

market which is essential to the development of other branches of farming was not at hand. The production of fruit, in which Douglas county is unsurpassed, could not be engaged in with profit until railroad transportation enabled the orchardists to take their crops to market. Previous to 1872, when the Oregon & California line was built, this county had no railway, and the people were compelled to find an outlet for their surplus production by water and freight wagons, which, from the nature and location of the county, was a very slow mode of transportation, and correspondingly unsatisfactory. This lack of shipping facilities was a great drawback to the raising of fruit, and many orchards which were started well were neglected when they came into bearing condition, because the ripened fruit could not be handled to advantage. With the advent of the railroad to Douglas county and the extension of transcontinental lines in this western country, and the development of the mining regions of Montana and Idaho, as well as of Oregon and Washington, an extensive market for Oregon fruit was opened, and the Umpqua valley is improving the opportunity for employing its superior qualifications in a profitable manner. Along the rich river bottoms many have gone extensively into the cultivation of small fruit—strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, etc.—and on the higher lands, peaches, pears, apples, plums, etc., are produced in abundance. The peaches of Southern Oregon are unrivalled in size and flavor, and the small fruit of that section is the earliest in the Portland market. The prune industry has proved a source of great profit in the southern part of Douglas county, and it is spreading rapidly over the other portions of the Umpqua basin. An equable climate is the most important element for successful fruit culture, and Douglas county possesses this and other natural qualifications, so that the labor of the orchardist is in unison with natural forces, rather than in neutralizing any disadvantages which nature has imposed on most sections. Frosts do not kill the trees, nor do cold winds blast the fruit. The soil is suited to fruit culture and the facilities which are now in operation and those being introduced enable the orchardist to realize the utmost profit from his business.

The pasturage of Douglas county is so good that stock raising and wool growing are among its most important industries. In the vast area of hills and mountains, either too rugged to be tilled or more profitable for grazing, and the creek bottoms where level land is in small tracts and not yet demanded for actual settlers, cattle and sheep find ample sustenance and fatten and thrive. The winters are so mild that it is not expensive to keep stock in good condition. The wool clip of this section is said to be the best

produced in the United States. It is unexcelled in length and strength of fibre, and is free from burrs, sand and other foreign substances which generally impair the value of the wool product. The operation of woolen mills now in course of erection will afford an additional stimulus to the business of production, and the wool crop, already probably more reliable than any other one product, will be rapidly increased and made a source of more profit to the people. The poultry product of Douglas county is estimated to be greater than that of any other county on the Pacific coast. The quantity of eggs and live and dressed fowls shipped from Oakland, which is the principal shipping point for this product, is enormous.

The minerals of Douglas county include gold, silver, quicksilver, iron and nickel ores, coal, cement, limestone and marble. Gold was discovered on the South Umpqua river near the mouth of Cow creek, in 1851, and since that time mines have been opened on Coffee, Starve Out, Cow, Myrtle, Mitchell, Calipooia and Jordan creeks, and on the north and south forks of the Umpqua river; but the character and location of the country has prevented very extensive work of development from being done. Lately a new interest is being manifested in the mines of this region, and operations on a larger scale than have heretofore been prosecuted are in contemplation. It is known that the mines of Douglas county are rich. Sufficient prospecting has been done to establish that fact. Mining operations are now conducted in various parts of the county on a paying basis, and the annual output of ores is an important item in the aggregate production of the country. More experienced miners are needed to take hold of the work in Douglas county and bring out the mineral wealth. There is an inviting field for persons of enterprise and experience in this line.

The foregoing is a brief mention of the principal general industries of Douglas county, but these are by no means all that are represented. Many very fine horses are raised, gardening is engaged in and manufactories requiring wood, grain or wool find favorable conditions. But the Umpqua valley is a comparatively new section. It is only a little more than a quarter of a century ago that the first white people settled in what was then a very isolated region. There were mountains on all sides of them, and communication with the outside world was, indeed, difficult and often hazardous. Boats could ascend the Umpqua river as far as Scottsburg, which for years was the depot for receiving and shipping supplies and produce. Almost the entire commerce for the basin was carried on in this way until the railroad was constructed. But for the superior qualifications which the Umpqua valley possessed, settlers