

HILL CONTROLS LANDS

Competing Railroad into the Harney Country Next Move

TO PLACE LAND ON MARKET LOW

With Great Northern President at Head of Big Land Company no Doubt Left as to Intention of Hill System Respecting This Section--Hanley Busy Too.

Some announcements of great moment to the Harney country have been made during this week which mean a long stride in the direction of early settlement and development of vast tracts of land in this territory. The first announcement of particular interest was that L. W. Hill had acquired a controlling interest in the Oregon & Western Colonization Co. lands and that Mr. Hill would resign as president of the Great Northern Railroad and devote his energies to colonization work.

The following day Bill Hanley announced that his company would also place 200,000 acres of land on the market in one man tract.

This in addition to the 800,000 acres controlled by Mr. Hill will make 1,000,000 acres and from the announcement the lands will be offered at very reasonable figures and on attractive terms. This will bring the desired result as it will attract a class of people most desirable people with some means capable of at once beginning the improvement of the tracts.

Mr. Hanley says it may be a year or two before he will be ready for the subdivision of his land but thinks it will go on the market at from \$15 to \$25 an acre. At an average of \$20 an acre the Hanley tracts would bring in \$4,000,000, and the Hill holdings \$16,000,000.

It is confidently expected that an announcement of the extension of the Hill railroad lines may be expected now at once. It is now certain the Hill road will follow the land recently acquired which extends the entire width of the distance over which the road is to be built and means that Burns will be tapped by the line.

In reference to the Hill deal the Oregonian says:
Control of 800,000 acres of agricultural and timber land in the heart of Central Oregon now held by the Oregon & Western Colonization Company, a \$12,000,000 corporation, of Portland and St. Paul, yesterday passed into the hands of Louis W. Hill, president of the Great Northern Railway, who proposes to throw it open for immediate settlement.

Mr. Hill's retirement from the presidency of the Great Northern and his succession by Carl R. Gray, president of the North Bank Road and the Hill lines in Oregon, are expected as an early consequence of this transaction. Mr. Gray left Portland last night for St. Paul for a conference with Mr. Hill and his father, James J. Hill.

Associated with Mr. Hill in his new colonization enterprise is W. P. Davidson, a St. Paul capitalist, who has been actively connected with the Oregon & Western Colonization Company since its organization.

It is understood that Mr. Hill and his father have been financially interested in the company for many years. The deal yesterday involved the interests of United States Farm Lands Company, which concern has held a half ownership in the property. Obtaining possession of the remaining half interest gives Mr. Hill and Mr. Davidson complete ownership of the entire tract.

This land which is the last of the unsettled area in the western part of the United States, was originally known as the Willamette and Cascade Mountain land grant.

The land extends from the western slope of the Cascade Mountains eastward to Idaho and includes some of the best portions of Crook, Harney and Malheur

Counties. The principal towns within the tract are Prineville and Burns, although the deal does not include much actual town property.

The report that Mr. Hill also is making efforts to gain control of other large holdings in the central part of the state has been persistent for the last few months.

By his repeated utterances on frequent visits to Portland Mr. Hill has shown that he is heartily and sincerely interested in the development of Oregon and that he is a believer in the soundness of the theory that low-priced land to attract the settler is the best means of developing and benefiting the city.

While the actual figure at which Mr. Hill and his partners have obtained possession of this Central Oregon property has not been determined, it is low enough that they will be able to place the property on the market at a comparatively low price.

Mr. Hill, it is understood, has made plans to offer it for sale to legitimate settlers at attractive prices. He will assist the worthy farmer in every way to develop and pay for his land and take pains at the same time that none of it passes into the hands of speculators. It is probable too, that the favorable prices of this property will compel a reduction in the figures attached to other land in the same territory and against the prices of which there has been much complaint.

This transaction it is believed, means as much, or more, to Central Oregon and to Portland than the construction of two competing lines of railway up the Deschutes Canyon a year ago.

Renewed railroad activity in Interior Oregon also will be an outcome of this investment by Mr. Hill, as the railroad is sure to follow the settler. In fact, Mr. Hill and his father often have said that if they are sure that the settler has an inclination that he wants to fill up a certain portion of the country, the railroad will be found there just a little ahead of him.

Respecting Mr. Hanley's plans that paper says:

More than 200,000 acres of productive farm land now held by William Hanley, of Burns, will be thrown open to settlement within the next few years at prices to attract the homesteader from other parts of the country, which, with the 800,000 acres acquired Thursday by Louis W. Hill, president of the Great Northern railway, is destined to make Oregon the Mecca for ambitious farmers for many years to come and give Portland the benefit of the development of more than 100,000 acres of agricultural property.

Mr. Hanley, who has been in Portland since the first of the week, said yesterday when he learned that Mr. Hill has acquired control of the Oregon and Western Colonization Company, that it is his intention to cut his vast holdings into tracts small enough to be farmed by one man.

"It is something, really, that I promised to the elder Mr. Hill when he built the Oregon Trunk into the central part of the state. He knew and I knew that the country could not develop and that the railroad could not operate at a profit unless the big farms were broken up so that settlers could get into them and produce revenue for the roads."

"I am sure that L. W. Hill means business by taking over the military road grant property. I was not surprised to read this morning that he had bought the controlling interest in the com-

pany, as I knew that he has been ambitious to engage in active development work in Oregon for a long time. He loves Oregon and he loves colonization work. It was only a matter of time until he would enter it actively, as he has always been interested in it indirectly.

Mr. Hanley's plans for throwing his holdings open to settlement are to be worked out independent of those of Mr. Hill, although they will co-operate in the general colonization work. The two have been close friends for many years, and it was reported once that they were to become partners in the acquisition of the Oregon & Western Colonization Company's property. Mr. Hanley said yesterday that no negotiations for the sale of his land to Mr. Hill or any of his associates ever have been opened.

"It may be a year or two before I am ready to place my land on the market," he said, "but I am working in that direction right along."

"I can't say just now what my land ought to be worth when I start selling it," said Mr. Hanley yesterday, "but I know that some of the best of it will be sold cheaper than some of the worst of that now being peddled by a lot of others in that section is bringing. I don't see why it can't be sold for \$15, \$20 or \$25 an acre, I don't know, of course, what prices Mr. Hill will ask, but his land is of about the same character as mine."

The following paragraph was taken from the St. Paul Dispatch in respect to the Road Grant land to Mr. Hill and associates. The article gives the impression that it has reliable authority for stating that it is the intention to place the land upon the market and active colonization work prosecuted. Respecting an extension of the Hill roads it says after explaining the work now being done by the Harriman system in this territory:

It is said that the Hill lines will not rest content with this ruse of the Harriman lines, but will shortly begin the construction of a similar line east and west, which will run to the foot of the Cascades. The fact that Mr. Hill is so largely interested in the colonization company seems to furnish ground for the support of the rumor that he intends to build another road through Oregon.

Oregon's First Irrigation Congress.

Oregon's first State Irrigation Congress, which met in Portland February 19-21, closed with the unanimous opinion that it was one of the most important and representative gatherings ever held. One hundred and fifty-six delegates were in attendance from all sections of the state. It accomplished the chief objects for which it was called.

The many interests which have been working separately for or against the Government, the Carey Act and the private projects have been brought together. They are now united in one organization which will endeavor to secure the passage of legislation that will offer every possible aid to the prompt development of all irrigation projects and at the same time protect to the fullest possible extent the rights of the settler.

The official announcement by E. G. Hopson, project engineer, that the Secretary of the Interior would proceed with the completion of the Umatilla project and would take care to protect all vested land and water rights was the principal piece of good news divulged at the Congress. The statement was preceded by a telegram from President Taft saying that he would endeavor to accord justice to Oregon and give to it its just share of the reclamation funds.

The resolutions adopted by the convention included a petition to Congress asking for an appropriation of \$15,000,000 a year for a series of five years for the construction and development of feasible irrigation projects, and that Oregon be given her full share in accordance with the provisions of the original reclamation act, which apportioned funds such purposes in proportion to the amount contributed by the sale

IRRIGATION IMPORTANT

Immediate Consideration is of Vital Interest at This Time

THE COST HALF THAT OF SOME

Harney County Farmers Should Embrace Opportunity--Investigate and Compare With Other Projects--Be Ready for Development of This Big Country.

C. B. McConnell's interview, published in last week's issue of The Times-Herald has caused much general discussion of the irrigation problems in this section. People are anxious that irrigation systems be installed and most of the land owners show a disposition to sign up on any reasonable contract provided they are assured of the service and that there will be no long delay in its installation.

Some speculation as to the probable cost of the Silvie project and what the land it would cover would profitable stand under a system of irrigation. However, this has not had serious consideration as few have really investigated the matter sufficiently to make even a close guess as to its cost. The main feature is whether \$40.00 an acre, as an estimate or suggestion by Mr. McConnell, was too high. The Times-Herald doesn't know what the actual cost of construction of a system of such magnitude would be, but compared with figures of other projects this is reasonable. The Bully Creek project of 40,000 acres over in Malheur county is costing the users \$80.00 an acre for water. To be sure the altitude is lower over there and fruit is a product that enters into the calculations, yet this project is not to cover such a product alone. It is the intention of most of the users under that system to engage in diversified farming and no doubt a greater part of the acreage will be devoted to garden and alfalfa. If those lands can be devoted to such crops at a profit with \$80.00 charge for water is it not reasonable that Harney Valley land with its demonstrated productivity of these products will be even more desirable and profitable at \$40.00 an acre?

Grain land throughout the entire Northwest has been considered worth \$100.00 an acre--even without such a system of irrigation. If \$100.00 an acre land can be profitably devoted to wheat why not the moderate priced lands of Harney County at a greater profit?

None of the government projects have been put in for a less sum than that suggested for this one--in fact they have been considerably more expensive. Figures have been published recently respecting certain tracts over on the Snake river at prices as low as \$18.00 an acre, but these are all small tracts covered entirely by gravity systems with no cost of impounding.

The Harney Valley farmer must no longer compute from the standpoint of an isolated pioneer without other than the home market to consider. He must realize that progression has put that consideration in the background and that opportunity is right at his door--transportation to take his products to markets of the world--and a world waiting and needing what Harney County soil is capable of producing to help solve the question of the high cost of living.

We must get into the spirit of these great changes and possibilities and make the best of our opportunities. Now is the time to take advantage during the transformation. It is worth more right now than five years hence at less expense. The man now here should reap the benefit of this new order of things.

LIBRARY CLUB.

The second and last program presented by the "Ibsen group" on Saturday, February 24, at the hospitable home of Mrs. E. E. Purinton, was pronounced a literary treat by all present.

"Exactly as Cervantes took the old ideal of chivalry and showed what came of a man attempting to act as if it were real, so Ibsen takes the ideals of 'Brand' and treats them the same."

This was the introductory thought that Mrs. Marsden, after the manner of a skillful educator, presented to her audience, thus proceeding from the known to the unknown.

The story of "Brand," Ibsen's first work that brought him national fame, was then told by Mrs. Marsden in a delightful conversational style.

She said in part, "Brand is a man of action seeking to realize his ideals in deeds, and he does so to such extravagant lengths that he defeats the purpose of the ideal itself. He ignores the real, ignores what he is, and where he is--he insanely steers straight on the rocks that no resolution can prevail against, yet one can not help but pity the fanatic as well as his victims."

"Brand" becomes intelligible when we regard him as a character of the Twelfth Century transferred to the Nineteenth Century.

"Men and women are alike the world over when judged by soul stuff and 'Brand' may still be found in America as well as in Scandinavia."

"However," Mrs. Marsden stated, "there is nothing but praise to be given to a poem which is as manifold in its emotions and as melodious in its versification as it is surprising in its unchallenged originality."

Mrs. Marsden then read portions of that marvelous fourth act with feeling, after which she stated "that in this great revealing crisis of the action did Ibsen's genius for the first time utter the clear, unembittered note of full humanity."

The musical and dramatic number, "Peer Gynt," presented by Mrs. C. B. McConnell assisted by Mrs. Rembold, piano, Mrs. Dodge, violin, and Mrs. Gault, voice, was unanimously voted to be one of the grand things done in the club this year.

With the skill of a finished lecturer, Mrs. McConnell gave a clear, comprehensive review and synopsis of the play, after which she gave a dramatic reading from the first and last scenes, the effect of which was heightened by the beautiful music rendered during the reading.

Vocal solos--Sunshine Song and Cradle Song by GREIG, were sung by Mrs. Gault in her usual captivating voice. Instrumental "Ase's Death" by GREIG, was played by Mrs. Dodge, violin and Mrs. Rembold, piano, in a style in keeping with the theme, which gave a most effective ending to the delightful hour spent with "Peer Gynt."

Light refreshments were served and all went home feeling that a very pleasant afternoon had been spent.

MORE HELP IN CHURCH WORK.

An important step in church work of Harney County was decided upon at a meeting of the Presbyterian church officials at the manse last Monday evening. The finance committee had been canvassing the city last week ascertaining the amount that local people would contribute toward the church work and met with such flattering success that it caused serious consideration of the advisability of the Presbyterian church of this city "going it alone."

Heretofore the local organization has had strings to it to a certain extent, in that the Home Mission Board helped to pay the pastor's salary on the condition that he look after the entire territory of Harney county.

While this was a satisfactory condition at the time of the first organization (1896) some fifteen years ago, the demands now are such that one pastor can not serve so great a territory effectively.

At the meeting Monday evening every department of the church was represented and the matter thoroughly discussed. It was found that the finance committee had found a disposition upon the citizens of this section to liberally support the work of the Presbyterian church to such an extent as to dispense with the amount contributed by the Home Mission Board, thus relieving the board of its obligations in this city which could be applied to out of town districts. This would open the way for another, or perhaps two more ministers, to be sent into the field with substantial support from that source.

With this demand in mind the session decided to send both the pastor and Elder A. B. Whitney to the spring meeting of the Presbytery, fortified with facts concerning conditions in Harney County and make a strong plea for at least one field man to take up the work in the surrounding country.

It was also decided at this meeting to hold services in the church every Sunday beginning with the first Sunday in April. Since the outside territory is to be supplied regularly by another man the local pastor will devote his entire time to the church work in Burns. By holding service each Sunday without interruption a greater interest will be stimulated and more effective results accomplished. This was considered very important and met with unanimous approval.

The Presbytery meets in Baker the second week in April and both Dr. Babbidge and Elder A. B. Whitney will attend. They will make a strong effort to have the work extended in this county and will appeal for support from the Presbytery to the end that at least one minister and possibly two will be placed in Harney County at the earliest possible time.

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(Continued on page 4.)