

Douglas County Leads in Union High and Grade Schools

By O. C. BROWN, County Superintendent

In any civilized country questions of education and good schools are paramount to all other. This is especially true in a Republic like ours where the people rule, and becomes still more important in a state like Oregon where the direct primary law and the initiative and referendum places the responsibility of government squarely up to the individual citizen.

Douglas County with an area equal to that of Connecticut has now 129 school districts in active operation. This includes eight union high schools. Before the number was reduced by consolidation there were 140 school districts. Taken as a whole the schools of the county are in excellent condition. Along the lines of consolidation, standardization, building improvement, sanitation, and community cooperation the advancement has been marked.

Seven years ago there were no union high schools in the county. We now have eight groups of districts organized into union schools for high school purposes only with a combined valuation of \$7,261,549. By means of these schools high school education has been greatly advanced in the rural sections. Thus hundreds of boys and girls who otherwise would have never gone to high school, are now completing four years of high school work in these community schools while the home circle remains unbroken. The South River union school is an illustration of this. Here six districts along South River have been organized into a union high school. Three of these districts situated nearest the central school have been united into a grade school consolidation. A \$20,000 building has been built. Here two large river boats bring the children to and from school each day. Before consolidation these separate schools were of the one room, one teacher rural type too common in the county before conditions were bettered by consolidation. Now the school is well graded with four teachers and housed in a modern up-to-date building. Up to two years ago when this consolidation was formed comparatively few children went out from this district to attend high school where now there is a local enrollment of 34 high school pupils.

The Glade consolidated school with the union high school of that place is another notable illustration of the benefits of consolidation. Five districts have been grouped here for grade and high school purposes. A modern \$17,000 school building is just being completed. Here the children are transported with three motor trucks. This district has a valuation of about two million dollars and promises to be one of the best of its type

in the state. It has an enrollment of about 24 high school students. Being 20 miles from the railroad makes it an ideal place for a real school and community center.

The union high schools at Elkton, Yoncalla, Reedsport, Wilbur, Camas Valley, and the union high and grade school consolidation at Days Creek are each notable examples of the benefits of such consolidation. All of these schools are thoroughly satisfied with the bettered condition and would not go back to the old system.

The consolidation of rural schools has also made a splendid showing and rivals that of union high school consolidations in this county. For several years a strong campaign has been launched for school consolidation, but not until about two years ago did we have the first consolidation. We now have seven consolidated districts composed of 21 districts with a combined valuation of \$5,174,399. Transportation is furnished in most of these schools. By this means 21 poorly graded one-room schools have been transformed into seven well graded schools with two or more teachers for each with building and equipment much better. These consolidations have greatly increased attendance, promoted better school spirit, doubled the efficiency of the school work, multiplied 8th grade and high school graduations, promoted better school spirit, and is developing a more thorough scholarship and a better type of citizenship. Many other sections in the county are so situated that consolidation will be of great benefit. The question is being agitated in these communities, and as the benefit is seen in the neighboring schools each will fall in line. As it stands Douglas County has the proud distinction of leading the state in this movement. Much of the educational advancement may be credited to the Zone Meetings for teachers, patrons and school officers, which were organized two years ago for the purpose of carrying out a scheme of rural school improvement. By this plan the county has been divided into six zones, geographically located so as to suit the convenience of teachers in the different parts of the county. Each zone has three meetings each year held on Saturdays. Each zone has its own organization, elects its own officers, appoints its working committees, and in cooperation with the county office selects the questions to be investigated and discussed during the year, a report of which is to be made at the annual institute each year. The first series of these meetings for the year have been completed, and although attendance is not compulsory the roll call shows an attendance of over 90 percent of the teachers of the county.

As a result of the drive for better schools and better equipment 21 schools have been standardized according to the requirements of the State Board of Education. 42 have been properly lighted, and many other improvements of school room and playground have netted the schools over 1000 points toward the total requirements of standardization in the county. Eleven play sheds have been built and four more will be added this year. These sheds are made large enough for basketball and other indoor contests. Nine modern school buildings have been constructed within the past two years, and in addition seven buildings have been enlarged, modernized, and improved.

The prime need of the school is for better trained teachers. Good school buildings, fine equipment, cooperation, and all else must fail if the teacher in charge fails to measure up to the high requirements of her office.

From the business section northward the town fills the valley on both sides of Deer Creek, which empties into the river within the city limits, and on the south extends to the point where river and valley merge into a narrow defile through which the waters surge on their way to the sea.

Six thousand red-blooded Westerners constitute the population of this distinctively Pacific Coast town. While it is true that many of the town's folk may have come from the "effete" East, they no sooner get here than the spirit of the unfathomable West gets under their skin and they immediately become by adoption sons and daughters of this great land of enterprise, opportunity and big things. Once adopted and having abandoned the ways of the "tenderfoot," they plunge into the activities of the country with an earnestness and zeal that wins success. The east becomes to them a spot well enough to think about as a former home, or a place where relatives are freezing in winter or sweltering in summer, but the idea of themselves ever going back, save on a visit, is hardly ever entertained. To become a resident of Oregon and Douglas County and a citizen of Roseburg is enough for the average man and woman, and the longer they stay the better they like the city and its charming environs. So, naturally, they become boosters for this wonderful spot in the great West, and this fact is a counsellor, in part, the steady growth of Roseburg in population and wealth.

Its Climate. Roseburg is situated in the very heart of the Umpqua River Basin, and by reason of its geographical position is practically the hub of the county, and around this center revolves all the business of this rich and prosperous part of the State. It is so situated that while storms rage to north or south during winter months, Roseburg and the Umpqua Valley basks under favorable temperature or mild winter sun. In connection with this statement it may be added that during the month of December of the year just closed, while Portland, Tacoma, Seattle, and all the Willamette Valley was practically snowed in for ten days, with heavy winds sweeping over the frozen sections, and with snow crowning the Cascades on the east, while three feet of snow lay on the ground along the Pacific highway just south of the Oregon line, no snow fell in the Umpqua Valley, there were no winds of consequence, Garyantheum and roses bloomed in a multitude of yards throughout Roseburg, while the lawns of city homes vied with the emerald green of the wild growth on the hills surrounding the valley.

These are a few of the many reasons why everybody likes Roseburg, and passengers looking out of railway cars that came from snow-bound points marveled at the glorious spring-like weather in the Umpqua Valley and the green lawns of the city when they reached this place.

Roseburg is a Southern Pacific Railway division point, and the company disburses annually in this city and other county stations more than one million dollars in salaries and other expenses incidental to the service. Aside from the railway payroll several other enterprises annually spend many thousands of dollars for salaries of employees. Among the industrial enterprises operating here are the Roseburg Cannery, which uses many hundreds of tons of fruit during the season, the Douglas County Creamery, owning and operating one of the finest creamery plants in the State. The Douglas County Light and Water Company, the H. S. Gile Trane Packing Co., the California Packing Co., the Sawyer Packing Co., The Oregon Growers Association, The Umpqua Broccoli Association, The J. G. Flook Co., the Oregon Gas Co., The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co., The Automatic Electric Brake Co. With these institutions there are a score or two of garages and repair shops, besides several general contractors, all of which employ a small army in the aggregate.

The Schools.

The school advantages of Roseburg are something worthy of pride, and the people maintain an education system that has no superior in the West. The matter of the city schools having been treated by Superintendent M. S. Haman, found elsewhere in this issue, we need not dwell longer on that feature.

Religious Denominations. Most all of the Protestant denominations are represented in Roseburg, the several church edifices bearing eloquent testimony to the religious life of the city. The Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist South, Baptist, Episcopal, Christian Church of God, Seventh Day Adventists have places of worship, while the Catholic people have a commodious place of worship and also maintain a parochial school. These churches have congregations ranging from probably 75 to several hundred. The Methodists, Presbyterians, Christians and Baptists being the strongest organizations, and each of them maintain spacious church buildings. The Methodists South have a practically new building, while the Christians are contemplating a fine new structure to meet their growing needs.

NEW YEAR'S DAY
THE storm-wind sank, the moon rode high,
Sat round with silver haze,
Where, late, sky-eyes as wonderful
Showered green as chrysoprase.

Within the old gray church anon
The gathered folk would sit;
I met the old year on the hill,
And bade farewell to it.

The woods around stood stark and dim,
But at my feet white birds
Plattered, the warblers of kindly deed
And sweet, remembered words.

Above me, from Orion's belt,
A great gem flashed and fell;
Was it a rough prince sped by,
Michael, or Gabriel?

Then, though my lonely heart must mourn
For some that came no more,
White halls of Hope I seemed to see
Set to a sapphire shore.

As he who dreamed a New World sailed
On an uncharted sea,
From Palos with his caravels
Lured by a mystery.

So, under fanning Asian skies,
Or by the still sea's pale,
That Great Adventure, the New Year,
Beacons the human soul.

—L. M. Little in Boston Herald.

Roseburg, a City of Roses The Whole Year Round

The Douglas County metropolis, Roseburg, is typical of the genial spirit of the population in this Southern Oregon country, and as it name indicates is the home of roses, and in normal seasons there is scarcely a month of the whole year that in bud or full bloom they are not to be found growing in the yards of countless lovers of this queen of all flowers. Nestling at the foot of wooded hills that give a picturesque background to its setting, the city spreads westward and across the South Umpqua River.

From the business section northward the town fills the valley on both sides of Deer Creek, which empties into the river within the city limits, and on the south extends to the point where river and valley merge into a narrow defile through which the waters surge on their way to the sea.

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