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The Help Problem

Those who have been considering the help proposition in this valley and the unusual condition which exists, with a great deal of extra help needed at the harvesting seasons, declare that a word to the wise is now in order.

They point out, and evidently with good reason, that it is up to the growers to make some radical improvements in their facilities for housing and caring for this special help.

In one respect Hood River is fortunate in that it is conveniently located for drawing upon Portland for extra help at the harvesting seasons. The Portland Y. M. C. A. is in a position to render great assistance in this matter and is this year undertaking to do so. Naturally, however, they are called upon by prospective laborers to give out information as to the facilities for caring for help here, and they report that they find it most difficult to secure help of the kind which the growers here want when it is known that no food nor shelter is furnished.

The question is of still greater importance when viewed from the standpoint of the apple crop than the strawberry crop. With a big apple yield in prospect, it would be a calamity if enough help could not be procured to harvest the fruit at the proper time. Then, too, the weather during the apple-picking season is such as makes the provision of proper shelter and good food even more of a necessity than at the present time.

Bunkhouses could be provided at small expense. Cooking facilities ought also to be installed and proper sanitary arrangements should, out of regard for both health and decency, be provided.

Several local fruit growers who have been interviewed recently state that they are already planning such accommodations for the help which they will need this Fall. They say that if the impression is circulated among the laboring classes in Portland that people who come here to help out are not given the right kind of treatment it would seriously hurt Hood River's chances for going into the labor market under favorable conditions.

In the hop districts of the East where large numbers of "foreign" pickers are used they are provided with substantial and comfortable sleeping quarters and are also given their board. Under these conditions it is a pleasant vacation for many city people and whole families plan on making their annual pilgrimage to the hopfields. They know that they will receive good accommodations and it is the farmers who give the best treatment who secure the most satisfactory class of pickers and who have the least trouble in getting them.

A Word About Land Values

The Portland Evening Telegram is publishing a series of progress editions containing some valuable statistical tables. The following comment on Oregon land values is based on some of these figures:

"When Eastern people hear that some of the best irrigated lands of Oregon sell for \$500 and up to \$2000 an acre, many of them jump to the conclusion that those prices are speculatively inflated to an absurd degree. But they are not. It is officially stated here that the average yearly value of fruit crops in the best orchard regions of the state is about \$400 per acre. Now, suppose that it costs in all kinds of expenses, including fertilizers,

interest, labor, half that sum—an estimate too high—to make the \$400 crop. The net profit is \$200 per acre. It may be much higher, as the same official statement says gross receipts at times mount up to \$100 per acre, and so \$500, \$600 and \$700 should not be very extraordinary. But, \$200 is 10 per cent on a capitalization of \$2000, or 5 per cent on \$4000. Any Eastern corporation, or big farmer, would figure and capitalize that way. Well, why not here? Isn't land that earns 10 per cent on \$1000 worth \$1000? And is land high under such circumstances? Certainly not."

"Dear Maria" on Deck

Mrs. Bellamy Storer has broken into the campaign, urging the defeat of Col. Roosevelt. It will be remembered that the Colonel, when president, recalled Bellamy Storer, who was an ambassador to Austria-Hungary, on the ground that Mrs. Storer was too active in undertaking to have Archbishop Ireland made a cardinal. Mrs. Storer immediately retorted that she had letters from President Roosevelt expressing the hope that the archbishop would be advanced. Roosevelt at once added her to his Ananias library of notables, and her reply came in the form of a letter written to her by Mr. Roosevelt, addressing her as "Dear Maria," and bearing out everything she had said before. It was one of the most interesting episodes of Roosevelt's term, but it added nothing to the fame of that administration.

Beautifying the Home

Many local ranchers have so far been "too busy to bother with flowers," but there are some who have cultivated the ornamental as well as useful and they are starting their neighbors to thinking along the same line. Just a few touches of color, a clump or two of flowers and a few shrubs can transform the appearance of a country place. They make the home more attractive, more homelike, more interesting and more valuable. To one who appreciates the beautiful they are a constant joy and refreshment. The returns on the investment are incalculable. In flowers there is an ever-present inspiration and delight. They repay a little attention many fold and they add to the home a charm which no home can afford to be without.

LADYBUGS TURNED LOOSE ON APHIS

Ladybugs by the thousands have just been turned loose in the orchards of W. H. Hannibal and George Gallagher, near Agnew, Cal., by Earl L. Morris, Santa Clara county horticultural commissioner, who is experimenting with them as a means of relief from the aphids found on the apple trees. Sixty thousand members of the Hippodamia convergens, or common red ladybug family, have been set to work to eat the aphids which last year caused the leaves to curl and did considerable damage in all parts of California.

As the result of experiments which were carried on last year, the California state horticultural commissioner sent a large force of men to the slopes of the Sierras a short time ago to gather the red ladybugs, many of which hibernate in the vicinity of Lake Tahoe. By means of pack mules load after load was taken out to the railroad and shipped to Sacramento, where the head bugman of the state supervised the distribution to those who had made a request for the aphid eaters. Just what they will do with the apple aphid is a question, for they are, for the first time, being given an opportunity to demonstrate their value. Should it develop that the red ladybug takes kindly to the apple it may prove a great boon to apple growers, who some years are given considerable trouble by this pest.

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CALLS BEES BEST FRUIT POLLENIZERS

J. D. Yancy, a fruit grower of Bridgeport, Wash., believes every orchardist should keep bees in order to effect pollination or fertilization of fruit blossoms. He says, in a recent issue of a Washington paper:

"Every up-to-date fruit grower is supposedly interested in whatever tends toward a better fruit crop. Much attention is given to selection of the proper location, nature of the soil, nursery stock, cultivation, pruning and spraying. This is all very well, of course, but it seems to me that one of the most important details of the business is almost, in fact in some cases is entirely overlooked. This is the pollination or fertilization of fruit blossoms.

"There are three methods of pollen distribution—artificial, by hand, by the means of winds and by insects. Artificial fertilization is, of course, impracticable except for scientific experiments; and it has been proven time and again that the wind is a very inefficient and unreliable agent at best. Every orchardist of experience has probably noticed that if fruit bloom be accompanied by weather so cool and cloudy as to prevent the flight of bees and other insects, a very small percentage of fruit will set, even though there be no actual damage from frost, while the reverse is true provided conditions are favorable to the abundant flight of honey and pollen gathering insects, by far the most important of which is the honey bee. This being true and the weather conditions favorable, the fruit grower may insure the abundant setting of fruit by supplying plenty of bees at the proper time."

Bids for Wood

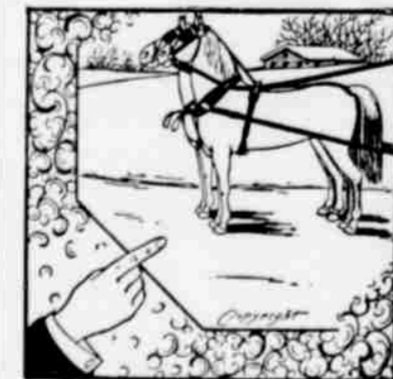
Bids will be received by the clerk of School District No. 4 until July 1, 1912, for 20 cords of four-foot oak and 20 cords of four-foot split or slabwood to be delivered at Barrett schoolhouse; also for ten ricks of 16-foot oak and ten ricks of 16-foot fir or pine, to be delivered in the woodshed of the East Barrett schoolhouse. Wood to be delivered on or prior to September 1, 1912.

F. H. MILLER,
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