

Bandon Recorder

Published Every Tuesday and Friday by the
Recorder Publishing Company.
C. E. KOPF L. J. BUTTERFIELD

Subscription, \$1.50 per Year in Advance. Advertising Rates Made
Known on Application. Job Printing a Specialty.
Entered at the Bandon Postoffice as Second Class Matter.

FRIDAY.....December 29, 1911

Possibilities of Coos County.

Editor Bandon Recorder:

Within Coos county we have enough lands of the proper character for fruit raising to support many added thousands to our citizenry. We have, already developed, enough plantings of tree, bush and vine fruits, to conclusively demonstrate that there is practically no limit to the possibilities for this industry, which has added so heavily to the fame of the state of Oregon. Several hundred letters, addressed to the Fruit Inspector, have been received and answered during the past year, containing inquiries covering about every conceivable phase of the fruit-growing industry. About half of these letters are from residents of Coos county, and the balance from outsiders, attracted by the lure of an undeveloped country. These inquiries show two things at least; first, that the Coos county growers of fruit are awakening to the realization that the profits which other sections have taken from the fruit raising industry, can be realized here under similar generalship in orchard culture and marketing methods; and second that of those who have Coos county in their minds' eyes' as a future home, a great number incline toward fruit growing as a means of gaining a living.

In anticipation of further inquiries on the subject, it is believed that a series of articles, concerning what has been accomplished, and what reasonable possibilities in the fruit industry remain to be developed in Coos county, will be interesting to the local grower, and instructive to those from the outside, seeking information concerning our resources.

First let us briefly survey the horticultural resources of Coos county as they exist today. Within Coos county, we have over sixty-six thousand apple trees in bearing, and seven thousand pear, peach, cherry, quince, plum and prune trees. As the figures indicate, apples are thus far the only tree fruit attempted in this county on a commercial scale. The trees show an annual yield of an average of five boxes per tree or more, or some 330,000 boxes, the annual fruit crop of apples alone. The orchards are scattered throughout all the cultivated bottom-land sections of the county, and are in blocks of from ten to fifteen hundred trees, embracing from six to forty varieties of apples, selected at time of planting, probably as an experiment, and with the usual results of such experiments, namely the success of varieties adapted to this climate, and the partial or complete failure of those not adapted. Of course were it not for just such experiments the orchard planters throughout the fruit growing world would be largely planting experiments. But in Coos county, happily the experimental stage has been successfully passed, and we find that we have a climate and soil, in sufficient variety to produce high grade fruit of any and all the commercial classes of apples. We find that the regions near the coast line are best adapted to the fruit which do not require high color to meet the demands of the market, and we find that back a few miles, protected by the hills from the sea air, we can and do produce high colored fruit fully up to all market standards. Another thing we find, that wherever in this county the fruit be grown, whether near, or back from, the coast, our Gravenstein King of Tompkins, Baldwin, Rhode Island Greening, Rambo, Spitzenberg, Bellofleur, Grimes' Golden Rome beauty, and Northern Spy apples, equal, and in some instances (notably the Gravenstein

and Bellofleur) excell, fruit of these varieties grown in other sections of the Pacific Northwest, in points of form, texture, flavor and keeping quality and lacking only color in the case of characteristically high colored fruit grown near the coast.

As stated in a former article comparatively little of this 320,000 boxes of fruit is of a quality fit for market, due to the prevalence of about all the diseases familiar to the pomologist. Nearly all this fruit is borne on trees, in more or less neglected orchards, from ten to forty or more years old, which are usually mere adjuncts of dairy ranches, and while a perfunctory cleansing of orchards annually, is becoming more and more general throughout the county, whether prompted by individual pride, or respect for the law, still the successive and seasonable sprayings, and judicious prunings which are the essential prerequisites of the profitable orchard in any fruit growing section, are as yet not generally practiced.

There are about 21,000 young trees, from one to ten years old, for the most part planted in blocks of one or two and sometimes three varieties.

Except for home consumption which of course is limited, the marketing of such a mixture of varieties as commonly found in these old orchards, has some serious drawbacks, well understood by those who have tried it. But there is a practical remedy for this however, which will be the subject of the next article. The facts that we have these trees produce this fruit, its high quality, and the profitable yields under adverse conditions, are in themselves sufficient answers to the inquiry, "Is Coos county, or can she be made, a fruit-growing section?" The local orchardist has most to concern himself with the control of the infections upon his trees, which annually rob him of from one-fourth to three-fourths of the fruit which "sets" at blooming time, and which, freed from attacks of insects and fungi, would develop to maturity. Orchards diseases increase much after the manner of a geometrical progression, with neglect as the coefficient, hence it follows that the redemption of old neglected, disease-saturated trees, will require greater outlay of materials and labor, than for trees of the same age, which have been properly attended to since planting. Two years of close observation here, have convinced me that in the orchards of Coos county, we have no exceptionally difficult problems to solve. To be sure, we will have to atone for the neglect of years by some hard work, but the orchard diseases once brought under control, the pruning and spraying of our fruit trees will become merely a detail in the business of raising a fruit crop. Even local statistics, under the generally adverse, though improving conditions, prove beyond civil, that an acre of orchard does produce more revenue than any other line of agricultural effort, excepting of course, some crops grown on the fertile bottom lands where the water-table or zone of saturation in the soil, is too near the surface for tree fruits.

With the vast acreage of favorable exposure and soil conditions in this county, it is by no means a flight of the imagination, to prophesy that in ten years, Coos county will rank as one of the big shippers, among the fruit raising sections of the Pacific Northwest. The wonderful adaptability of the Coos county climate, to the raising of all manner of bush and vine fruits, places the limit to which small fruit raising can be developed, too far beyond all calculating, to make it necessary to go into figures. Suffice it to say that

the productivity of this section of Oregon, in the matter of small fruits is to all practical purposes, unlimited. In this connection, it is interesting to note, that the people of Coos county, spend annually for jellies, jams, preserves and canned berries, grown and put up outside of Coos county, and mostly outside of the state of Oregon, a sum in excess of seven thousand dollars.

I realize, from my experience of a year ago, endeavoring to get a canning industry started here that little interest will be taken by many in a statement of facts so obvious, but it is one of the functions of this service to keep these horticultural possibilities before the eyes of the public, and it is my intention to keep on shouting the resources of this most favored region, until some one probably some newcomer, takes the hint, and really does something. I have in my possession, letters and printed matter concerning this region, emanating from local business offices, sent to me by outsiders for verification, containing statements in the main misleading, and in specific cases obviously false. Up to the present time it has not been my policy to go further than to outline as above, the admittedly great possibilities of this country, along certain lines. We don't have to lie about this country. Half the truth, told without embellishment, will attract the newcomer, while extravagant misrepresentation will, upon disillusionment, make an enemy out of him.

And such a man, you may depend upon it, will upon his return to whence he came, proceed to denounce everything connected with this region, which, I opine, is mighty bad for this country.

Fruit raising has pulled many another section less favored by nature, out of the "just peggin away" rut, and raised them to high rank among the progressive centers of our civilization, and now that rail communication, with the outer world, is reasonably to be expected within the span of an ordinary human life the present is a good time to "sit in" the horticultural game. For it we had all the transportation in the world today, we could not hurry the growth of our orchards. Let us take up the needs of the old trees and reclaim what we already have, for the double purpose of securing the revenue, and to give the new young plantings a chance. Now a word to the wise. The great increase in plantings of young trees, 11,800 for 1911, as against 3300 for 1910, presents an added reason for holding down the lid on orchard diseases tighter than ever. Great improvement is evident in all directions, but there still remain some knoekers at their own interests who persist in ignoring the statutes which make it a misdemeanor in Oregon, to maintain a diseased orchard. I promise the grower who is struggling with his old trees, doing the best he can, as well as the planter of young stock, that he shall have protection against his contumacious neighbor, for as fast as I can get around to them, I am going to get after every last one of those fellows, and hale them into court. I have a simpler way of getting away with the disease question, for the law gives the inspection service summary power to destroy in the face of contumacy. But we are in the business of upbuilding, not destroying, and shall exhaust every other means to the desired end, before a single redeemable tree shall be destroyed. So cheer up Mr. Grower, for the worst is yet to come, but it will be brief.

Ex-Governor Adams of Colorado once said, "the road that leads to the orchard, is the pathway to a simple, happy, prosperous life." I believe it.

P. M. HALL-LEWIS,
Fruit Inspector, Coos County.
Marshfield, Ore. Dec. 20, 1911.

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Notice for Publication.

Department of the Interior.
U. S. Land Office at Roseburg, Oregon.
December 18, 1911.
Notice is hereby given that Abe Corson, of Bandon, Oregon, who, on February 2, 1909, made Homestead entry Serial, No. 04113, for SW 1-4 NE 1-4, E 1-2 NW 1-4, and SWNW 1-4, Section 11, Township 30 S, Range 15 W, Willamette Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final five year proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before C. R. Wade, U. S. Commissioner, at Bandon, Oregon, on the 1st day of February, 1912.
Claimant names as witnesses: John Miller, Fred Crou, William Tenbrook and George Koontz, all of Bandon, Oregon.
99-112 BENJAMIN F. JONES, Register.

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