

WILLAMETTE FARMER.

VOL. XVI.

SALEM, OREGON, FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 1885.

NO. 48

During these hard times the tendency to trench is very strong and very proper. Let the farmer ask himself, however, if he can afford to dispense with the only journal in the State that belongs to him and represents his interests? Thirteen years ago we purchased the WILLAMETTE FARMER and invested in it all our means and the best years of several lives. Consider, friends, whether it is not more reasonable at this time, (when you know how hard the times must pinch the publisher of your own journal) to go out and collect a small club of new subscribers at the low price offered rather than think of "economizing" by doing without the services of a friend of such long standing.

Correspondence.

Mortgage Tax Law Legislation.

IRVING, Or., Dec. 30, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

As the meeting of the Legislature is near at hand and it is generally believed that there will be a strong effort made to have the mortgage tax law repealed, it is proper that the subject be fully investigated before action is taken in the premises. Previous to the passage of the law it was alleged that many notes and other evidences of debt were either removed from the State or withheld from the assessor, as shown by the great discrepancy in the offsets for debt and the amount given as notes and accounts. Also that notes secured by mortgages in remote counties were chiefly held and taxed in Portland and other money centers to the damage of the rural districts.

The effect of the law has been to materially reduce the discrepancy spoken of above and the collection of taxes on property in the county where located. These results are both just and equitable. It is claimed by a great many that the law is unfriendly to capital, by imposing a double tax on money as compared with other property, especially real estate. A careful examination of the law fails to warrant the assertion or to show that the mortgage tax law has anything whatever to do with the rate of assessment. The wrong, if one exists, lies altogether with the assessors.

Section 9 of the law reads as follows: No promissory note, or other instrument of writing, which is evidence of a debt that is wholly or partly secured by land or real estate situated in no more than one county in this State, shall be taxed for any purpose on the State, but the debt evidenced thereby and the instrument by which it is secured, shall for the purpose of assessment and taxation, be deemed and considered as land or real property and together be assessed and taxed as hereinbefore provided, that is in the county where it is recorded.

By this section we see the law exempts the note and the mortgage where recorded, and while it neither increases or diminishes the amount it does prevent those who might be so disposed from removing the notes from the State or in any manner screening them from their just share of taxation.

Having tried to show that the present mortgage tax law is not to blame for any inequality in the assessment, I go still further, and deny the allegation that land is not assessed at more than half its value. I will admit that an occasional sale is made at more than the assessed value, but it would not be fairer to take that for a basis for assessment than it would be to assess the hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of merchandise throughout the State at its selling price.

The true value of money, land or any other property should be determined by the net return yielded when judiciously handled during a term of years. I know of no better or safer illustration of the comparative values of different property than furnished by the census of 1880.

In 1860 the national wealth was twenty-four thousand millions of dollars, in 1880 it was forty thousand millions, of which farms and the personal property incident thereto increased from eight thousand millions to twelve thousand millions. In 1860 farming property amounted to one-third of the nation's

wealth, while in 1880 it was but three-tenths. The twenty-five million farmers are worth but \$480 each, while the other twenty-five million are worth \$1,428. To the twenty years the farmers gained but \$160 each, while the other classes gained \$640 each.

I assert, without successful contradiction, that to take the farmers of the State and place them under oath and they will testify that for the past ten years they have not cleared six per cent. on the assessed valuation of their property.

Let the mortgage tax law be so amended as to meet the want of uniformity, discovered in the U. S. District Court by the microscopic eye of Judge Dundy, then enforced by the officers and courts of the State.

Come forward, brother farmers, if you deem the law just, and let us defend it. Respectfully, A. C. JENNINGS.

An Experience in Raising Corn in Southern Oregon.

WILBUR, Oregon, Dec. 30, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

I see in your issue of the 26th inst., that you advocate the growing of a corn crop so as to raise a variety; also as a preparation for wheat. I thought I would drop you a line and give you my experience in raising corn. Two years ago last May, I planted about eight acres of corn on side-hill land—such land as would yield about twenty bushels of wheat to the acre. I did not measure the corn so as to ascertain just how much it produced to the acre, as I commenced cutting and hauling it to my stock as soon as it became a little too hard for roasting ears. But I am satisfied that it went further in feeding my stock—consisting of cattle, sheep and swine—than any twelve acres of wheat or oats on the place; and then it comes in just at the time when our grass is dried up and of but little use, and carries the stock along until the rain falls and our pastures become green. And, besides, I fattened a cow on it that I killed just before Christmas, and we had the best of corn-fed corned beef all winter. I have planted corn the last two years with results similar to the above, except that I have not fattened any beef the two last years. Last year, in addition to my field corn, I planted about three acres of sweet corn, which I found to yield abundantly and was well appreciated by the cows, sheep and swine. I did not feed it to my horses, but if they could get where the cows or sheep were fed they would pick at it as long as there was anything left.

If nothing interferes, I expect to plant more largely of corn the coming spring than ever. I expect to plant about twenty acres of sweet corn with a view of turning my sheep on it as soon as it is too hard for roasting ears, and let them help themselves.

It is true, as you say, that the cultivation of corn leaves the ground in excellent condition for wheat. But I am not, and never have been, an advocate of raising so much wheat and shipping off the fertility of our soil. My object in raising the sweet corn I speak of, is to clean the land by cultivating the corn and let the sheep eat it on the ground so as to make it more fertile, and then sow it to grass. But if I think I do not get it clean enough and rich enough, I will plant it the second year and turn the sheep on it again.

Where I raised my corn two years ago I now have in timothy; I sowed it two years ago this fall, and have the best stand I have had in a number of years. The ground on which I raised my corn the last two years, I expect to plant to artichokes for the purpose of wintering my hogs, as I find they winter well on them and it saves a great deal of trouble. I will give you my experience with artichokes, if you desire it, and also with a little corn I brought from Marshall

county, Mo., in my next. A happy New Year to you. THOS. SMITH.

P. S. We had just snow enough here on the mornings of the 11th, 23d, 28th and 29th, so that you could see it, but not deep enough to measure, and a little sleet on the 23d and 24th, and it is now clear and frosty. T. S.

[Note—Any experience our esteemed friend may have will be highly appreciated by the proprietors of the paper. Correspondence on all farm topics is desired.—Ed.]

Mortgage Tax Talk.

SPRINGFIELD, Or., Dec. 29, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

As the tax question seems to be a matter of interest to the people of Oregon at present, and as you have had several articles in your paper on that question, I will, with your permission, say a few words, as I suppose it is right that all should be heard. December 19th you say to tax money or not will be a leading question. Now, why should it be? why not tax money the same as any other property? It has the same protection as the land. Generally money, notes, accounts and mortgages take up a good deal of time in the courts for adjustment, then why should they be excluded from taxation? You say, not to assess money and credits will greatly simplify matters and make collection of revenue much easier, while it will remove a cause for dishonest returns by tax-payers; then I suppose a law that is simple, without any regard to its justness, is the best. Now, if I should sell my cattle land and horses and conclude to loan the money and live off of the interest, why should I be exempt from taxation because my capital is in a different kind of property. Is not a man as able to pay tax on ten thousand dollars in money as the same amount of other property? Yes, but you say when he has money he won't give it in, or there is a strong inducement for him to make a false return. It seems there might be a law made which could not be evaded to any great extent if properly enforced. You say, to tax all property in sight will make the whole tax question easy of solution. That probably is so, but is it right for a portion of the people to pay all the tax to carry on the government because they happen to own a kind of property that is easily found, or is it not better for every one to pay according to what he is worth, and have no privileged class. But you say to not tax money will make interest low. We don't know that; but suppose it did, to get the benefit that the people would have all to be borrowers, which they are not. Probably a majority of the people are not much interested whether interest is high or low, but they want every man to pay his portion of tax. While it might be well enough to encourage capital to come into the country it is not best to do it at the expense of other interests. We make no fight against money, nor wish to give it any advantage over other property. Money is plenty able to take care of itself. It would be fully as well for the country to encourage other interests. It seems to me the assessment laws are well enough if they are properly carried out; they may need some amendments to make them more efficient, but no radical change. Hoping if the Legislature does make any change in the assessment laws it will be for the best interest of all concerned. SPRINGFIELD.

A New Year Letter from Scio.

SCIO, Or., Jan. 3, 1885.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

We are still in the snow knee deep, but as to health and plenty we are all right, or at least most of us, as we have our stock in good shape and plenty of feed to carry them through, though there are a few who have no feed for their stock and who are too hide-bound and penny-wise to buy of those who have plenty to spare, and of course they will

lose their stock. We don't pity such men, but do their stock.

There have been a good many barns fallen in by the weight of the snow, and a great deal of feed is exposed to the element and will spoil if we have our usual amount of rain, as it is impossible to recover or build again as there is no material to be had, as the state of the roads is such that teams cannot travel. Our mail matter has been very much out of shape since the storm and we know little about the outside world or how it is with our fellow-men. Hope it is better with them than with us.

I think the storm will somewhat discourage this year's immigrants, as they have heard so much about the climate and the absence of snow, though I would advise them to be of good cheer as this kind of weather is not common for Oregon, and it may never occur again, at least I hope not.

What is known as the Richardson bridge, across Crabtree creek, is gone; cause, too much snow, which mashed in the roof and broke the stringers. One old shed of our neighbor, Lee Morris, fell in and caught his son under it, but strange it was, he came out but little hurt but badly scared.

We hear that a son of James Elliott, of California, is here on business and wishes to sell his father's old homestead, which consists of one thousand acres of fine land.

Our friend S. W. Gaines, two miles south of Scio, is in the poultry business up to his eyes. He has as fine poultry as can be found on the coast, and is still importing some handsome birds. We saw a trio which he received last week from Ohio, and to say they were handsome would be only putting it mildly, as they were the finest birds we ever had the pleasure of looking at. Such men should be encouraged in such enterprise, and Sam is just the man to make it pay if work and pains can do it, as he prides himself on doing things in the most improved style. Anyone wishing fine poultry would do well to call on him, as he will be able to furnish them with the very best at reasonable prices.

Our Grange (Santiam) is moving along slowly, though we hope successfully; it has been a trying time on ye Grangers, as produce of all kinds have ruled very low for the past season, in fact below cost to the farmer, and when that is the case all suffer alike, as it makes hard times.

We hope our Legislature will do something to compel the different railroads to give us a reasonable freight tariff, as their rates are too high and out of proportion to the need of the public.

There is not over one-third as much fall wheat as last year in this part of old Linn, as a good many farmers have concluded that flax pays better than wheat and will try that the coming season, and a good many are turning their attention to grass and stock, which I think is a good idea.

Scio is quite a business place and her citizens seem to be willing to live and let live. Land in this part of the valley is cheap and we would advise those wishing homes with good neighbors to come this way and will never have cause to regret a look at this country, whether they buy or not.

Hoping the FARMER a prosperous year, with a full support of the farming community, I am truly yours, O. K.

Gone to Rest.

EAST PORTLAND, Or., Dec. 27, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

Another pioneer has been called to his home above. Mr. Christian Deordorf came to this State many years ago and has lived most of his time in this vicinity. He had reached the advanced age of seventy-nine years, and was honored and respected by all who knew him. Full well did we know for many months that his time was short and his departure was near at hand, but that is some

thing pretty hard to do, to prepare ourselves to become reconciled to give up a friend, but now we are called upon to deplore the loss of the departed. He leaves a wife who laments his loss, who has loved and kindly cared for her for over fifty years. Mr. Deordorf leaves three sons, all prosperous farmers, two having large families.

Mr. Deordorf was a Christian in every sense; he was devoted to his church, a kind and indulgent husband, an affectionate father and an observer of the golden rule given us by our great Teacher: "Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you."

Mrs. E. J. P.

Weather Report for December, 1884.

EOLA, January 1, 1885.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

During Jan., 1884, there were 11 days during which rain and snow fell, and an aggregate of 6.09 inches of water, 5 clear, 5 fair and 10 cloudy days other than those on which rain fell.

The mean temperature for the month was 30.73 deg.

Highest daily mean temperature for the month, 42 deg. on the 2d.

Lowest daily mean temperature for the month, 14 deg. on the 17th.

Mean temperature for the month at 2 o'clock P. M., 34.45 deg.

Highest temperature for the month, 49 at 2 P. M. on the 4th.

Lowest temperature for the month, 8 deg. at 9 P. M. on the 23d.

Sixty inches of snow fell during the month, which settled down and melted away until there was not at any time a greater depth than 36 to 38 inches.

The prevailing winds for the month were from the north during 23 days, south 3 days, south-west 5 days.

During Dec., 1883, there were 10 rainy days and 5.63 inches of water, 6 clear, and 15 cloudy days.

Mean temperature for the month, 40.32 deg.

Highest daily mean temperature for the month, 50.02 deg. on the 26th.

Lowest daily mean temperature for the month 26 deg. on 31st.

T. PEARCE.

A Dog Law Needed.

WHITEAKER, Or., Jan. 2, 1885.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

While there is so much being said about the mortgage tax question, I think the farmers overlook an important question. Why don't we have a dog law? The Indiana dog law for instance. How much we lose by the ravages of these pets. I think friend Hunt can give us some interesting points on this subject. Will you induce him to give us the extracts concerning such a law? CITIZEN.

[REPLY.—The columns of the FARMER are open to the discussion of all such questions. There is no doubt of the value of such a law and while the term of the Legislature is short it behooves those interested to act promptly and to the point.—Ed.]

The Weather in Umpqua.

WILBUR, Or., Dec. 9, 1884.

Editor Willamette Farmer:

I saw in last week's FARMER that there had been heavy sleet here. There was a sleet storm near Oakland, but none here. There is no snow in the valley now, but some in sight on the hills. H. M. MARTIN.

IF YOU DON'T WANT THE FARMER FOR 1885 drop us a postal card and say so. We don't want to lose a single subscriber, but shall not force our paper on anyone.

Additional earthquakes occurred in Spain every day last week. The city of Alhama was thrown down hill; 10,000 head of cattle perished; the people are camped in the fields. Showers of stone fell in some places. Many children's bodies are buried and cannot be recovered. Many fissures in the earth appeared.

Genuine cod are caught in a pool on the beach at Ilwaco.