

OLD SHACKS NO LONGER PROFITABLE

Ground Is Too Valuable to Remain Non-Productive in City Limits.

TAKES ADVANCED RANK

Investors Attracted to Two Widely Separated Districts by Reason of Recent Purchases Made. Secretive About Theater.

BY JOHN J. HARRISON.

"One of the probable factors in the metamorphosis that is going on in Portland, stirring up the dry bones of village days and substituting big modern buildings for shacks that for years constituted desirable locations is attributable in some measure to the policy of taxation adopted by Assessor Sigler.

"Valuations on important pieces of property here and there throughout the city have been gradually brought up to a base contingent on proper improvement. This advancement in valuations has been conducted with a rare sense of responsibility and fairness, but it has resulted in many instances in compelling owners of these lots to put up improvements commensurate with the demands of the times and of such character as to produce revenue sufficient to pay taxes, in some cases interest on loans, and give the owner a fair revenue from the holding.

"The foregoing may appear to be suggested by one of Henry George's books on single tax, but the fact is it is the opinion of one of the leading realty brokers of Portland. This broker continued by citing instances where to his knowledge good improvements had been made for the reason indicated. Some of these date back for two or more years, but the majority are of recent months.

Portland's High Position.

Whatever part the assessment policy has in the remarkable advance in building operations during the last few years is not a matter that is to be authoritatively discussed in this column, but it is enough to provide a text for thought, to say the least.

It is a subject that is, Portland's position among the progressive cities of the country—calling for much gratulation from all who have interest or pride in this city's marvelous growth. On every hand are seen evidences of what appears an unbroken line of building operations, and from the records of the Building Inspector's office this forward movement shows no indication of falling behind for some months to come, at least.

The announcement made in The Oregonian Wednesday of the purchase of the old Y. M. C. A. building at Fourth and Yamhill streets by Joseph M. Healy was the most important deal of the week. This transaction must be credited to the week's business for the reason that it was not publicly given out before, although negotiations had been under way for some weeks before. Mr. Healy is not to obtain possession of the property until July 1 of the coming year, but in the meantime will consider several proposals regarding future use to which the building will be put.

His purchase has put considerable activity into the local market, especially for holdings in that locality of the city. It is somewhat generally believed that next year will bring long-talked-of improvement in corners in the neighborhood owned by wealthy individuals, and these beliefs are based largely on the knowledge of what these owners have already done elsewhere. The corners referred to are small buildings in the sites at present, some of which produce practically no revenue while others only nominal amounts compared with what modern large buildings would bring.

New Theater Talked Of.

As to a site in the neighborhood for a new theater building, its selection stands as good chance as any mentioned in that connection, according to those who are interested themselves in the project.

The whole matter of a new theater is said to be up to the promoters, and the enterprise. One of the promoters said yesterday that if a sufficient public spirit could be worked up to undertake the erection of the proposed building, evidence is at hand to prove that the investment would be one of the best paying in sight at the present time. Plans have been drawn for an annex to a theater of generous proportions, this annex to be arranged into stores and offices. Not much enthusiasm has been aroused, however, in the project so far, principally on account of the aversion to publicity evinced by the promoters.

The district in the vicinity of the dock and grain elevator about completed by the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railroad Company at the foot of Raleigh street is to be further improved by the addition of another big elevator and dock. The Campbell-Sanford-Henley Company announces its intention to build on the waterfront property at the foot of Fifteenth street, acquired by the firm some months ago. When the next grain season is fairly opened and the North Bank road in good shape for hauling the product of the great country known as the inland Empire and the big yield from the Columbia Valley west as well, there will be need of the big storage facilities being provided. All these improvements in the extensive terminal district will make it one of the most important in the city. The wholesale section to the west and south of the elevators and docks is moving ahead at a great rate, many large firms finding that former locations in places occupied by them are too highly valued by owners of the sites and that modern improvements are denied leases in many instances.

While there continues to be much lack of pride in having records of realty transfers show the city's importance, about the usual number of records appearing every day with unusual names, it would appear that many purchasers of ground withhold the correct figures in order to keep the Assessor from getting a line on values and the practice certainly is not commendable. So far the advocates of having city records accurate seem unable to devise a plan that would compel proper records and have finally abandoned hope of reform.

Buyers Block of Ground.

G. W. Priest, a well-known building contractor, has purchased a block in Ravenswood, near Richmond, for \$200, and next Spring will erect a number of dwellings on the land.

The Central Methodist Church, of Albina, has purchased a quarter block on Vancouver avenue and Central street, and has started on the erection of a chapel. Work is in progress on the basement.

At Highland work has been started on a \$5000 Baptist Church building.

TWO HANDSOME NEW PORTLAND HOUSES



C. B. MOORE'S E. 15TH AND WASCO



J. A. HASELTINE N. W. CORNER MADISON AND STOUT

FINE SHOWING FOR MONTH

BUILDING PERMITS IN DECEMBER OVER \$1,000,000.

One More Large Structure to Figure in Statistics Before January 1.

Building permits for the month of December to the close of office hours yesterday amounted to 186, and the total amount of estimated cost of the structures and for alterations to \$784,925. Plans and specifications for the annex of the Imperial Hotel being erected for J. B. Wilcox are in the Building Inspector's hands for examination and will figure in the month's totals as the submitted plans will be, in all probability, passed upon in the course of the week. This estimated cost for the work covered in the application will approximate \$200,000, taking the building operations for the year well over \$10,000,000.

For the past week 57 permits were issued with \$156,715 in estimated valuations. Permits of over \$2000 each issued for the week, with location and owner's name, is shown in the following:

- December 14—J. F. Kraeger, store and flats, Union avenue, between 17 and Cook avenue, \$2000; Thomas Moffatt, dwelling, Northrup, between Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth, \$4500; Ed Sheen, dwelling, Williams avenue, between Killingsworth and Sumner, \$3000; L. D. Wolford, dwelling, Waidler between East Fourteenth and East Fifteenth, \$4500.
- December 15—C. Oskanburg, dwelling, Cal far, corner Moore, \$4500; P. A. Cantander, dwelling, Cleveland, between Sumner and Thueson, \$4500; Mrs. J. W. Eise, dwelling, Garfield between Jarrett and Ainsworth, \$2500; R. V. Jones, apartments, Montgomery, between Fifteenth and Seventeenth, \$25,000.
- December 16—Dr. A. M. Webster, dwelling, Hawthorne avenue, between East Thirty-first and East Thirty-second, \$3500.
- December 17—Norwegian-Danish M. E. church, Vancouver avenue, corner Skidmore, \$1000; E. M. Baker, store and office, Alberta, between East-seventeenth and Eighteenth, \$10,000; J. Landigan, lodging-house, Commercial, between Stanton and Morris, \$12,000; Hannah C. Groba, dwelling, East Eleventh between Thompson and Blaine, \$3000; Emil Pitelkan, apartments, Park corner Taylor, \$20,000; G. A. Anderson, apartments, King between Washington and Davis, \$15,000.
- December 18—Lullie Manufacturing Company, warehouse, Fifth between Hoyt and Irving, \$5000.
- December 19—C. M. Polz, dwelling, Ainsworth, corner East Sixth, \$3000.

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BUILDING WORK ACTIVE

CONCRETE PILING IS BEING USED ON FILL SITES.

When New House Is Ready There Will Be Three Large Structures At Fourth and Everett.

Concrete cylinder piling is being put down on two sites on the East Side for buildings that are to be additions to the wholesale district. This form of foundation is to be extensively used in those places in that district that were filled in and reclaimed for building purposes. The process has been attracting considerable attention from passers-by, as this form of piling has been practically unknown in this part of the country except in bridge construction.

Plans for the new building to be erected by a Chinese syndicate at Fourth and Everett streets, on the quarter-block leased from the Bolland Investment Company, are about completed by Emil Schacht, the architect. When this building is completed there will be three large buildings in the immediate vicinity occupied entirely by Chinese. Lee Hong, recently appointed Oriental agent for the Harriman steamship lines, with office in Portland is one of the officers of the syndicate, and a principal owner.

Preliminary estimates are being made and received by David C. Lewis for the construction of the new building to be erected by the Lewis estate on the lot, 86x100, at the northeast corner of Oak and Fourth streets. Mr. Lewis said yesterday that it is his purpose to have the new building a model in the way of office-building construction and finishing. Plans are to be completed for a structure of reinforced concrete of 19 stories in height.

Uprights and girders have been put in place for the first floor of the Henry building, at Fourth and Oak streets, extending for the sidewalk base. Concrete bases for uprights have been under way for some weeks, and those who were unconvinced with the fact that concrete hardens in water expressed the opinion that this condition would weaken the mass. Experts say directly to the contrary, and refer to numberless instances where their contention is borne out. One point brought out is that in the building of walls for buildings of concrete they are kept saturated so that the mass may become more compact.

Top course of brickwork is about finished on the Crawford building at Fifth and Ankeny streets. Some surprise is expressed by passers-by that the structure is to be only three stories high. Previous announcements having been made that it was to be from four to six stories. The building, nevertheless, is a distinct improvement for the locality, and as it covers one-half of the half-block, it makes quite an addition to what last year was the site of a rambling frame. The Fifth-street front has concrete uprights and bonds, the balance of the building being of brick.

Contract has been awarded by Doyle & Patterson, the architects of the Meier & Frank building, amounting to about

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\$30,000, for the plumbing, heating and wiring of that structure, which has now reached the seventh floor in steel interior construction.

The fifth story concrete construction of the Lombard building at Fifth and Stark streets, will be started this week, the lower story walls having set.

New front on the Alder-street side of the old Oddfellows building, at the corner of First street, is about finished, and gives the building quite a modern appearance.

Opening of the recently completed freight sheds for the Portland Railway, Light & Power Company was celebrated yesterday afternoon by a public inspection of the buildings and surroundings under invitations issued by the company.

About 30 acres on the hillside at the head of Lovejoy street will soon be placed on the market for residence sites.

Humason & Jeffery report the sale of a 60x73 1-3 lot on northeast corner of Tenth and Everett streets, \$2100, to Mrs. Lucy Dougherty, who will erect a dwelling. The lot was sold for \$2500. Also 50x100 on Wasco between Nineteenth and Twenty-first was sold to Mrs. Al Moser, price, \$1900.

Considerable buying is going on in the Irvington section. In the past few days Humason & Jeffery report the sales of the northeast corner of Thirtieth street and Broadway, \$2100, to Mrs. Lucy Dougherty, who will erect a dwelling. The lot was sold for \$2500. Also 50x100 on Wasco between Nineteenth and Twenty-first was sold to Mrs. Al Moser, price, \$1900.

Chapin & Herlow report the following sales in the Riverdale district, which comprises Riverdale, Palatine Hill, Riverdale and Abernethy Heights. Eight acres formerly owned by John Sommerville to F. C. Graham, of Portland; four acres owned by the Breyman estate to Carlos H. Smith, controller of the Elgin National Watch Company, of Elgin, Ill., and Alfred La Vole, a retired real estate broker of Chicago; four acres from J. J. Graham, of Albany, Or., to G. A. Hoff, man, of Portland; 3 1-3 acres formerly owned by Judge Williams to Ira F. Powers, of Portland; 4 6-100 acres from the Breyman estate to Frank C. Savage of Portland; 10 1-5 acres, formerly owned by Iam White, to a local investor of Portland, whose name is being withheld for the present; 4 2-5 acres from C. E. Wood to Walter V. Mackay, of Portland.

New Oregon Postmasters. WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The President sent to the Senate today the following nominations for Oregon postmasters: William M. Brown, Lebanon; J. E. Beasley, Falls City; Merritt A. Baker, Weston.

A Christmas Present that will ever become dearer—

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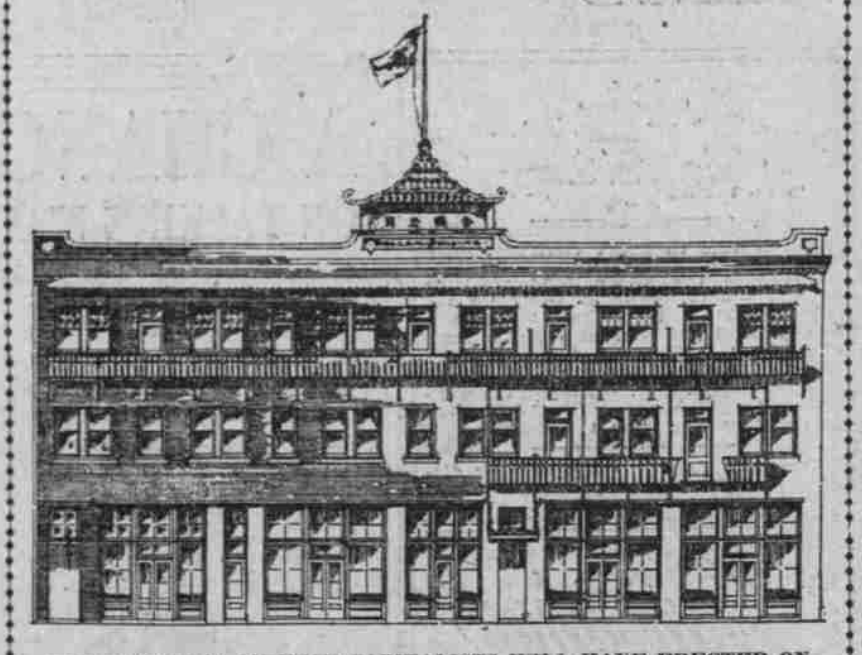
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BUILDING TWO CHINESE CAPITALISTS WILL HAVE ERECTED ON LOWER FOURTH STREET FOR EXCLUSIVE USE OF CELESTIALS.

On the quarter block on the southwest corner of Fourth and Everett street another building to be devoted for use of Chinese tenants is soon to be erected. The Bolland Investment Company owns a long-term lease on the ground, which it has sublet to two Chinese merchants, Lee Lung and Lee Hong. It is the intention of the Chinese capitalists to build a three-story brick and concrete structure on the site, the first floor of which is to be arranged in stores, and the upper floors divided into offices and rooms; all to be rented to Chinese. This building will provide the third large structure in that locality for Chinese in Portland; practically doubling the matter of a new Chinatown, as former places occupied by them along Second street are rapidly being vacated.

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