

THE WEST SIDE

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Idaho in assuming the responsibility of statehood July 4th, did so with less than one hundred thousand population.

Let us have precinct assessors; let the land be assessed and not the individual; let no indebtedness be deducted, and then perhaps we may have more nearly equal taxes.

The prospects for a bountiful harvest in Polk county are most flattering. These late rains brought out the grain wonderfully. Should the war rumors affect the market and the price of wheat be seventy-five cents a bushel money in Polk county will be very easy.

One great competitor of the farmer is the almost universal use of steam and electricity in place of horses in our cities. It requires no hay or oats for feed, horses or mules for power, or leather for harness. These are all products of the farm, and as the greatest development of electricity is in America, so is this failing market most felt here.

OUR ADVANTAGES.

When strangers visit our city they are naturally inclined to ask two questions. The first one is—what are your future prospects? The second one—what can I do to make a living? No matter what the prospects may be of a town the opening must be found which will employ the man in his particular business. If he has no particular line, then he must find the opening himself. Every man in order to make a living must do so through his own abilities which no one can supply him. Many times a man will embark in a new line of business because he sees a favorable opening. If he sees that the town has a future he will be more apt to invest, depending upon the advantages which he may gain by being "on the ground" first. The question then of most importance to be answered is—what is our future?

Independence is now a town of several hundred population, variously estimated at from fifteen to seventeen hundred. Is it destined to grow and become a town of four thousand people or has it reached the limit of its growth? That future depends upon its people, whether they are enterprising, and its location, whether it is favorable. Presuming, which is true, that we have the usual amount of enterprise among our people, what about our location? We have a good saw mill and the active demand for lumber proves that it is a good point for that line of business. The storage here yearly of from one-fifth to a quarter million bushels of grain, proves that it is a good point for warehousing, and consequently the erection here of the one hundred barrel flouring mill will prove to be a wise move. Then the number of school children, nearly four hundred, proves that we need a good school building such as is about to be built. But this is not all. The amount of transient travel demands a good substantial hotel, a permanent building, adapted not only for accommodating the regular trade but an increased transient of a better paying quality. The location is a good one for a hotel at least seventy-five rooms.

The town is located on the line of the Southern Pacific railroad from Portland to Corvallis. The promised extension of that road to Junction City means the placing of the town on a through line of travel. That alone would be of little advantage, but we are surrounded by a productive farming country, which with ordinary encouragement will center its trade at a point which has both water and rail transportation. Within at least a few months this extension to Junction City will be built. This fact alone will be to the advantage of the town. Then again the completion of the motor line from Independence to Monmouth brings the town in close connection with the Narrow Gauge lines, and also, as tall timber is only a few miles away, is the beginning of a logging railroad which will bring logs direct from timber to a navigable water way. The very evident determination of our citizens to encourage and eventually build that road to timber is positive proof that it will soon be built. As far as the logging business is concerned this must be the terminus of the road. Not only will such a road terminating here prove of advantage to the town as a logging road, but it will also draw a large trade in this direction, all of which means greater prosperity to the town. In the no distant future a railroad will be extended to the state capital, Salem, and this will make the only cross-road between the east and west side railroad from Portland. This favorable location of Falls City as a summer resort will draw considerable traffic over the road besides being the start for a road to that other watering place

Newport. Whenever the Astoria railroad is built from Albany it must pass through the town, which will also make it another railroad crossing.

Whether we look at our present or our future, in either case it looks bright. There is now building the fine brick of the Independence National bank and the one hundred barrel flouring mill, and soon the \$16,000 school building will be commenced. The employment of from forty to sixty men during the whole year will add to our prosperity, and as the other enterprises are developed, more manufactures will center here. Our people should view the situation as it now exists and offer words of encouragement to every stranger. Let us have electric lights, water works, and other improvements. Let us have plenty of good side-walks and graded streets. The future has plenty in store for us, and let us build upon it. Let neat and tasty dwellings be erected. Let us make our town be known to the outside world. Let us advertise ourselves. A standing advertisement in your home paper, keeping these advantages before the public will be a paying investment. Let us not be afraid to invite the stranger to invest his money with us. If we expect to prosper we must let the outside world know of our advantages. You need not expect that others will recognize our advantages if we do not sound our own praises. The only way to succeed is by advertising.

ASSESSMENTS.

The WEST SIDE does not find fault with the man who, under the existing laws, pays a little tax as possible since the action of the law is so unequal that if such is not done rain will result, to men who are now wealthy. When however a man of wealth by means of our tax laws covers up his wealth and pays taxes on only a small part we do not think he might pay that part without forever grumbling. We have said considerable on this subject of taxation, but we do not do it on personal grounds. The present law is a poor one, one which is damaging our state thousands of dollars annually. The residents of Polk county are not the only ones believing this. The wealthy men of Portland are just as ready to evade taxes. Here is what the Mercury has to say on the subject:

Upon the returns on file, we notice that our banker fellow citizen, Wm. S. Ladd, perhaps stimulated thereto by a stirring of conscience that induces him to occasionally aid churches, has developed into being the very Magnus Croesus of our Portland taxpayers. His assessment for 1889-90 is more than double his returns of late assessments, and is now on record for \$746,880, which is perhaps nearly a fifth of what he is worth on a statutory basis for taxation, or that his executors would put in probate.

Next in the line of this order of assessment is that of the banker H. W. Corbett, who is down for the indefinite aggregate of \$192,250, which holds a like proportion to the Ladd assessment from a statutory basis. His partner, Henry Failing, is of somewhat less monetary pretension, being booked for the comfortable sum of \$309,220, with an "indebtedness within the state" of \$54,930.

Following in like contrast is the assessed M. F. Mulkey estate, which is assessed at \$43,000 though probated for less than half its value at about four times that amount.

Next in that same range of assessment is that of the late Charles E. Sifton, for 1889-90, whose aggregate assessment for all property not quite the millionaires at present, by their financial tactics they are heading that way. Of this partnership, Holman is assessed for \$26,900, which is fully offset by indebtedness, and is consequently tax proof; and his partner, Fliedner, is nearly in the same financial situation, his entire property being on the assessment roll for \$28,400, with an indebtedness of \$26,000—leaving taxable only the pittance of \$2400 to represent this Washington street and South Portland property, the latter of which is cheap at \$80,000, as values are rated in that quarter of the city.

The result of this assessment and "indebtedness within the state," is, that for all the property men, the exchequer of state, city, county schools, etc., have to be satisfied with the gnawings from the bone of \$2400! Henry L. Pittock, of the Oregonian, who is tangibly worth a half million or more, but apparently unconscious of his property, is on the roll for \$70,250, with an indebtedness of \$65,500, with a taxable remainder of \$4750. S. G. Reed is another Portland capitalist who is down for \$300,440, but hedged with an indebtedness of \$275,000 "within the state." D. P. Thompson, late republican candidate for governor; is another who economizes his assessment at \$137,500, though known to have property worth many times that

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