



#### ASHLAND AND ROGUE RIVER VALLEY.

The year 1889 has been one of rapid development for the Pacific northwest. For Southern Oregon it has been a test year, and the results of the test are perfectly satisfactory. For weather and crops it has been the hardest year in the history of this part of the state since the first settlement of the Rogue river valley, thirty-five years ago. The summer last past has brought the nearest approach to a drought ever experienced here—the nearest that it seems possible to occur here, with the favoring conditions of several preceding winters, in which the rainfall was far below the average for the twenty years of record. This we may well call the worst kind of a season possible for the Rogue river valley, so far as can be judged by a comparison with the past, and yet a stranger would suppose from the general prosperity and peace and plenty in the valley that we had experienced at least an average season. The *Tidings* claims that the year just past is one of the best ever known here, in the light of a showing of the good qualities and the resources of our country. To come through a "poor season" in such excellent condition is the best showing a country can possibly make—and it is of value in the record of Southern Oregon—for it is a difficult thing to find a poor crop year in the record. In the valley the aggregate of grain, hay and fruit grown during the year was large—very little below the average, in fact, taking the whole valley—and we have learned that during the very driest season there are fields and meadows and orchards that will yield the very largest crops. This is a very different condition from that in which a drought leaves large sections in other states when it visits them. So we must consider 1889 a year that has made a good showing for Rogue river valley.

Ashland people have called the year a "quiet" one, but we find that it has a record of more than \$100,000 worth of building improvements "quietly" made by private parties, to say nothing of the public improvements inaugurated and in progress. During the year there were built in Ashland thirty-four new dwelling houses, and eleven were remodeled and rebuilt or had additions made to them exceeding in cost in each instance the average cost of the thirty-four. This makes us in reality forty-five new houses erected in Ashland during 1889. The aggregate cost, learned from careful statement or estimate in each case, was \$69,800. Of other buildings, there were built the Ashland house brick hotel, \$6,500; the Thompson & Billings office block, \$2,500; the Catholic church, \$2,500; improvements on public school house, \$1,500; and last, but not least, the fine brick opera house block of Mr. Ganiard, still unfinished, \$20,000. Although the improvements aggregate about fifty new dwellings and business houses, at a total cost of \$102,800. To this should be added a large sum for minor improvements, which have been numerous in all parts of town. During the year the electric lights have been introduced, and the finest hotel in this part of the state (built during the last months of 1888, at a cost of more than \$20,000) was opened to the public in February, 1889. This year adds to it a companion piece of architecture in the Ganiard opera house, on opposite corner of First avenue, one of the finest opera houses in the state. There have been noticeable improvements in widening the streets, opening and grading new streets, building sidewalks, etc., and a large quantity of new plank sidewalks on Main street and the Boulevard has been ordered, and is now in course of construc-

tion. For the coming year the prospects are bright for a larger number of new brick buildings in the business part of town than has been constructed in any year in the past, and the structures projected are such as will make a wonderful improvement in the appearance in the business quarter of the city.

The planting of orchards in and near the city has steadily progressed during the fall, and by next summer the acreage will have been very largely increased. Without doubt the coming season will see the inauguration of the fruit and vegetable canning industry here on a large scale. The new water works projected for the city, for which the fifty thousand dollars issue of bonds has been sold at a premium, will be an important improvement of the coming year, and will give the city the best supply of pure water of any town on the coast. The population of the city has kept up its solid and steady growth, as is demonstrated by the comparison of the votes cast at the annual elections for several years past, and the city makes rapid improvement every year as an attractive and desirable place for home seekers. It is eminently entitled to the name of the young "City of Homes" of Southern Oregon, for many people have, and more will have their homes here, even when business interests are located elsewhere. Ashland has made good progress in 1889 and will make greater progress in 1890.—*Tidings*.

#### THE MINES OF MONTANA.

The year just past places Montana still further in the lead in the list of mineral producing states, as noted in *WEST SHORE* near the end of the year. Though the official figures are not yet announced, the total mineral output of the state for 1889 does not fall much short of \$50,000,000. Butte alone yields nearly \$24,000,000. The metals produced are gold, silver, copper and lead. The mines of Montana paid \$3,353,250 in dividends during the last eleven months of the year, the Granite Mountain paying the largest dividend of any mining property in the United States, \$2,200,000. The Hecla consolidated mine at Glendale ranks as one of the best producers in the state, the yield for 1889 being 6,191,794 pounds of lead, 236,447 pounds of copper, 581,522 ounces of silver and 1,096 ounces of gold. About 350 locations of placer ground were recorded in Jefferson county during the year. The total shipments of ore from the comparatively new and undeveloped districts of Oro Fino and Zosel, in Deer Lodge county, were in round numbers 4,500,000 pounds. A vast amount of base or smelting ore has been uncovered at Granite, in the lower workings of the Granite & Bi-Metallic mine, which could be more profitably reduced by smelting. This body of smelting ore is expanding, and the *Pittsburgh Mail* states that a rumor is prevalent to the effect that these companies will build a large smelter in the spring. "It seems quite necessary that these mines should have a smelter," says the *Mail*, "and if they should consolidate in the construction of the same, as it is understood they intend doing, it would no doubt be a grand success. The Bi-Metallic company will have their additional forty stamps dropping on ore in the spring, and it is also understood that the Granite people intend putting in twenty more stamps at the Granite mill, making in all 220 stamps that will be dropping on ores of the Granite & Bi-Metallic mines." Messrs. Brantnaber & Bennett, who, representing the London Financial and Mining Trust syndicate, recently purchased the Elkhorn Mining company's property for