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MANY NEW SCHOOL HOUSES BEING BUILT

Josephine County Bettering Its Educational System—Longer Terms and Higher Wages.

Josephine county is making more progress this year in the betterment of its schools than in any previous year in its history. For several years past the tendency has been toward longer terms and a higher standard of teaching and better wages to teachers until now the schools of Josephine county compare well with the most progressive counties of Oregon. In the erection of new school buildings this will be the banner year for the county for there will be at least six or eight put up. In size and cost Grants Pass leads with a \$15,000 brick structure that will make it the third brick school house for the city and the fourth in all, the fourth ward having a wooden building. This new building will contain eight rooms and will be fully up-to-date in its conveniences and appliances. The board in securing the grounds for this school made an innovation new to Oregon towns in providing a large playground for the children. Usually there is barely space about a city school building for the children to walk about with no playground except a, too often, germ infected, basement. About the new Grants Pass school building will be two acres of ground, one acre of which is a handsome grove of oaks and madrones making a healthful, delightful playground. The basement for the building is completed and the brick work for the first story will be finished next week and it will be well toward the close of this month before the bricklaying is completed and the roof on. As the finishing and plastering will take some time there is no possibility of the building being ready by the time school begins the second Monday in September. Until it is finished the old building and the rented rooms will be occupied.

Kerby, which found its school so large last year as to require the renting of a room to accommodate the scholars, has commenced the erection of an addition of one room to their present building, making it a two-room structure. The addition is to be completed by the first of September, when school will begin. Eighth grade work will continue for this year to be the highest in the school, but it is expected in another year to add one or more grades.

Selma is another Illinois Valley village that has outgrown its school facilities. This village now has one of the handsomest one room buildings in the county, and it is pointed, which is not the condition of all Josephine county school houses, and is well furnished and has a bell in a neat appearing belfry. The attendance at the school has increased to such an extent that another room was required to accommodate the scholars. It was decided to erect a separate building near the present school house. Work was begun on it and it is expected to have it completed by the time school is to begin in September. The ninth grade is to be added to the course this year and next year it is the expectation to add the 10th grade.

The Jewell district, three miles south of Grants Pass, will replace their small, dilapidated building with a large fine school house. It will be located on the Grants Pass stage road half a mile north of the present

road. The Upper district in Williams Valley known as the Hurt district will build a new school house this all to replace the present one that is old and too small. The New Hope district on the Applegate is likely to erect a new school house this year to replace the present building that has long since outgrown its usefulness and good appearance. Wonder is another district that has a school that is the worse for wear and bad appearance. The progressive settlers in the district are planning to secure a new school house for their district by next year at least.

To raise the money to pay for school buildings districts either levy a special tax or issue bonds. Grants Pass issued bonds to meet the payment for its new building, but usually the country districts raise the building fund by taxes. As the settlers in a new country have to open their farms, erect buildings, buy machinery, build roads, churches and meet other public and private expenditures, it would be less burdensome to them if the districts issued bonds instead of levying taxes. To pay for a school house by taxation means that the farmers have to raise the entire amount in one or two years while if by bonds the payments can extend for 10 or more years. By the latter method the settlers who moved in later and got the benefit of the school could pay their share of the cost of putting up the building. The district would then be more wealthy, a \$1000 bond issue could be paid off without great increase in taxation while the same amount paid by one or two tax levies on a new, sparsely settled district would make taxes so high as to drive settlers out instead of bringing them into the district.

CATTLE COMPANY WINS MORE LAND

Question of Fraud in Acquiring Title to Alleged Swamp Lands Not Admitted

The Oregon supreme court recently handed down the following decision: Warner Valley Stock Company, respondent, vs. J. L. Morrow, appellant, from Lake county, H. L. Benson, Judge, affirmed; opinion by Justice Hailey. The stock company brought suit to recover possession of property to which it claims title by virtue of purchase from the state under the swamp-land laws. Morrow claimed right of possession as administrator of the estate of J. W. Morrow, who took the land as a timber claim.

In the course of its opinion, the supreme court holds that the issuance of the patent from the government to the state was sufficient to convey title, though the patent had not been delivered; that a deed from the state to the company was not invalid because it conveyed more than 320 acres of land; that it was not permissible to introduce evidence to show that the land was not swamp-land, for when patent has been issued it will be presumed that all the prerequisites have been complied with and the title conveyed is impregnable to collateral attack; and, finally, that Morrow could not hold possession of a claim upon which final proof had not been made by the deceased, and, therefore he is in no position to question plaintiff's title.

Arrangements for the inauguration of a through freight and passenger service from Klamath Falls to the outside world via Lairds Landing and the California-Northeastern R. R. are about completed, and operation of same is expected to begin about August 15th.

VACANT LAND IN JOSEPHINE COUNTY

Homestead for the Taking That Would Make Good Fruit Farms.

The United States Land Office in Roseburg has issued tabulated statements, showing the status of land embraced in its jurisdiction, up to June 30, of this year. The total area of all lands in the district is 11,793,738 acres, of which three-fourths have been appropriated or "entered upon." Of the remainder, three and one-quarter million acres have been thrown into a reserve, nearly one million acres are still open to public entry and about one-half as much more will be as soon as surveyed.

The following is the official statement in full:

Counties	Total Area	Approved	For Ent.	Unsurveyed	Reserved
Benton	131,000	119,033	2,407	63,877	89,339
Clatsop	1,199,600	628,538	4,346	62,877	400,800
Clatsop	1,007,300	330,080	137,337	62,614	703,685
Donkey	3,691,400	2,110,311	104,910	77,375	199,188
Jackson	1,779,400	1,283,433	224,741	15,789	608,040
Josephine	1,072,016	378,702	78,506	37,233	185,790
Klamath	881,100	62,211	5,910	75,517	800,368
Lane	2,679,500	1,648,737	234,603	6,019	44,035
Tillamook	90,500	48,916	14,065	42,930	14,516
Wasco	6,315,000	3,331,637	13,967	149,340	4,973,516
Total	11,793,738	7,136,737	928,332	419,163	3,250,516

By the above statement it will be seen that Josephine county has a large amount of land subject to entry and a considerable amount is yet unsurveyed and 24 townships that are withdrawn for forest reserves. Of the land subject to entry in this county there is much of it that with irrigation would make good farming land. Springs and wells are numerous and with electric, gasoline or steam power pumps irrigation could be carried on cheaply. There are thousands of acres that would grow grapes, apples, peaches, vetch and winter grain with no irrigation. As land becomes more valuable this vacant land will be taken up by energetic persons and by skillful farm methods be made to produce profitable crops. There are thousands of acres of land in Josephine county now not considered worth taking up that has deeper and richer soil than has hundreds of acres in New England and Pennsylvania. The day for getting a quarter section of fine farming land in the United States just for the cost of the filing papers is gone by and it is going to be a hustle with the landless to get even a tract of land heretofore considered worthless. Within 10 years there will be many fine farms in Josephine county on land that the early settlers would not take as a gift.

Three Cougars in One Day.

Having heard of a cougar being seen on the head of Grave creek, W. B. Sherman and Herman Horning took a trip out there Wednesday with the result that they returned with the skin of a large female cougar that they shot and with her two kittens, one of which they captured alive, but their dogs killed the other one before they could get to it. The live kitten is about the size of a house cat and takes its captivity quite contentedly. The trip was a hard one on the hunters as they had to travel about 30 miles to reach the section where the cougars ranged and then they were several hours climbing over steep hills before they succeeded in securing their game.

They now have two young cougars, they having secured the first from near Glendale. Early in the Spring they secured three young cougars but they sold them some time ago to Eastern parties to be placed in menageries.

James Martin, of Ashland, has been elected principal of the Woodville school. Mr. Martin is a member of the "06" class of the Normal.

PEAR SHIPMENTS SOON TO BEGIN

The Fruit Growers Union Will Handle Fruit For Farmers—Hold Meeting This Saturday.

A meeting of the Grants Pass Fruit Growers Union was held last Saturday at the Courier office that was attended by nearly all the members. Verbal reports from the growers present showed that the fruit prospects were fine and that a good yield and quality would be had. The pears are extra fine and the Union will be able to ship between two and three car loads. To accommodate the growers the Union will this year handle pears for all whether members of the Union or not, and will receive them in any quantity, even but five boxes. The packing will be done by experts employed by the Union, they doing the work at the orchard where there is a quantity, but the small growers will be required to deliver their pears at the Union's warehouse in Grants Pass. The Union will also handle apples for the farmers, whether members or not for this year, the object being to demonstrate to the fruit growers of Josephine county that they can market their fruit more profitably through the Union than by each selling his small quantity to a dealer.

While most of the fruit dealers are honest and deal justly with the farmers yet some of them are thieves of the boldest kind. It would take the entire eight pages of the Courier to tell the hardluck stories of Josephine county farmers in their dealings in selling their fruit and melons to irresponsible dealers. One farmer residing near Grants Pass sold last year \$188 worth of pears to a Medford buyer and never got a cent, for the fellow had no property and it was no use to sue him. Another farmer in response to a tempting offer shipped a 1000 boxes of fine Crawford peaches to a San Francisco firm and got 11 cents per box in return, which barely paid for the freight and boxes. He had 800 boxes more in his orchard that he fed to his hogs and gave to his neighbors.

The Union is desirous of securing the services of a number of expert packers and two or three boss packers.

The resignation was accepted of Fred D. Eismann as president and manager of the Union. At the meeting this Saturday a president and a director will be elected as required by the constitution. For manager the board of directors has secured John Christie who will superintend the picking and packing and the shipping of fruit handled by the Union. Mr. Christie was for years one of the largest growers and shippers of fruit in Josephine county until he sold his fine farm and orchard to the Eismann Bros. and retired to take life comfortably on a small, well kept farm near this city. Mr. Christie is an expert in all that pertains to picking and packing of fruit and the assurance is certain that a box of fruit prepared for the market under his direction will be put in the best of shape and be of uniform quality, the fruit in the center being exactly as good as that of the top and bottom layers. As the Grants Pass Fruit Growers Union is unknown in the markets of the world more than extra care will have to be exercised in having its pack up to the highest standard that is in force among fruit growers unions. That its pack shall be absolutely true to grade the Union has adopted very stringent rules governing the picking, grading and packing of fruit, for it is the purpose that customers shall be so well suited that they will become regular buyers from the Union. When once the Union has established a reputation for handling high grade fruit and for dealing in an upright manner it can command the best price the market affords for its fruits, and always be certain of securing the patronage of big dealers who meet their obligations promptly and fully. The next meeting of the Union will be on Saturday, August 4, at 1:30 p. m. sharp at the Courier office. It is expected that all members will be present and fruit growers not members are invited to attend and learn of the plans and purposes of the Union.

Carrier Pigeon Returns Home.

A carrier pigeon arrived in Grants Pass Wednesday from Dallas, Oregon, but was over a month making the 250 mile trip home. On June 19, Mr.

and Mrs. W. S. Barrie sent some fine chickens to Mrs. Bertha Barrie Smith, who resides in Dallas, and in the crate they sent a homing pigeon. On June 21 Mr. Smith and a party of friends turned the bird loose in the court house square at Dallas, first attaching a message to one of its legs. When the pigeon arrived home the message was gone. As the message was in tin foil and fastened very securely it was evident that it had been removed by some person. And the bird being so long on the journey would indicate that it had stopped to rest some place and had been captured and kept confined for some time and on being released it then made its way home.

ASHLAND AND MEDFORD NOT MONEYED TOWNS

Little Cash to Merry-Go-Round—Have to Run Second Time in Grants Pass.

Monday the merry-go-round closed its discordant one-tuned engagement of a week in Grants Pass and departed for new fields. This was the second engagement in this city for this summer it being here in June. The first stay here was for two weeks and the managers stated that Grants Pass was the best small city in Oregon for ready cash and a willingness to spend it. From here they took their steam swing to Medford and Ashland but had such poor business in those places that they had to come back to Grants Pass to make a raise of funds so they could start on a tour of the towns north on the Southern Pacific railroad.

The Salvation Army people too find that Grants Pass is a prosperous place where money comes easy and goes easy for this is the only town south of Salem in which a Salvation corps is maintained throughout each year. The Salvation Army has a barracks in Grants Pass and hold services in it and on the business streets every evening of the week except Monday. Their expenses are kept up by collections taken up at their street meetings.

It is a saying among persons traveling and having business in many towns that a place that supports a regular Salvation Army Corps is a moneyed town and will spend money readily on amusements as well as business ventures.

The Courier has the largest corps of correspondents of any paper in South-

ILLINOIS VALLEY A FINE FRUIT DISTRICT

Has The Best of Soil, Perfect Climate and Water for Irrigation—Lacking a Railroad.

E. A. Humpton was in Grants Pass Tuesday purchasing supplies. Mr. Humpton resides in Deer Creek Valley, four miles above Dryden, on Thompson creek where he and his wife own 400 acres of land, 160 acres of which is a homestead the other 240 acres they purchased. Mr. Humpton is preparing to make fruit raising his principal business, though he will raise some stock for he has a fine range of a vast extent in the hills about his place. He now has 250 fruit trees planted, mostly Spitzenbergs and Newtowns that he planted last winter and the year before. He will plant as many more this fall and continue to increase his acreage to fruit as he gets the land cleared. While he is now 26 miles from Grants Pass and a market yet he expects that by the time his orchard is in full bearing that a railroad will be running into Illinois Valley and he will have a shipping point near at hand.

Mr. Humpton has made a close study of the soil and climate of the Illinois Valley and he is confident that when transportation facilities are had that Valley will be one of the great fruit raising sections of Southern Oregon. Much of the soil is the deep red clay that is noted for producing the best of grapes, peaches and apples and there is ample water for irrigation from the streams that flow down from the hills and mountains that surround the Valley. Being nearer the ocean this valley is not so dry as the main Rogue River Valley and fruit trees would require little or no irrigation.

Mr. Humpton is one of the most successful teachers of this county and each winter teaches in the schools of his vicinity. For this winter he will teach in the Wilderville district, the school beginning on the first Monday in September. Mr. Humpton will move his family to Wilderville so that he can have his children in school for there will be no winter term in his own district.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Sampson entertained a number of their friends last Sunday at Walnut Hill fruit farm. A fine dinner was enjoyed and the afternoon spent in inspecting the fine orchard and walnut grove that is on the farm.

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