

OREGON'S OUTLOOK

G. A. White in November Sunset.

Maeterlinck sets up the theory in his essay on "The Future," that past and future are realities of like value with the present, nothing more than a point of individual observation, whence time falls away into past and future, leaving man, because of long racial habit, to judge of past alone. Yet the future is not put to us so complex in all things as to be inscrutable; nor is it alone the domain of the profligate, trance-medium or the prophet. The doctor steps into a sick room, puts his fingers to the pulse of the patient and says with a degree of certainty, "In a day or two you will be broken out with the measles." And so we may take the pulse of a state in hand and determine from the heart-beats of its industries and resources very much what its tomorrow will be.

What shall we say as to the state whose chief symptoms are: millions of acres of fertile lands awaiting the touch of the plow, billions of feet of the finest timber inviting the woodman's axe and the markets of the world; waterfalls and streams ready for the harness of servitude in the generating of power and electricity; great stock ranges wherein the finest animals can be raised with none of the inconveniences and setbacks of a severe winter; hills rich in mineral store; a great commercial waterway, which opens the gate of trade with the vast countries of the Orient; a people of progressive spirit, who are combined for the state's advancement; and added to these things, enormous productions in every branch of agriculture, horticulture and manufactures; new railroads threading their way with commercial sustenance to growing sections of the state. These are some of the signs of Oregon's future and the conclusion to be drawn therefrom is obvious.

Oregon's pulse today is beating with the strong steady movement of prosperity, a prosperity which includes past, present and future in its scope. There is peace and plenty throughout the state, attendant upon one of the most successful years in its history. This year's crops have been heavy, products of mill and factory, exports and imports, in fact every branch of industry and activity shows increase. The banks are full of money, the people's pockets are protruding with plenty; and yet the bright sun of prosperity is hardly above the horizon, for Oregon is yet in her early morning.

Like California, Oregon is one of the younger communities of America. The Oregon country passed to the sovereignty of the United States a brief sixty years ago and was explored by Lewis and Clark one hundred and one years ago—an event, the centennial of which was so fittingly celebrated last year by the Lewis and Clark Exposition at Portland.

Equable climate and bountiful resources early attracted the westward-bound cavalades of settlers, who found therein a land of plenty, which gave to them a livelihood without asking too much in return. They found that in Oregon, Nature had set up a storehouse of the things that are good for man; and the word went out bringing its throngs of hopeful homeseekers from the less encouraging districts of the East. And today the opportunity for the homeseeker and for the investor was never greater. Few, if any, places, offer so much to the newcomer, whether he be capitalist, farmer or workman. The need of all classes cannot be emphasized too clearly.

Oregon is the largest of the Northwest states. California and Nevada form the southern boundaries, with Washington to the north, Idaho on the east and the Pacific across the west. From north to south is a distance of 290 miles, from east to west 350 miles. The total area is 99,030 square miles, or 61,459,200 acres.

Three mountain ranges divide the state from north to south—the Coast Range, the Cascades, which segregate the state into Eastern and Western Oregon, and the Blue Mountains near the eastern boundary. It is among the slopes of these ranges that is found the most valuable stand of lumber in the world—a stand estimated at 300,000,000,000 feet, board measure, and making up approximately a sixth of the merchantable timber in the United States. Converted to lumber and disposed of at, say \$12 per thousand feet, the amount of revenue derived would be \$3,500,000,000. Last year 1,300,000,000 feet of lumber was shipped, adding to the wealth of the state the neat sum of \$16,900,000. The increase over the timber output in past years is represented in millions of dollars; for example, in 1904, the sum of \$13,200,000 was derived, and in 1903, the total was \$12,000,000.

Industrial Oregon may rightly be divided into seven districts. First, the rich Willamette Valley taking its way from Portland southward across eight counties and occupying four million acres of rich land. Here a total failure of crops has never been known, the Coast Range doing away with the necessity of irrigation, although the need of conserving the surplus water supply for dry periods and thus adding to the general productiveness, has of late been generally urged. Diversified farming is carried on with success and the livestock and dairying industries are now on a sound footing. Experiments in dairying have established that this is a natural center for the industry. The mild climate does away with that loss of energy and fat used up by rigorous winters. Forage is of the best and there are good pastures the year round. North-eastern Oregon, a second district, is bounded by the Columbia and Snake Rivers. It is a domain of grain fields, orchards, stock ranches and ranges, and of great mineral wealth—most of it yet undeveloped. Central Oregon, at the western end of which stands the majestic Mount Hood, with its mantle of snow, is an empire of farming, stock raising and fruit growing. In the northwestern portion of this district lies the justly renowned Hood River fruit region, a name that has found fame in the four quarters of the globe as producing the best apples in the world. And here the fruit growers work upon a basis that is well worthy of emulation. They send out none but their finest fruit, sacrificing enormous quantities that the best may go to the outside markets. You will find the Hood River apple featured on the markets of New York or Michigan or Ohio, even of Europe and the Orient. The fourth, or Coast district, begins at the junction of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, taking in the Coast country on down south to the California line. Great showings have been made here in dairying and the making of cheese. The settlement is sparse and there is unlimited room for development—room that is rapidly being taken advantage of by investors and homeseekers. The Southern Oregon district and its neighbor, Southeastern Oregon, likewise offer opportunities innumerable and are drawing hundreds of people to share their mineral and agricultural wealth.

Oregon's exports form no inconsiderable item. The total exports from Portland and Coos Bay harbors amounted in value last year to \$10,131,949, as compared with \$7,146,444 for 1904. These exports for the most part went down the Columbia River to serve Europe, Asia, Oceania, Africa, Mexico, South America and the Hawaiian Islands. The average cargo leaving Portland harbor now runs up to 7500 tons. With a forty-foot channel at the mouth of the Columbia River the largest vessels need show no hesitancy in making Portland. River improvements are now being conducted by the Government with this end in view.

The Columbia River, with its tributaries taps a region as great as the whole of New England with New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland thrown in for good measure. Its foreign commerce averages up to more than \$12,000,000 in solid business. Substantially all exports are grown in the country tributary to the river. Practically all imports are absorbed by Oregon. Demands from the Orient for all commodities are increasing and this fact, added to the growing population, the expanding territory, and the great field for manufacturing, forms the magnet that is attracting the investor.

Last year Oregon produced 13,700,000 bushels of wheat, 1,750,000 bushels of barley, 6,250,000 bushels of oats, 800,000 tons of hay and 375,000 bushels of corn. The salmon output on the Oregon side of the Columbia River made a total of 24,581,671 pounds, the total farm products brought \$4,510,343 (and only about one-sixth of Oregon's area is now included in farms), fruit added \$1,544,411, and so the figures may be piled up indefinitely—all telling their story of resources immeasurable and of opportunities unlimited.

Two things that should be touched upon in passing are climate and scenery. The climate is milder than other regions of the same latitude. The mean annual temperature in the Coast region is 51 degrees; in the Willamette Valley, 52 degrees; in Southern Oregon, 53 degrees, while in Eastern Oregon the average is 46 degrees. This is much milder than normal, latitude considered. Western Oregon and parts of Southern Oregon are green the year around. Roses flourish in Portland on Christmas day. Oregon scenery is urged as an unanswerable argument for the patriotic "See America First" campaign. There is perhaps no more inspiring sight in the world than the trip down the Columbia River from The Dalles to Portland. Nature has laid on her coloring with a lavish hand in this magnificent sweep of scenic grandeur. Crater Lake, a masterpiece of coloring, the Willamette Valley, with its rural charm, the Rogue River Valley and the mighty Siskiyou all reveal a wealth of incomparable scenic beauty.

A factor of the utmost importance in the development of the state at this time is the unprecedented railroad activity. It was pleaded a few years ago that all Oregon had outgrown its railroads. But to this an ample remedy is being applied. Fully a hundred million dollars will have been put into new steam and electric lines before the close of 1908, and will accentuate the development in every direction. Oregon is becoming the Mecca of the transcontinental lines. The Harriman lines in Oregon alone have at hand for immediate expenditure the sum of \$14,343,587. This money is being expended as rapidly as possible in the face of a labor shortage, such as is now general throughout the Northwest. Wages in every field of activity were never higher nor workmen so hard to get. Another big work wherein the railroads are helping is that of publicity. Thousands of dollars are being put out by lines in Oregon in presenting the state's resources to Eastern fields. The relation of the railroad to the development of the country it serves has never been more fully illustrated than in Oregon.

When Portland and Oregon, with characteristic spirit and enterprise, held the World's Fair last year, a reaction from the activities attendant thereon was predicted on all hands.

But there has been no reaction. Commercial and industrial activity have swept ahead on a broader scale under the impetus which the Exposition gave. Realty values in Portland and throughout the state have increased steadily. Portland, with Oregon behind it, and Oregon with its wealth of resources behind it, were never greater than today.

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