

## The Athena Press.

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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ATHENA, ORE., JAN. 11, 1907

One of the principal arguments used in the Willamette valley against the Barrett jute mill bill is that the raw material is in the hands of the trust. The same material is used in the manufacture of sacks at the mill of the Washington state penitentiary, where sacks were manufactured last year at 5 cents each, the net profit on 1,377,252 grain sacks made in the mill and valued at \$89,520.80, being \$14,125.28. The figures, taken from the Warden's report made to the Washington State Board of Control are: "The number of grain bags manufactured was 1,377,232, valued at \$89,520.80. The total value of burlap cloth and articles other than jute bags, was \$13,881.94, making the total cost value of products \$103,402.74. The total cost of operating the mill during the year 1906, was \$89,276.56; and the net profit \$14,125.28. Of the operating expenses the principal item was \$64,566.17 for 3524 bales of raw jute. Other items were salaries, fuel, motive power, repairs, improvements, supplies. The proportionate cost of producing the 1,377,22 grain bags was \$77,291.10. The cost of producing one bag was 5 cents. The average cost of jute was \$18.32 a bale." To start with, the state of Oregon already has suitable buildings for the mill. One of the principal items of expense in the operation of the Washington mill is motive power, which the state of Oregon would not have to contend with, for the reason that it owns a power plant.

Fred Lookley, who recently disposed of his interests in the Pendleton East Oregonian, will hereafter be identified with the editorial staff of the Pacific Monthly, the leading magazine published west of Chicago. Mr. Lookley has long been a contributor to this popular magazine and that his work is appreciated by the editorial management is evidenced by the flattering offer it made him some days ago. Fred is a descriptive writer of marked ability and his work for the Pacific Monthly will be confined exclusively to articles of this character—the painting of word pictures of western life, western history and western incidents. He will travel through old Mexico, the Hawaiian Islands and that treasure-house of the author and writer, Alaska, in search of fact and data for the warp and woof of his thrilling western narratives.

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## ATHENA.

H. L. Wilhelm never overlooks an opportunity to say something good of a town or locality in which his popular and influential magazine circulates. In the current number he thus speaks of Athena:

In the midst of the very richest of the wheat raising lands of Umatilla County, Oregon, lies the beautiful and attractive city of Athena, which boasts of about 1,200 population and is situated about seventeen miles from Pendleton, the county seat. It is located upon the Washington & Columbia Railroad about 33 miles from Hunts Junction, now Attalia; fourteen miles from Pasco, Washington. It is also on the Washington branch of the O. R. & N.

Athena is one of the best points upon the line between Walla Walla and Pendleton, and boasts of a strong bank and general commercial institutions. Here is located a large flouring mill—the Preston-Parton Milling Co.—which grinds annually the marketable output of this part of the country and consumes all of the wheat sold at this point. This mill will grind over 800,000 bushels of grain this season and is a great boon to the commercial interests of this place. Because of this mill the farmers get from one to three cents more a bushel for their grain than they would were they compelled to ship it out to other points.

The farmers here engage almost exclusively in wheat raising, but corn and hogs form a substantial part of the ranchers' income. The wheat yield for 1906 of the country directly tributary to Athena is about 272,000 sacks, or 600,000 bushels. Herewith is presented a view of a fifty horsepower steam combined harvester and thresher as it was photographed operating on George Ferringer's Umatilla Reservation lands. This powerful machine has a daily capacity of cutting, threshing and sacking fifty acres of grain, averaging from thirty-five to forty-five bushels to the acre. As will be seen, the machine merely cuts off the upper part of the stalk—that which contains the berry.

The schools and churches of Athena are well worthy of mention—the schools maintaining an excellent high school course and the churches here numbering among their edifices two magnificent structures, of \$15,000 and \$10,000 cost respectively.

The people of Athena are enterprising and public-spirited. The city presents a prosperous and inviting appearance. Its clean and well built business blocks and the cosy and well kept homes which compose the residence district make it a place to be desired. The stores carry varied and complete stocks of merchandise and as a trading center the city is the choice of a large area of the country. The prosperity of the farmers makes the prosperity of this place.

One evil, however, which will mean good in the days to come when others will want homes and the land owners can no longer hold on to what they have, is that the country in this vicinity is becoming depopulated, through the operations of the bonanza farmer who buys all the ground he can get and holds all he can pay for, which with the bountiful crops of the past five years has meant a great deal. Death, however, will even up all these absurdities and the foolishness of it all will be very evident when these men have passed from the scene of action.

This wheat raising country is a beautiful and chosen land and those who

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desire to possess all of it and do get as much of it as they can, are not to be blamed. Coming into Athena from Pasco over the W. & C. R., one of the most attractive views the writer has ever had the privilege of surveying was beheld.

After much coughing and puffing, snorting and wheezing, the train reached the summit of the plateau east and south of the valley wherein it had started. For several minutes the cars sped along with no great exertion from the steel of steel. Then it came to a standstill at a sidetrack. Here in all directions the country extended as far as the eye could see. Wheat field after wheat field covered the great rolling areas of land which extended over hills and valleys far away into the distance. The dark spots are the summer fallow areas. Every foot of this domain is cultivated.

High knolls and deep ravines are plowed and utilized. Here and there, homes with their little patch of orchard and green shade trees greet the gaze. This view extends in every direction and as the beholder enjoys the feast, his mind is thrilled with the immensity and greatness of the land,—this land which a few years ago was thought to be untillable, but today is a part of the richest wheat producing land in the state of Oregon. The railroad people have designated this point "Grand View," and in every respect the locality implies and ratifies the name.

Such scenes are beautiful, not alone for the strangeness of the composing parts, but for the wealth and productivity which the soil makes possible, and the great vista of glory, growing, wealth producing glory which set the eyes aglow, with wonder and admiration.

Athena boasts of one of the best papers in the state of Oregon, "The Press," edited and published by F. B. Boyd, which is a semi-weekly and full of items of interest and news. With its advantages Athena is certain to grow and become a larger and better city as the years roll around. The loyalty and home spirit of the residents will make this possible and their enterprise and earnest endeavors will deserve and merit it. H. L. W.

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