

## Coos Bay, Roseburg and Eastern Railroad.

The construction of the Coos Bay R. R. appears to be assuming more practice pro-pastime than at any time heretofore. It is announced in the eastern press that George Gould is actually going to build, in the very near future, two roads to the Pacific Coast, and that the Coos Bay road is one of them. We are disposed to place a great amount of credence in these reports, particularly that regarding the Coos Bay road. We have two reasons for crediting this last announcement.

One of our reasons is sufficient. There is a demand for the construction of this road. The commerce of the Pacific Coast, with the orient and our insular possessions is assuming enormous proportions and will increase from years to years as our commodities come into more general use by those people. In order to meet this demand there exists a necessity for more railroad carriage. This is prohibited to other companies by the management of the present roads; and there is but one way men handling the amount of traffic handled by such lines as the Gould, can reach the coast, and that is by their own independent lines. It is therefore imperative for Gould to reach the coast, if he expects to share in the oriental trade. He can't do it at Seattle, Tacoma, San Francisco or Portland. He has lines as far west as Salt Lake. The construction of a road from Salt Lake to Coos Bay will give him just what he wants, an outlet. It will do more it will give him a control of all the shipping business between Baker City in Oregon and Reno, Nevada. A county rich in all western resources such as stock, grain, fruit, timber and minerals. The distance between these points is 400 miles, and is the largest scope of territory in the United States without a railroad. The traffic of this section alone, will, with eastern connections at Salt Lake, support a road on a largely paying basis. The time is here for this road and unless all signs fail, the road is coming.

### Good Price for Prunes.

The prunes growers will be interested to know that the price named by them in their conference meeting held at Salem, on July 25, were not far wide of the real value of prunes. The Willamette Valley Prune Association has since that date accepted a few orders, when buyers could be induced to pay the price, the sales aggregating now upwards of forty carloads. Probably twice this amount would have been sold had it not been for the break made in Southern Oregon, where some large growing crops were sold at an abnormally low figure, the fruit being resold in the East as low as 2½ basis, four cents for 40-50s. In an interview with a Salem Statesman reporter, Manager H. S. Gile, of the Willamette Valley Prune Association, said:

"It seems strange that growers should be content to accept 3½ to 3¾ cents for 40-50s when other growers are selling the same goods at 4½ cents in the bins, and this is what the Salem and Roseburg associations are doing."

A letter received by Manager Gile from a representative grower in the Santa Clara valley states that all California crop estimates have been too high. The letter gives some interesting facts to prove that the valley crop will not be more than 40 per cent of that of last year instead of 60 per cent, as is generally estimated. The writer had just refused 3¾ basis (4½ cents for 40-50s) for his large crop.

F. W. Crandall, manager of the Sorosis Fruit Farm, who had just returned from Europe, speaking before the growers at a meeting recently held in San Jose, California, said:

"There has not been in twenty

years so strong a pressure on the part of the Eastern merchants as there is now to crush down prices to the minimum. The growers must stand together and not sell one pound at less than a good round price. The trade does not care whether it pays on a 3 or a 3½ cent basis. What it does care for is that there shall be uniformity. The demand for prunes was never greater.

"In the European markets there is a very small holdover crop. Hamburg and Bordeaux being the only places where there is any to speak of. The prospects are for only one-quarter of an average crop. California must pack up to the brands, and not send fruit which has been strongly sulphured and then not aired well before boxing. The price of prunes this year does not depend on what New York or Chicago merchants want, but on what the growers of California say. A 3 cent net basis would be reasonable."

Colonel Philo Hersey, president of the Santa Clara County Fruit Exchange, who has also recently returned from a trip to Europe, and who addressed the growers during the same meeting, said:

"This year's fruit crop is short in every country. All the natural products are light. At the beginning of the season there were no French prunes on hand. Bosnia and Serbia have only 2,500 wagon loads of eleven tons each, a mere grain for the European markets.

"This country had a holdover of 27,000,000 or 28,000,000 pounds on May 1st. The largest estimate for this year's crop is two-thirds of last year's yield. There will not, therefore, be the usual consumption of fruit in Europe and America, so that there is no reason why California prunes should not bring a higher price this year than last."

During the interview Manager Gile further said:

"In view of all the facts there is no reason why the prune growers in Oregon and Washington should take less than 4 to 4½ cents net for 40-50s. The 25,000,000 or 30,000,000 pounds of prunes produced in the Northwest is a very small factor in the world's supply. The growers should not forget that a large crop or a total failure in Oregon has very little effect on the enormous total amount annually consumed, but our conditions may be tremendously affected by the failure of crops abroad."

The prune crop throughout the Willamette valley is generally reported as making rapid growth, and the growers are thoroughly pleased with the favorable weather conditions and the encouraging prospect.

More than 5,000,000,000 pounds of sugar, valued at over \$100,000,000, was brought into the United States in the fiscal year just ended. This is a larger importation of sugar than at any preceding year in the history of the country, and the value is greater than in any preceding year, except the importations of 1891, 1893 and 1894. These figures include the sugar brought from Porto Rico and the Hawaiian Islands.

### Reduced Rates to Oregon State Fair.

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