

# WEALTH IN POTATO ALCOHOL

Results In Germany Prove That America Is Missing Chance to Make Money

Fort Dodge, Ia., Aug. 31.—As the time approaches for the removal of the tax on alcohol, the problem which confronts those most interested in it is what is best to make it from with a view of getting the largest returns. Another phase of the question which is not being overlooked is who will benefit most by its removal.

An examination of the machinery used in the passage of the bill brings to light the fact that the farmer is entitled to the greater part of the credit, if not a large part of the glory. Singly and through his granges he practically dictate the vote which, in time, to bring him such great benefits.

Next comes the manufacturer, who sees in cheaper alcohol lower costs on his finished products and a consequent greater profit to himself. It is not expected that the buying public will realize any great saving in the retail prices of the hundred and one things into which it enters, for the manufacturer expects to secure a little extra profit. It would therefore seem that the one thing which enters into the change which takes place the first of next month is, who is to reap the benefit of the new law?

It appears to be a matter of common knowledge among those who know that the Standard Oil company has control of the wood alcohol plants of the country. As this item of commerce is the principal agent employed in the denaturizing process called for by the law, it is apparent to any one wishing to denaturize a gallon of alcohol that he must first settle with them for his denaturizing agent.

Next comes the whiskey trust, which has numerous idle plants scattered over the country capable of making a large quantity of alcohol, and if a sufficient number is not now in working order an additional number can be acquired readily.

Alcohol from molasses is already an established method of manufacturing. But the sugar refineries of the country are under the management of the sugar trust and some of its directors are members of the whiskey trust.

Thus three of the greatest combinations of capital are ready to furnish alcohol at a price, and hundreds of manufacturers ready to purchase it to lessen their cost of manufacture, but what has the farmer done to make sure of the earnings of this new industry?

**Relief in Potatoes.**

The foregoing are some of the different phases of the question which have presented themselves for consideration to those who have given study to the new industry which is destined to do so much for the American people. The real point for the people of the west to consider is, how are the western farmers to reap benefit from it? The answer is—potatoes.

In the early days corn was raised purely as an item of food. In the pioneer days of New England it was used in church decorations on occasions of celebration. Roger Williams found the Indians making a potage which they called "somp" from corn. But science has developed corn until at the present time there are over thirty different uses to which it is put. It is not only raised for food but the reduction of a corn crop in the six corn growing states of the union will vibrate a wave of price fluctuations that will reach all of the civilizations of the world.

Three billion bushels of corn was raised last year and the money was paid to six states for it. Practically every one of the important corn products plants of the country today were developed after corn had been abandoned as a principal food product.

An acre of potatoes will produce over twice as much alcohol as an acre of corn. Experiments show that an acre of ground which will produce fifty bushels of corn will make 1,960 pounds of fermentable matter, 45 per cent of which will be obtained as absolute alcohol, 882 pounds or 120 gallons.

But there is another consideration with regard to the potatoe for human food and for scarcely any other purpose. We plant the potatoe which has the finest flavor for the table, without regard to its yield per acre. Were we raising potatoes for the purpose of making alcohol, we would do different. The variety which would yield the most abundant per acre would be planted. Where potatoes are used as a cattle food as they are in Germany, varieties of the latter kind are resorted to and there seems to be no obstacle to producing double the amount of alcohol as from the present yield. So that it would be within the bounds of reason to say that it is possible to secure 500 gal-

lons of alcohol from an acre of potatoes.

Potatoes, moreover, are a commercial crop only when within a certain distance from market. At the average price at which the potatoes sell in the middle states it can be hauled only a comparatively short distance, but when reviewing it as a source of light, heat, and power, factories would be encouraged to be built, country neighborhoods and the tubers grown for its largest possible yield of alcohol.

Pretty good testimony for potatoes.

**Potatoe Handicap.**

And how many do we raise? Three hundred million bushels last year. Not enough to go around some years and we have to buy a few in Europe. Ten bushels of corn raised for each bushel of potatoes. What is the reason? It would appear that the general verdict is that they are an easier crop to raise than corn. The principal reason is this: Owing to the great bulk and perishable nature of the crop it cannot be transported as advantageously. In years of bountiful yield net returns to farmers are often unsatisfactory. This is the whole situation in a nutshell—no home market.

The western farmer can harvest his corn in the fall and draw it to a cooperative elevator or keep it at home and wait until the price gets him interested in selling it. But the man with the potatoe crop must hustle it to market and sometimes get back a bill from the commission man for his trouble, market glutted, etc., and all because there is not now any other use for them but to boil, bake and fry.

It doesn't sound good at all. They do things different over in Germany, where they made 90,000,000 gallons of alcohol last year from potatoes.

This is what Congressman E. J. Hill says after a visit and an investigation:

"In Germany alcohol is made almost wholly from potatoes. The highest yield per acre was 360 bushels and from that down to 124; probably a fair yield would be around 200 to 225. The potatoes are grown by the farmers and manufactured into alcohol in individual farm distilleries and in cooperative distilleries as well. The aggregate product of the farm distilleries was about fifty times as much as that of the industrial distilleries in Germany. At the beginning of each year the syndicate managers fix the price which they will pay the producers for their product. This is based, of course, upon the condition of the crop. The price this year has been fixed at 25 per cent less than it was last, indicating a much larger crop. The product is taken and paid for by the syndicate as it is made by the various farmers. On all of this alcohol, which is made denatured or rendered undrinkable, the government allows a special return of tax previously paid, amounting to about 21 1/2 cents a gallon. Out of this amount the expenses of the syndicate, an allowance for their investment with a fair profit on their business, and commissions for the wholesale and retail dealers are all paid, and whatever is left at the end of the season is returned pro rata to the farmer or original producer. I was told that as a general rule an additional return was made at the end of the year to the producer, but that occasionally the payment was the other way, the price at which the product was sold not being sufficient to reimburse the managers of the syndicate for the amounts already advanced at the beginning of the season.

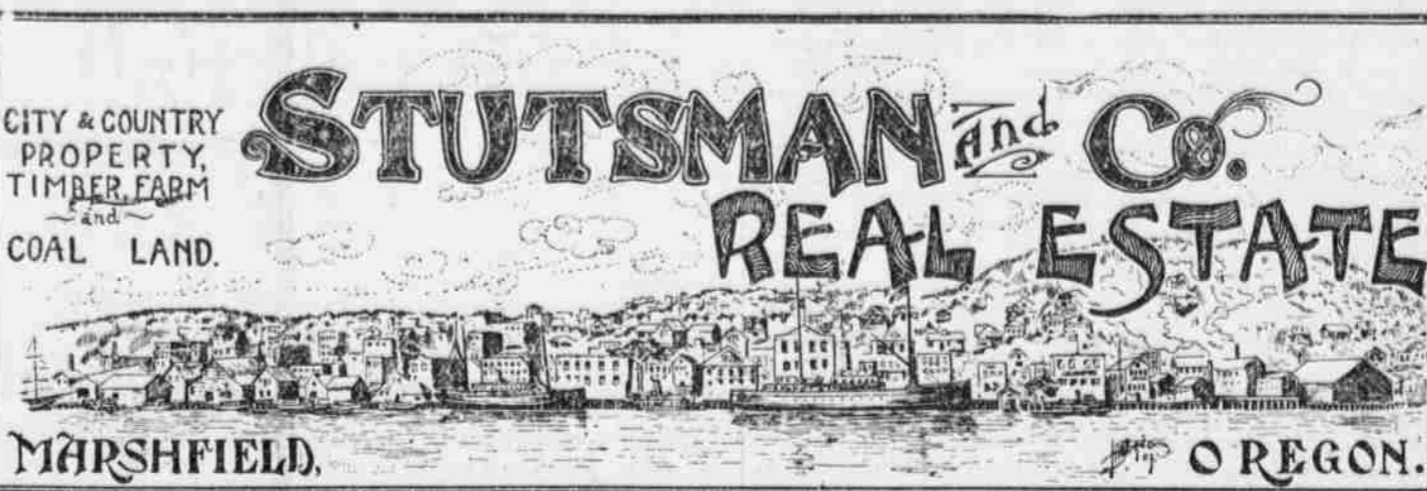
**Farmers Need a Market.**

"The extent of the industry is shown by the fact that last year there were more than 10,000,000 bushels of potatoes consumed in the manufacture of alcohol. Over 8,000,000 acres of farms in Germany were planted to potatoes and nearly 6,000 distilleries were in operation. "I have not the slightest doubt that alcohol can be made cheaper from corn in the United States, and that the same thing is true in the northern states from potatoes, and probably in the southern states from sweet potatoes. Certainly a traveler needs but a short stay in France or Germany to come to the conclusion that the cultivation of potatoes is an industry which can be greatly improved there when compared with the quality of our American product. "I found that the practice was quite common of sorting the potatoes, the best being reserved for human food, the next grade for feeding animals, and the refuse or poorer grades for manufacturing alcohol. The first grade was selling at retail for 75 cents a bushel. The average cost of all potatoes grown in 1904-

was 27.6 cents a bushel, and I am quite confident that this was far more than they were worth, quality being taken into consideration." It would thus appear that it is up to the farmer to provide a means of marketing his product which would not be under the control of a large corporation. It would seem the better part of wisdom to utilize the cooperative system of neighborhood distilleries and avoid some one concern dictating the price for both the finished and raw product. If cooperative distilleries, and thus keep the industry in the hands of those who created it?

If German farmers with their methods of farming make it pay, what could the western farmer do with his methods and machinery? Consider the history of the sugar beet industry. Pioneers in this built factories and contracted with the local farmers to raise the beets. He raised them and the beet sugar industry is no longer in the experimental stage. It takes ten times as much labor to raise an acre of beets as it does an acre of potatoes. Cooperative distilleries and the manufacture of alcohol from potatoes means a new field of great revenue for the western farmer, who is in the best position to derive the greatest profit from the effect of the new law.

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COMMUNICATION

Establishment of Smelters Would Work Much Injury.

Do the people of Coos Bay know the results of having a smelter established in their vicinity? It would, doubtless, be a success in bringing money into the country, but it will destroy far more than it can bring. A few years ago a huge smelter was built at Keswick, near Redding, Cal., and when I was there four years ago not an atom of green vegetation existed within a radius of about two miles of the place, and everything from timber to grass was dying for a much greater distance in all directions. I have recently been informed that although the plant had an annual output of nearly \$1,000,000, yet the people have succeeded in stopping its operation.

If the people of Coos Bay wish to utterly paralyze all agricultural and dairying enterprises in their vicinity destroy a vast amount of timber and render their beautiful green hills a horrid barren desert, let them permit a smelter plant in their midst, and the sulphurous, arsenical, mineral, and other poisonous vapors vomited from its deadly funnels in prodigious quantities will do the work ten times quicker, cheaper and more effective than it can be accomplished in any other way. If a Japanese fleet should come in and shell everything in sight to their hearts' content the consequences would be tame in comparison.

Now don't call me a "knocker;" but investigate for yourselves, and learn the conditions in the vicinity of long established smelters, and decide accordingly. Don't blindly permit its establishment, and then after the havoc is wrought, spend years in litigation in the attempt to suppress it. Myrtle Point, Aug. 29, 1907. I. N. Wilson.

**DAILY TRANSFERS.**  
Aug. 27, 1907.

B. Frank Wyatt to Wm. Rowley, quarter of southwest quarter of northeast quarter of southeast quarter, section 16, township 25, range 13; \$1937.50.

Geo. Bolster to Edward Donnelly, lots 7 and 8, block 6, South Marshfield; \$10.

J. V. Pope to Herman Smithgall, lots 6, 7, 8 and 9, Caples Addition to Marshfield; \$10.

Lawrence B. Jennings to John Sundell, lot 1, block 6, Bay City; \$10.

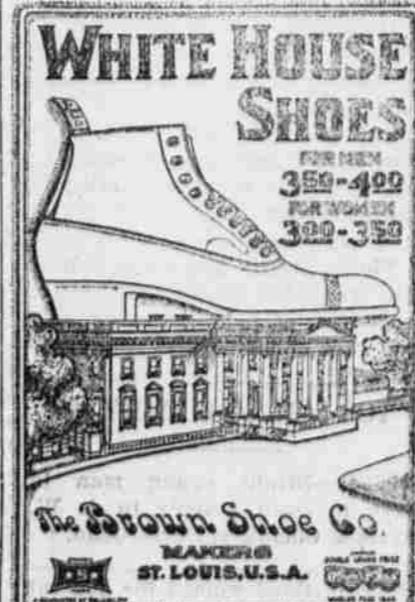
Nicholas Reichert to Mat Anderson lot 35, block 15, Railroad Addition to Marshfield; \$10.

L. A. Roberts to Wm. B. Hughes, south half of southwest quarter, northeast quarter of southwest quarter, east half of northwest quarter of southwest quarter of section 10, township 29, range 12; \$200.

Elmo F. Hughes to Wm. B. Hughes one-eighth interest in south half of southwest quarter, northeast quarter east half of northwest quarter of southwest quarter of section 10, township 29, range 12; \$10.

R. L. Edmonston to Laura B. Bartlett, lots 11 and 12, block 13, Edmonston First Addition to Marshfield; \$10.

M. R. Lee to Elijah J. Hutchinson, lots 5 and 8, block 35, Woodland Addition to Bandon; \$210.



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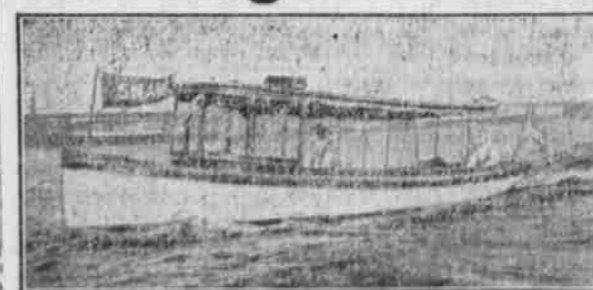
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