

SALEM AT LAST GOING FORWARD

By William E. Curtis in the Chicago record Herald.

SALEM, ORE., Sept. 23, 1909.—The capital of Oregon has recently awakened from a stupor of two generations, and is becoming one of the liveliest towns in the state. The population of one of the most fertile and attractive valleys in the world actually diminished in numbers for several years while all the country around was booming, but now Salem is going ahead as fast as any place of its size in the west. In 1890 there were 4515 inhabitants reported by the census enumerator; in 1900 the number fell off to 4258, but everybody expects that the total for 1910 will not be less than 10,000, and they are confidently expecting 12,000.

Salem is located fifty-two miles south of Portland. It is the county seat of Marion county as well as the capital of the state, and for twenty miles in every direction is surrounded by orchards, gardens, farms, hop-fields and other sources of profit that are not surpassed anywhere in the world, while the climate comes as near pleasing everybody as any climate could possibly do.

Willamette county as everyone knows is a "garden spot" of more than 5,000,000 acres, running 150 miles north and south, with an average width of about 60 miles between the Cascade and Coast ranges of mountains. It is one of the richest sections of America, "where every prospect pleases" and where very few men are vile. Indeed Oregon is the Connecticut of the Pacific so far as morality and sober habits are concerned, and Salem has always been the headquarters of Methodism on the coast.

In 1843 a mass meeting was held at Salem which by a vote of 52 to 50, annexed the Pacific northwest to the United States. There is a humorous side to this important chapter of history, but these contestants for an empire saw nothing funny in it at the time. There numbers were small, but they had enough zeal and determination to have moved a mountain and fought for the privilege of living under the stars and stripes. That mass meeting may seem insignificant and amusing, but as portentous in its results as the tea party in Boston harbor.

In order to induce immigration, Congress was persuaded to pass what was known as the Donation Land Claim act, giving to each married man 640 acres and to each single person 320 acres. The result was greater than any one expected for not less than 8000 emigrants, chiefly from New England, took immediate advantage of the opportunity, and every enterprising citizen of Oregon immediately got married regardless of his age or previous condition. Many young men who had no other choice married Indian maidens; others entered into agreements with the parents of children, 5, 6, or 10 years of age to marry them immediately, and to live with them after they reached womanhood. There were not enough women to go around, but the men wanted the land and they got it—640 acres for themselves; 320 acres for their wives and an equal amount for each of their children.

The consequences of permitting a single family to acquire so large an area were to retard the development of the country, because the owners had an excessive estimation of the value of their farms and would not sell except at high prices, hence newcomers went to other parts of the valley where they could locate homesteads, or buy as much land as they wanted at reasonable rates. There was no transportation except wagons and stages, no railroads, no steamboats, no market for produce, and it was useless for the residents of this part of the valley to raise any more than they needed for themselves. They thus acquired easy habits and an indolence which has kept back the development of this section. Later, when steamboats and railroads made the valley accessible, it took a long time for the people to change their habits. The lethargy was not broken until recently; the large farms which lay idle were not broken up until a few years ago, and while Washington, California and other parts of Oregon were rapidly filled up with enterprising and thrifty eastern families, this country was the very last

to seek or even welcome newcomers. But now everybody is awake. The big farms are being divided into holdings of from 20 to 80 acres. There is a vigorous, healthy growth in all the territory tributary to Salem, and in this immediate vicinity every available acre of land is producing profitable crops of fruit, hops and vegetables.

The city of Salem was suggested by Jason Lee, a Methodist missionary way back in 1834. He came from Connecticut, accompanied by Daniel Lee, his brother, and three other laymen, bringing horses, cattle, implements and household goods, and originally intended to settle among the Flathead Indians, but for various reasons selected the center of the Willamette valley instead, where they founded a mission at an Indian village called Chemekete, a name spelled in various forms, which means "Here we rest." They built a group of houses, a mill, a school and various other necessary structures, and the Lord prospered them. They cultivated several hundred acres of ground and taught the Indians the arts and crafts of peace as well as the gospel as expounded by John Wesley. Jason Lee was a great man, an empire builder, a natural pioneer, full of zeal and faith and resources, fearless and confident, capable of mastering any emergency, and shrewd enough to outwit the evil one, which he was frequently compelled to do during his exciting experience here.

The Presbyterians came into Oregon in 1836, two years after Lee drove his stake at Chemekete. Marcus Whitman settled at Wallapel, near where Walla Walla now stands; William H. Gray at Astoria, H. H. Spaulding and other devoted men established schools and churches elsewhere, and it was the missionary influence that kept the Pacific northwest a part of the United States in opposition to fur traders, who tried to make it a part of Great Britain.

Christian Church.

At the Christian church Bible school at 9:45 preaching at 11 a. m. and 8 p. m. C. E. at 7 p. m. W. Theo. Matlock, the new minister, has arrived and will preach both morning and evening. Subject of the morning sermon, "The First Century Church and Twentieth Century Problems." Evening subject, "The Twentieth Century Church and Her Place in Medford." Strangers made welcome.

ART EXHIBIT OPENING FREE EMBROIDERY LESSONS

The ladies of Medford will be pleased to learn that beginning Saturday, October 2, Mrs. G. Eary will have on sale and exhibit at Deuel & Kentner's store a special line of tinted doilies, center pieces, pillow tops and novelties, art laces, loops, girdles, ruffles and Japan needles art goods, consisting of stamped and accessories. Free embroidery lessons will be given. 171

WILL CHART THE POLAR REGIONS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 2.—Steps are being taken at the hydrographic office of the navy department to revise and bring down to date the chart of the polar regions—probably the only one of its kind issued by a government office. The revised chart will indicate the routes of both Cook and Peary as soon as the observations are received. The observations of the explorers will enable the officers of the hydrographic bureau to plot the courses, as they have all the scientific equipment necessary to determine their accuracy.

The map, which has been in existence for many years, indicates the routes of all polar explorations as far back as the latter part of the eighteenth century and the lands discovered. No revision has been made, however, since Nansen's expedition, and the present time is considered appropriate for bringing it down to date. It is one of the most elaborate examples of charting undertaken by the hydrographic office.

Mr. and Mrs. Justin Cooper of Los Angeles are visiting friends in Medford.



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Prepaid Railroad Orders.

"Something which is of considerable interest to the public generally and which is perhaps not generally known is the system of prepaid orders now in effect between stations of the Southern Pacific company and all points in the United States. By means of this system tickets may be purchased at Medford from any place in the United States and mailed or telegraphed direct to the party wishing to come here. Sleeper accommodations and small amounts of cash in connection with these tickets may also be forwarded at the same time."

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