of the state. The Union Pacific runs over 500 miles through southern Wyoming. The Denver Pacific branch runs south from Cheyenne; also the Colorado Central, The Cheyenne & Northern runs north from Cheyenne, and about to be built, with the coming of spring penetrates the very center of that most promising of

all oil regions, the Salt Creek basin. The Oregon Short Line runs northwest from Granger, in the western portion of the state. The Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley road extends nearly 200 miles from the eastern border to the western of the state. The Burlington Route has a complete line to Cheyenne, and is now finishing a line in the northeast portion of Wyoming. The Wyoming Eastern will traverse the entire territory from east to west, and many other projected lines and branches are reported in progress.

A VERY VALUABLE TRIP.

The leading aim in every respect and for very many reasons the most advantageous point in central Wyoming is Casper. It is the western terminus of the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley railroads, and the county seat of Natrona county.

From this point I set out for what proved to be one of the most interesting and valuable overland trips of all my life. My party consisted of a party of four, including myself, and a horse and pack animal.

My companions were Mr. W. E. Hawley, mayor of Casper, president of the board of trade, and a gentleman of wide and thorough acquaintance with the country for hundreds of miles around. Being an old friend and an entertaining man as I ever met, I had the assurance that the trip would be, as I have inferred, a particularly enjoyable one.

The rains were in possession of an old and well-posted traveler of the "sage brush country," a former railroad clerk, and a better driver I never saw.

Our load was a heavy one, for, in addition to the three persons in the party we carried provisions and feed sufficient for four days, an entire camping outfit, a Winchester rifle and a big supply of ammunition.

Wearing buckskin shirts and cowboy shaps, to defy the sharp, cutting winds to be found on the mountains; cowboy hats with unusual width of brim which offered the protection almost of great value against the dazling sun and blinding snow storms out of our face—our appearance can best be imagined than further described.

After crossing the Platte river a short distance west of town we wheeled our horse north.

Our course was toward the Mercedes, the newly reported gushing well, said to be situated some 15 to 20 miles almost directly north of Casper, and in the midst of the hundred thousand acre oil field, in the Salt Creek basin, which is the property of a syndicate of Bradford, Pa., oil men, and which also includes a number of stockholders, my friend Mayor Hawley.

Striking the trail beyond the river, and rounding a chain of foot hills, I found that we were skimming across what seemed a sea of sand whose north and westerly borders seemed to meet the sky. A hundred miles distant, but presently the trail described several long sharp angles and brought us among lesser foothills. As we drove up the gentle slopes, the mountains in the distance seemed to rise before us, and we were about to face with a grove of nearly a thousand antelope, about two hundred yards distant. Head and ears high with curious wonderment, we stood a moment, and then an instantaneous wheel about, and off they

went. The oil well, reports of whose discovery have so electrified all central Wyoming.

In view of the well known secrecy of oil men regarding their improvements I did not become offended in the least nor did I waste any time wondering what my friend, Mayor Hawley, meant, by telling me, when we arrived at the much speculated upon place of work, that he was sorry that it was impossible for him to give me any more privileges in the way of going into the rig, the derricks, etc.—than those who had been kept away.

Unfortunately for the preservation of this syndicate secret the well is in a sharp bend of the stream known as Salt Creek from which this portion of the oil field derives its name. In close proximity to it, numerous deep ravines, gulches, etc. During our stay in the vicinity Mr. Hawley had business with the superintendent whose house is situated a little to the east of the oil well. While he was closeted with the official I took a detour out from our camp which was a quarter of a mile distant from the well. After considerable dodging through ravines, over little hills, etc., and by keeping the rig out of sight, we finally got up to the derriek and looked in. The first thing, however, that gained my attention upon getting very near to the well was a hissing sound like that of escaping steam, which, when it hit the derriek, revealed the cause. The well had bowed, sure enough. It had been plugged up; as much as possible perhaps but not sufficiently. Oil was bubbling up around the edges of the ground to waste. Judging by the hissing noise that it made the true force of the natural pressure must be something terrific. The oil was of a light green color, perhaps nearly as good as that in every way closely resembled the best crude petroleum which I have seen come from the Pennsylvania fields. Work had evidently ceased in connection with the boring of the stationary rig, which stands a few feet distant, was "dead," and evidently had not been running for some time. The derriek was about fifty feet in height, and plainly indicated having been struck by lightning from top to bottom while the belching steam, the engine and the half of the smoke stack on the side toward the well had, it was plainly to be seen, shared in the copious baptism of oil which unmistakably had sprung in a stream far above the top of the derriek.

From this mighty pinnacle of nature we looked down the valley and saw the great prong of the continental divide, the elevation of which is 6,500 feet.

Always, way down through fathoms upon fathoms of space you look into vast, broad valleys which from so great a height take on, as if bewitched, the appearance of having just been upturned by the plow. The overlying stretches of rugged magnificence fairly send a quiver through your very soul.

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Published by Mr. A. T. Butler, who is giving his party and the public at large a paper which they have every reason to heartily support.

The other paper, The Derrick, with Mr. W. S. Kimball at its head, is democratic in politics and fully up to the standard of a good newspaper. Its news, good equipment and editorial ability is giving the public a paper that is appreciated.

Casper is the gate city to the oil and mineral wealth of central Wyoming. To the west are the Mountain and Lattinense fields, while to the northwest are the Salt Creek and Powder River fields. The topographical features of the country are such that Casper is the natural junction point for the outlets of the fields mentioned.

Seventy-five miles west of Casper I found six miles of fine coal, pronounced by Prof. Gilbert E. Parson, of John H. Jackson of Chicago, chemists and mining engineers, as being first-class steam coal, good cooking and the best roofing coal west of Pennsylvania. Within a radius of five miles is to be found a vast quantity of iron ore, which is a very pure article of mineral wealth, and the balance a pure hematite ore free from sulphur and phosphorus, and a mountain of white magnesian limestone, together with quite a large quantity of good clay. The works are located in the valley, they would be about equally distant from the different materials, which could be delivered and dumped into the cars by traction roads, making one of the most desirable plants of the kind that can be found in the United States today.

It is widely concluded that four-fifths of the railroad building to be done in the west. By this idea can be obtained an idea of the value of the works would be located in the center of this railroad building.

In the mountains about ten miles south of Casper are excellent discoveries of gold and silver. The gold has lately been made and are rapidly being developed. In the same vicinity some remarkable veins of asbestos are being discovered.

Near Casper I found some of the large soda lakes of Wyoming. These lakes are phenomena in themselves. They occur in basins surrounded by sand hills and vary in area from 100 acres down. An examination revealed an abundance of soda. The depth washed from surrounding hills underlying which is a solid crust of soda from two to six feet thick. The average analysis of this material shows it to be about ninety-five per cent pure, thus giving a product of great value in the manufacturing of glass, soap and powder, and last but not least, for use in refining oil. The ease of producing coupled with its extreme purity, makes this soda product an important factor in Casper's growth and prosperity.

In concluding these columns, nothing suggests itself to me with greater force than the hope that the reader may, some time in the near future, do my statements the honor of putting them to a personal test. To see Wyoming, to seek by personal observation and contact, a knowledge of her people and resources cannot, I pledge you, result in other than advantage of which as yet, you may not have the slightest conception.

CHARLES H. CRESSEY.

As for the newspapers of Casper, they are worthy of much more than the simple starting of a new paragraph in these columns. Their work will commence early in the spring.

It is evidently the purpose of a large syndicate to obtain a surety of a large supply, before putting their product upon the market, and in order to give the best possible rates for the transportation, as well as in order to build tank lines. The Cheyenne &

Mr. J. J. Hart, one of the oldest and most extensive sheep owners in the state; Mr. A. J. Cunningham, manager for C. H. King & Co., general merchandise and bankers; Mr. George Mitchell, lumber and coal merchant; Hawley & Bartlett, oil and mineral lands; Mr. David Graham, proprietor of the leading hotel in the city, the Graham house; Messrs. Nicholson & Patton, White & Co., and Padden & Crow, who furnish fine coal and cigars; C. F. C. Postman, pharmacy goods; J. J. Corbett, abstracts of title, and C. K. Bucknum, the livery man, whose team of fine horses did such excellent work on our journey to the oil fields.

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THE LOUNGER IN THE LOBBY.

Some of the Superstitions Which Prevail in the Dramatic Profession.

ATTRACTONS AT THE THEATERS.