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GREAT FALLS.

FIVE years ago a few tents marked the founding of the town of Great Falls. The small number of people who came here then were induced to do so from their belief that nature had endowed the place with special advantages, and from the rumor that there was a power behind it which would soon bring it into prominence.

The initial steps in starting the town were attended with many difficulties. There was not, at that time, a county road leading to it from any direction, and to divert the overland stage line a few miles from its old route to take in Great Falls was bitterly opposed and, after much effort, was finally accomplished. Apparently nine-tenths of the people of northern Montana were working with all their energy to crush out any attempt at building a city at the head of the Missouri falls. The little town, however, instead of being paralyzed by opposition, continued to grow, until at last, when the Manitoba railway reached it, it came at once to the front as one of the most promising young towns of the new northwest.

Soon after the completion of the Manitoba and Montana Central railways to Great Falls the ground was broken for the Montana Silver Lead Smelter by a New York company, of which Abram S. Hewitt is president. Bridges were built across the Missouri river; the Sand Coulee coal mines were connected with the town by rail, and a large amount of money was spent in opening out this great source of fuel supply.

These steps in the development of Great Falls were all accomplished before the close of the year 1888. The past year opened with bright prospects for important enterprises in the interest of Great Falls; but it was not until midsummer that the Belt Mountain railway was commenced, which is to make tributary to our town one of the greatest silver, lead and iron regions of the continent. Negotiations with the Boston & Montana Copper Company for the establishment of their works at Great Falls, which had been carried on for more than a year, were concluded only last November.

It is proper to state here that the Boston & Montana Consolidated Silver & Copper Mining Company is one of the strongest and most successful companies of the kind in the world. Its mines at Butte are practically inexhaustible, and of marvelous richness. It is said that 3,000 tons of ore per day can be mined and shipped by this company. The products of these mines will be shipped from Butte to Great Falls, where will be located the smelters and refineries of the company. It is not necessary to state that the works of this company at Great Falls will be built on an extensive scale, will employ large forces of men and will consume a large quantity of fuel and water power.

The establishment of such extensive plants as the Montana Silver Smelter and the Boston & Montana Silver & Copper Works at Great Falls so soon after the founding of the town, shows clearly that capitalists recognize its superior advantages for the treatment of ores. Abundant water and water power at all times and cheap fuel are the prime essentials for the economical reduction of ores. So decided are the advantages in this respect possessed by Great Falls over all other western towns, that it cannot fail to become, in a short time, as prominent a center for the handling and treating of ores as Minneapolis has become in the handling and milling of wheat.

One of the most important industries we shall ever have at Great Falls will be the manufacture of iron and steel, as all the materials are found in unlimited supply in our immediate vicinity to produce them. Many of our iron ores have the smallest trace of phosphorus, and some of them are entirely free from it. The carbonate iron ores which underlie the coal measures carry from forty to forty-five per cent of metallic iron, while the great hematite and magnetic leads of the Belt mountains carry from sixty to sixty-eight