

A Farmers' Opinion of the Causes of the Present Hard Times

ANATONE, W. T., March 11, 1886. Editor Willamette Farmer: It is a common thing now-a-days to read in the papers, articles on "The deplorable condition of the Farmer."

To prove the first two assertions let anyone who may differ with me visit the home of the banker, lawyer, merchant, or doctor; let him notice house, furniture, conveniences and especially the dress of the occupants, and compare these with the farmers' home and family?

When I began farming in Linn county I could name three merchants and five lawyers who had no more ready cash than myself. To-day these eight men are each worth from ten to forty thousand dollars, while I have barely held my own, and I know at any time from that day to this they have had in their homes many times the luxuries and conveniences that I have had in mine.

As to the remedies, they are few and simple. While the farmers are dreaming of things as they should be, the business men of the cities and towns are shaping matters as they are. Then we must awake, prepare for the conflict, take more time to read and observe and study the situation.

They are demonstrating to the rich that they have brains, and can use them, have homes and interests to protect, wives and children whom they love, and the freedom to enjoy life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, was not inserted in our declaration of independence for the rich alone, that the many blessings this government was instituted for, and is capable of bestowing, must descend to all posterity alike.

ones sold for 18c. I have seen as good home made butter as ever was eaten, refused at 50c per roll, while eastern butter was sold in same grocery for 80c per roll.

Now the above mentioned points are some of the direct causes of depression in the farmers products on this coast.

I will now mention some of the indirect causes: First, the population of the cities is increasing at a greater rate than the country, consequently there are many needless vocations that are kept up at the per cent. taken from the laborers' products, as banks, real estate agents, brokers, commission merchants, lawyers, physicians, insurance agents, drummers, etc.

These machines with their nice coat of paint, appear at first sight to be great money saving implements, and would be, were the farmer to get them at even twenty-five per cent. above cost, but when they are purchased at the price asked by the retail dealers, if the length of time they are used, and interest on cost is considered, they too often are an enemy in disguise.

It was once an advocate of free money, but when the Legislature of Oregon reduced the interest from 12 to 10 per cent. I saw that law-makers could bestow great blessings, and did I need further proof of the curse of free money, its effects witnessed in Idaho would furnish it.

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Last week we were in John Hughes store Salem, when a country man brought in his butter. It was packed in a neat box which had sliding shelves; each roll or rather square—for the butter was packed and shaped by a square mold—was neatly wrapped in cheese cloth and the whole out fit had a delightfully fresh and sweet smell.

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