

## GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES

Achievements of Success Not Confined to Pioneer Days.

### CONDITIONS ENCOURAGING

Needs and Requirements of Morrow County at the Present Time Properly Explained.

Not infrequently do we hear the young man of today remark: "There are no opportunities now like there used to be; why 20 and 30 years ago the man who located in this section of Eastern Oregon could not help but get rich. All he had to do was to turn his stock loose on the range and watch them grow into money. Advantages of that kind are not to be had nowadays." What a mistake. Ask Pap Minor, Oscar Minor, Lum, Tom or Jim Rhea, Tom Ayers, Henry Heppner, Orin Farnsworth, Jim Hager, or any of the numerous other successful pioneers of Morrow county how "easy" it was for them to accumulate property and become well fixed here in an early day. They will tell you that it required hard, persistent work, exposure to all kinds of weather, perseverance, strict economy and careful management to bring success to their efforts. There was nothing funny nor easy about it. Our pioneer citizens had to work for what they now enjoy. Thus it has always been and always will be. Those halcyon days when men could get rich by sitting down and folding their arms exist only in the minds of the visionary and misinformed.

There are just as many, if not more, golden opportunities nowadays for the man of pluck, energy, and business tact to attain success in Morrow county as there were in the days of long ago. All we need to do is to take advantage of them. Travel the American continent over and it is impossible to find a country more highly favored by nature than our own beloved Oregon.

Morrow county is just entering upon a new epoch. Think of what she will be when her natural resources are fully developed. One hundred thousand acres of arid land reclaimed by irrigation and

transformed into thousands of prosperous and happy homes, adding over a million dollars to our taxable property; every acre of tillable land in the county producing grain, fruit and vegetables; coal mines and gold mines giving up their hidden treasures; the giant pines of her forests converted into houses, barns, fences and bridges; manufacturing industries sending their smoke heavenward, notifying the world that the West has shut down upon the unprofitable practice of sending her raw material across the continent, there to be manufactured into needed articles and shipped back to us again, we paying the freight both ways.

Opportunities? Yes. This county has never been so abundantly supplied with them. Young man, take heed and do not let all of them pass by.

Other contributors to the Gazette's New Year edition will doubtless treat fully upon present resources and conditions of this section. It is this writer's desire to here present briefly a few suggestions as to the future needs and requirements of Morrow county:

1. The present tax law is the greatest inconvenience with which the people of this county have to contend, and especially is this true of the farmers. The law requires one-half of the taxes to be paid before the first Monday in April—at a time when no one but the rich have any money. A failure to pay at this time subjects the taxpayer to a penalty of ten per cent upon the whole amount and interest on the same at the rate of twelve per cent per annum. Those who are able to pay the whole amount before the first Monday in April are allowed a rebate of three per cent. This law is unjust and should be amended. The penalty for non-payment is too severe, and the rate of rebate should be reduced or knocked out entirely. What is most desired, however, is that the law be amended so that the first half of the taxes will become delinquent say in June or July; or better still, to have them all become due in the fall of the year, say October or November. By this time cattle and sheep have been turned into the markets, the farmers have sold their wheat and everybody has money. At such a time it would be easier to pay the full amount of taxes

than to be compelled to pay one-half when there is no money in the country.

2. The legalizing of the present barb wire fences is another question in which our citizens are very much interested. Following the custom of the country, which is usually law itself, the wire fences of Eastern Oregon are mostly constructed of two or three wires with posts two rods, or about thirty-two feet apart. To build so much fence as is needed in this country according to the requirements of the present law would nearly bankrupt the stockmen and farmers. Under present conditions, if animals running loose upon the range or public highways should injure themselves on these wire fences, the owner of the animals, were he so minded, could sue and collect damages from the owner of the fences, because the fences are not constructed according to law. The farmers and stockmen seem to be a unit in favor of having the present fences made legal.

3. Morrow county is being rapidly transformed from a stockmen's paradise to a vast agricultural district. A few years hence will find the most of our land under cultivation. Our own citizens are just waking up to the possibilities which this section has in store for the energetic and prudent tiller of the soil. People from abroad are noticing and taking advantage of these possibilities also. Many of Sherman county's best citizens have lately purchased fine tracts of improved land here, and more of them are coming right along. So they are from many other parts of the State, also from the East, and soon the real estate which has heretofore been selling at \$5 per acre will be worth \$10 and \$15.

What is needed, however, is farming carried on under the diversified system. It is an apparent fact that the most successful farmers (except, perhaps, those who are able to raise wheat upon a very large scale) are those who have not depended exclusively upon their grain crops. We need more hogs, more milch cows, more butter, more chickens, turkeys, eggs, etc. Alex Young, who recently sold his Morrow county ranch and cleaned up over \$10,000 in hard cash, informs us that he made his money by raising grain and feeding it to his

hogs. He figures that his grain has brought him one dollar per bushel when marketed in this way. It doesn't look well for us to allow the East to ship carload after carload of ham, bacon, lard, butter, poultry and eggs into the West every year when we have such splendid means of producing these things right here at home.

4. Another thing we need is something to arouse more interest in the matter of irrigation—a subject that is of supreme importance to every resident of Eastern Oregon. The Government has appropriated some \$8,000,000 with which to reclaim a portion of the arid lands of the West, and we are entitled to a portion of that money. We will get it too, if the proper efforts are made in that direction. Morrow county has in the neighborhood of eight townships, or some 100,000 acres of arid land susceptible to irrigation. Nothing is impossible for human ingenuity to accomplish, and the waters of Snake river should be put to work, converting our desert lands into fertile ranches and productive orchards. It would be no small thing to add over one million dollars' worth of rich agricultural land to Morrow county's taxable property, and we should exert every possible effort to get a slice of that appropriation. It is a regrettable fact that Morrow county didn't have a representative at the recent irrigation convention held at Portland. The convention will meet again at Baker City next June and at Pendleton next November, and our county should be well represented at both the future meetings. All that is needed to make Eastern Oregon one of the most fertile and productive countries on earth is irrigation. President Roosevelt realizes this fact, and it was no doubt his solicitude for welfare of Morrow county which prompted him to take so much interest in this gigantic scheme. We, the citizens of this county, should certainly take as much interest in our welfare as does the President of the United States.

5. Morrow county needs more people. It can support many times its present population and then have plenty of room for more. The main object of the Lewis & Clark exposition to be held at Portland in 1905 is to attract immigration to Oregon, and Morrow county must have

a portion of these new settlers. This Fair should be encouraged in every way possible. The legislature this winter should make a good, liberal appropriation for the Fair. This great enterprise will be of inestimable benefit not only to Portland but to all Oregon. As to this fact there remains no question. When the proper time arrives Morrow county should not allow other counties to outdo her in showing up their resources and possibilities.

6. Morrow county needs cheaper fuel and this demand will be fully supplied soon by our new coal fields. The men who have risked their money in developing these mines are deserving of the greatest success and commendation. They are public benefactors, and no one will envy them the fortunes which seem to be in sight for them.

With all these conditions confronting us, are we not right now enjoying the age of golden prosperity?

E. M. SMITH.

The HEPPNER GAZETTE is the oldest paper in Morrow county, having been identified with the interests of the county for the past 20 years. Issued weekly, \$1.50 per year. Send 25 cents in stamps for trial subscription.

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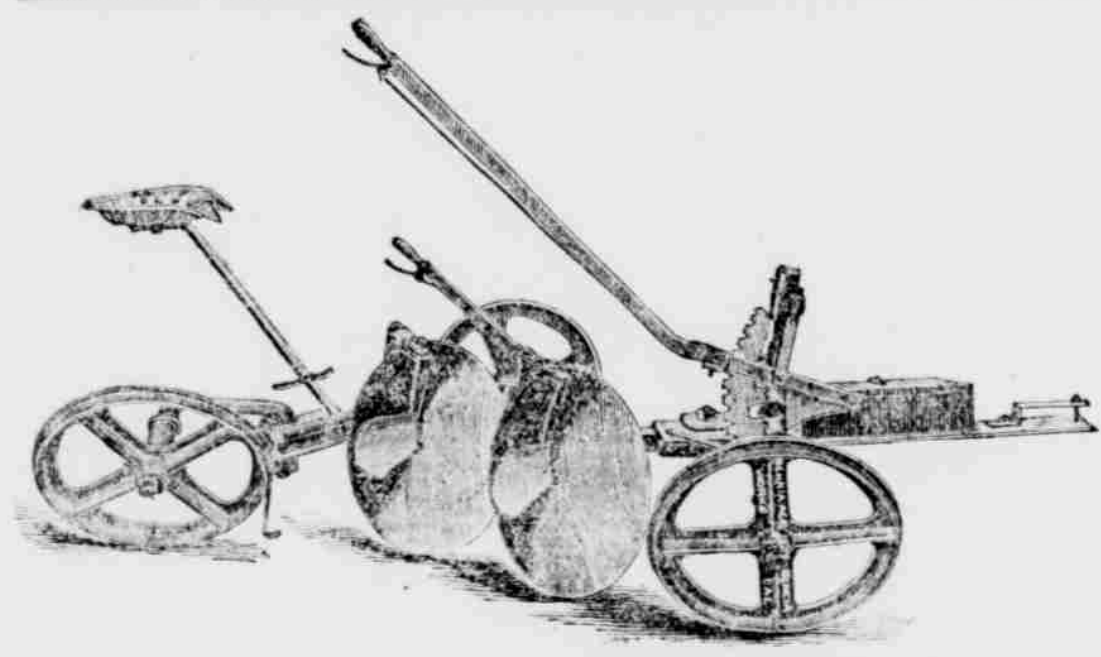
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