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The Selling Combine

Whatever may be the result of the negotiations now under way looking toward the combination of the "Big Four" fruit districts in the purchase of the Northwestern Fruit Exchange, it is evident that the trend of sentiment is strongly in that direction. The large attendance at the meeting Saturday was proof enough that an intense interest is taken in the Rogue River proposition and it is now assured that Hood River growers will not take their hand from the plow, figuratively speaking, until they have convinced themselves one way or the other as to the practicability of the proposition.

It was the unanimous sentiment at the meeting that some step in this direction is now almost imperative and after listening to the favorable reports submitted by the committee and individuals who have investigated the Northwestern Fruit Exchange, that proposition was looked upon with considerable favor.

The logic in Mr. Gwin's arguments tending to show the necessity of some combination between the districts could not be gainsayed and when simmered down the proposition now rests upon one point—whether the Northwestern Fruit Exchange and its affiliations will furnish the best machine through which the four fruit districts can work. Apparently it is admirably adapted to the purpose, but as was stated Saturday the information so far obtained has come entirely from the selling party. This being the case and in view of the momentous importance of the proposition, it is rightly considered that the closest and most searching investigation will be necessary before any final action is recommended. It is earnestly to be hoped that the Northwestern Fruit Exchange may prove to be all that is represented, and there is no reason at the present time to believe that it will not. But however this particular proposition may culminate, it is certain that benefit must accrue from the fact that the fruit districts of the Northwest have been brought to a united realization that the time is ripe for concerted action in the marketing and distribution of their fruit.

The Bonding Decision

Although the Jackson county bond issue for roads has been held unconstitutional by the supreme court, it is reasonable to believe that the time is coming, and in the near future, when the necessary legislation conferring this power will be enacted. Without it the people of a county are restrained from the construction of a system of permanent highways for the reason that the limit of indebtedness remains at \$5000.

That the method of bonding for the construction of a system of permanent highways is a popular one is evidenced by the fact that several other counties of the state, Hood River among the number, had announced their intention of bonding if the Jackson county case was declared legal by the supreme court.

Complete local self-government in this matter is now being advocated and it is pointed out that every county should have the right to determine for itself how much in bonds it should vote for road building. It is generally acknowledged that better permanent results can be obtained by the construction at one time of a complete system and that such a policy has many ad-

vantages over the piecemeal methods of road building which are rendered necessary while the present legal restrictions are in force. Hood River county is further handicapped by this restriction in being restrained from building the proposed public dock. A measure to cure this defect should be passed as soon as possible.

Wilson Made The Butt

Ever since Governor Woodrow Wilson began to be seriously considered as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for president he has been made the butt of a carefully planned series of attacks by the interests which are opposed to his nomination. Every incident which, by implication or otherwise, could be made to reflect upon Wilson has been used, no matter how great a distortion of facts has been necessary. The same interests have seen to it that these incidents have been given the widest possible publicity and no pains have been spared to place Wilson in an unfavorable light. The latest incident which was made to serve such a purpose was Wilson's alleged repudiation of Harper's Weekly, which had been supporting him. The reasons why the interests are searching so diligently for the weak places in Wilson's armor are obvious. He is not the type of man which can be made to truckle to their purposes; therefore he is not a desirable candidate. Instead of injuring Wilson, such attacks should have the opposite effect, especially when the people understand by whom they are inspired. Wilson is today the strongest candidate the Democratic party has and if he is discarded chances for a Democratic victory will be very materially weakened.

False Philanthropy

However commendable real charity may be, it makes one hesitate to learn the opportunities there are for practicing a false philanthropy. Portland has been trying the experiment of finding jobs for the unemployed and has already learned an interesting lesson. In a single day nearly two hundred jobs at grubbing, wood cutting and general farm work were offered 225 men who had announced that they were seeking work. When it came to a "show down," however, only a score signified their willingness to accept the jobs.

Men who are sincere in their search for work cannot be choosers, and the jobs offered, although demanding hard manual labor, would have provided fair wages, food and lodging, as well as a little something to lay aside. Those who really deserve charity are not the ones who appear in the market place and lift up the cry that the world owes them a living. Agitators and professional tramps who are looking for a "soft snap" are not deserving of any sympathy and should receive none.

An Agricultural Prodigy

Since the advent of Luther Burbank, nothing is wonderful in the plant kingdom. Botanical miracles are now accepted as a matter of course. It is cheering to contemplate the great benefits which may accrue to the farmer, who is being assisted in the production of bigger and better crops, not only through the assistance of the Burbanks but by the thousands of trained men who are applying scientific methods to the production of a greater food supply. From Tillamook county comes the announcement of a new perennial clover of the alsike species that has been discovered there. Experiments are being made with it and it is asserted that it yields enormous tonnage to the acre, while it grows the year round. The clover has no seed, bloom or sex and is propagated by cutting up the plant and sowing the pieces. The department of agriculture will make an investigation of this new plant.

Financial stringency need no longer be a bar to marriage if would-be bridegrooms will follow the example of Captain Bernhard Anderson and Captain Nellie E. Wilkins, both members of the Salvation Army at The Dalles, who were married a couple of days ago. The ceremony was performed in church and The Dalles folks paid the admission fee of twenty-five cents to witness the ceremony.

That Congress recognizes the necessity of protecting the fruit industry is witnessed by the fact that Congressman Hawley has secured insertion of an item in the agricultural appropriation bill of \$35,000 for use in fighting the ravages of the Mediterranean fly. This pest is endangering Pacific states fruit, especially in California, through importation in Hawaiian fruit.

The public has reason to congratulate itself upon the fact that the McNamaras will not be able to go into vaudeville with their stunt.

One of our contemporaries advises scales for the farm, and that San Jose critter is doing its best to supply them.

ADVICE GIVEN ON PRUNING OF TREES

There can be no fixed rules given in regard to the pruning of trees, for the pruner will have to use his judgment in all cases. However, the following principles can be followed and are applicable to most fruit-growing sections, according to horticultural authorities.

1. All crossing limbs should be removed. This will facilitate spraying.
2. Prune to encourage the production of fruit rather than wood.
3. Prune to prevent the "off-year habit" in trees.
4. Prune to prevent the lower limbs from hindering circulation, and the upper ones from growing out of easy reach for spraying and picking.
5. Prune to prevent too compact or too strong a growth of top.

Some prune their trees just at "any old time" with more or less success. This method of procedure is not to be encouraged. With pruning, as with almost anything else, there are certain times of the year that are better than others—times when the tree will recover from the operation with less noticeable effect. The season for pruning may be best divided into what is known as "winter" pruning or "summer" pruning. For some reason, not easily explained, winter pruning has been more generally practiced than summer pruning until recently.

Summer pruning is becoming more popular and should be done in July or early in August. At this time, in most sections, the trees have finished growing, but still there is a flow of sap sufficient to heal the wounds and to enlarge the buds that are formed so as to increase the number of fruit buds. If the pruning is done before the tree has ceased growing it will result in the growth of shoots instead of the formation of fruit buds. If summer pruning is practiced, the tendency is to produce fruit rather than wood. This statement is borne out by experiments conducted by the horticultural department, University of Idaho. Ten apple trees of the Jonathan variety were experimented on, covering a period of five years. The winter-pruned trees produced an average yield of 25.2 pounds per tree, while the summer-pruned trees produced an average of 39.3 pounds per tree.

Ten trees of the Wagner variety, winter pruned, yielded an average of 26.1 pounds per tree, while the ten trees summer pruned yielded 54.3 pounds per tree, an advantage in favor of summer pruning of more than 100 per cent.

If large branches are to be removed, care should be exercised not to leave the stub too long, nor to make the cut any longer than is absolutely necessary.

If the orchard is an old and neglected one, it is best to trim the trees back to the state of bearing by pruning them a small amount each year for three or four years. If they are pruned too much the first year there will be a tendency, due to the presence of an over supply of sap, to form wood or small shoots instead of the production of fruit.

Looking For John Bush

Eugene Bush of this city wants to get information as to the whereabouts of his brother, John Bush, who left Hood River about eighteen years ago. Anyone knowing of his whereabouts will please inform EUGENE BUSH, 3-11 Hood River, Oregon.

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