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CO-OPERATION A NECESSITY

That the problems of co-operation between the big fruit sections of the Northwest ought not to rest before it has been definitely solved and that it would be unpardonable folly to permit the fruit industry to run a chance of falling into decay for lack of such co-operation is the opinion of the Oregonian in discussing the marketing plan which is now being considered by the four leading fruit districts. The matter is treated at length in a recent editorial, which is given in part as follows:

"The rapid development of fruit production in the Pacific Northwest makes the question of marketing one of imminent interest. It is of no particular advantage to produce fruit unless it can be sold profitably. Unless good markets are available the more we grow the greater the loss, and there will be more loss on fancy fruit than on inferior grades because they are more expensive to raise. When the total apple product of this region was moderate in quantity the subject of markets excited but little apprehension. Markets found themselves, almost. The fruit was so attractive and competition so slight that the demand outran the supply and prices ranged at alluring figures. But of late years apple planting has gone ahead at a tremendous rate, and now many of the new orchards have come into bearing. The consequence is that markets can no longer be found without effort. In fact a great deal of effort is required to dispose of the fruit crop at remunerative prices, and as time passes the task will naturally become more and more difficult.

"With these facts in mind prudent orchardists have begun to devote anxious thought to the problems of marketing. It is becoming apparent that while it is difficult to produce good fruit it is even more difficult to sell it at rates that pay. As long as each grower seeks the market on his own sole account there is certain to be destructive competition. One man bids against another and prices go down to the limit where production becomes impossible. Something of the same sort inevitably happens also when the various fruit-growing districts seek the market independently. The Rogue River valley competes with Yakima. Yakima strives to get the better of Wenatchee and Hood River is in the field as a fourth competitor. Under these conditions nothing can be expected but lower prices year after year and ultimate discouragement among growers. It is said that there has already been a decline in the prices even of the best Hood River fancy apples. They no longer bring the astonishing returns of two or three years ago, though yet sold at a fine profit. What else could be expected when there is no sustained and systematic effort to regulate the supply in accordance with the demand?

"What confronts us now is the problem of eradicating destructive competition among local unions and securing effective co-operation throughout the Northwest. If this can be done there will be only moderate difficulty in reaching the most remote markets of the world on favorable terms and overproduction need not be dreaded for a long time to come.

"The live question among our orchardists is, therefore, how to secure marketing co-operation,

not so much among individual growers as among the great producing regions, Hood River, Yakima, Rogue River and Wenatchee, with the lesser associations brought in if possible. This is the ideal toward which progressive fruit men are looking and they are eagerly inquiring how to attain it.

"It is evident that the problem of co-operation among our large producing districts is one that ought not to be allowed to rest until it has been definitely solved. If one plan proves undesirable another must be formed to replace it and the orchardists must persevere until they have found the best way out of the impending difficulties. Fruit-growing is already one of our most important industries and it ought to become more important every year. It would be unpardonable folly to permit it to fall into decay for lack of co-operation, and we do not believe that any such calamity will happen."

That Road to Portland

This being the official Good Roads Week in Oregon, renewed interest in the proposed highway between this city and Portland comes at an opportune time, Multnomah and Hood River counties are both vitally interested in the construction of this important thoroughfare and the former county has already started work on its portion.

Construction on the connecting link between the two counties is a difficult and expensive task for the reason that a considerable portion of the road must be blasted through the rocky points that project into the river. According to the estimates, it would cost to complete the work about \$150,000, of which \$50,000 would have to be expended in Hood River county.

The proposition now being made is that the residents, not only of Hood River and Multnomah counties, but of all those so situated as to benefit by the road, be aroused to a sense of the great benefits which would be secured thereby. It is hard to realize that there is no connecting link whatever between Eastern and Western Oregon by road through the northern part of the state. Automobile tourists who have driven across the continent arrive at Hood River to find that access to Portland and the coast is barred by this comparatively short piece of uncompleted road. It is right and proper that the building of this road should be made a state issue and that an appropriation of \$150,000 be asked at the next session of the legislature. It is of state-wide importance that this road be completed.

When it is known who will be the representatives in the next legislature of the counties most interested, a concerted effort will be made to impress upon them the importance of securing the necessary appropriation. In the meantime public interest in the matter will be stimulated in order that all who are interested in this most important project may exert their influence along the proper channels when the time for action arrives.

The East Side Grade

Local businessmen have grappled with the problem of improving the East Side grade. They have made some tentative plans whereby this matter may be settled once for all and as a result of which, it is believed, both city and county would reap material benefit.

It has been common complaint, especially on the part of East Siders, that they have had to come to town to find bad roads. As the county has improved the East Side road to the city limits and as the city has heretofore been unable to improve the remaining portion, it has remained in most unsatisfactory condition. It is in an effort to remedy this that the merchants have taken the matter up.

The proposition at the present

time is that the city shall put the \$2000 already appropriated for that purpose into the improvement of the road and that when this is completed all that territory lying east of the river shall be disincorporated by the city. The road would thereby revert to the county. It is conceded by all that the city should never have annexed this territory and that it would be best for all concerned to remedy this mistake as expeditiously as possible.

It is not believed that the proposition will meet with opposition on the part of the county for the reason that the city would be turning over to it the road with improvements worth \$2000, as well as the bridge, which cost the city approximately \$7,000. It is said that the county would then be able to appropriate another \$2000 and complete the improvement of the road this summer. This would insure the orchardists a continuous improved road from farm to city when the big crop is harvested this fall.

The city, on its part, would be showing its good will towards the county by appropriating the \$2000 for the improvement of the grade. The city would be freed from the expense of maintaining the road in the future and the merchants would benefit by receiving more trade from that section, which has heretofore been isolated to a considerable extent on account of the condition of this road. In a word, the proposed readjustment would place matters where they should have remained in the first place, making nothing to lose and apparently everything to gain from the standpoint of both city and county.

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, 344 Hood River, Oregon.

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