

Medford Daily Tribune

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CO-OPERATION PROFITABLE FOR FARMERS.

Anyone reading the annual report of Secretary Wilson can hardly fail to get the impression that the veteran head of the agricultural department is something of a farm uplifter himself. For twelve years he has labored for the advancement of agriculture in all its aspects and for the betterment of rural conditions in innumerable ways. Giving an account of his stewardship, Secretary Wilson declares that during his administration "agriculture has made wonderful progress and permanent advances, and that the farmer of the medium and better sorts, in matters of information, intelligence, and industry, has thriven mightily." The farmer has solved the problem of national sustenance by increasing food production, according to Orchard and Farm; he has developed larger efficiency in what may be called the financial management of agricultural enterprises, and he has established himself and family in pleasanter ways of living. His uplift is not among the things that are to come; it has already arrived.

Elements of the agricultural transformation Mr. Wilson has witnessed in the last dozen years, and to which his department has largely contributed are many, but there is one of them deserving special mention on account of its economic importance, and that is the spread of co-operation among farmers. Contrary to his reputation, says the secretary, the farmer is a great organizer. It is estimated that the numbers of farmers' co-operative associations is 75,000 with a total membership of 3,000,000, representing one-half the cultivable lands of the country.

The lines along which farmers more especially developed co-operation are fire, livestock, and tornado insurance, with about 2,000,000 policy holders; butter and cheese making, irrigation, the warehousing of grain and cotton, telephone service, and co-operative buying and selling. The buying is conducted mostly by co-operative stores and more extensively by groups of farmers, who buy potatoes, wheat, and other products for seed, or who buy from certain merchants and manufacturers under an agreement for discount from regular prices.

Associations to regulate, promote and manage the details of selling products of co-operating farmers are found in all parts of the United States. There is co-operation for selling by the growers of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and berries; by livestock men, by the producers of cotton and tobacco, wheat, sweet potatoes, flax, oats, eggs, poultry and honey. Farmers co-operate to sell milk for city supply, to sell wool, cantaloupes, celery, cauliflower, citrus fruits, apples, and so on with a long list.

In addition to the associations for purely economic purposes, there are many others for educational or social improvements, giving opportunity for exchange of ideas and for comparative study of farm methods. The economic associations, however, are destined to play an increasing role in the country's agricultural life. Some of them have come into unpleasant notice by reason of the lawlessness of some of their members in the night-riding districts of the south, but in spite of their lawlessness they have an economic reason for being, which will survive when the unruly members have been brought into submission. The formation of these associations shows that the farmer has felt the moving spirit of the times, which is co-operation and organization. By closing up ranks he will be better able to hold his own in the economic struggle; he will no longer be at the mercy of both buyer and seller. It is a movement of immense significance, both nationally and agriculturally.

BUTTE FALLS ITEMS.

George Albert has gone on a visit to Boise, Idaho, and will likely remain several months.

J. H. Miller, mill manager, walked from the Falls to Medford and does not look after such experience again, as he found the roads in very bad shape for pleasant walking.

E. D. Colby of Brownboro, who has been quite sick and confined to his bed, we are glad to report as somewhat improved. The neighbors lately rendered him and family timely assistance by providing a goodly supply of winter wood, as the winter store laid up by Mr. Colby was almost exhausted and he was unable to secure more on account of his sickness. He is very thankful for such neighborly aid.

T. A. Hall of Brownboro spent Saturday and Sunday in Medford. He reports the roads as drying up since the heavy winds.

Reulah Hildreth has returned from the Coos Bay country, glad to get back to the land of warranted sunshine.

Scott Claspill is down in the valley after supplies for his store.

J. H. Miller has returned from a business trip to Medford.

Mr. Mathes of Butte Falls, who has lately bought property, took a trip to Medford during the week. He reports Mr. Hughes, who was accidentally shot, as improving very much.

The Uniform Rank of the Fraternal Brotherhood will meet in Seattle next year and will be encamped on the grounds of the Alaska Yukon Pacific exposition.

NEGRO PUGILIST SAID

TO BE DEAD IN PRISON

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 4.—Mystery surrounds the reported attempted suicide of Jack Blackburn, a negro pugilist, who is in Moyamensing prison awaiting trial for murder. The prison officials are silent. General St. Clair Mulholland, prison inspector, says the report is untrue.

If Blackburn is dead, as some reports have it, his body is supposed to be in the prison hospital. Poison, not hanging, is the means which the negro used in the attempt on his life, according to a rumor in circulation today.

It is said a woman visited Blackburn a few days ago and slipped him a vial containing poison, which he swallowed in his cell last night. No confirmation of this report can be obtained at Moyamensing.

SOCIALISTS WOUNDED

IN CLASH WITH POLICE

HANOVER, Germany, Feb. 4.—Socialistic demonstrations held here today in protest against the Prussian election laws resulted in a collision between the socialists and the police. Between 20 and 30 persons were wounded.

The Northern Pacific railroad will have more than 100 additional passenger coaches to take care of the extra travel to Seattle next year during the progress of the Alaska Yukon Pacific exposition.

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