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NO MYSTERY IN IRRIGATION

Any Farmer Can Irrigate Successfully Without Previous Knowledge

[Thomas Nelson, the author of this article, lived for over 20 years in an irrigated farming country and has observed and practiced irrigation successfully during this time.]

Did you ever walk through your field on a dry, hot day and see your crops drooping from the heat and wish way down in your heart that you had some mysterious power to call forth a good, soaking rain? And, when later that rain came, how the growing grains held up their heads and rejoiced—how all nature seemed to take on new life?

Now, Mr. Farmer, if you are located under an irrigation system you have that power. There is no magic about it—just plain horse sense. Just open up the headgates and conduct the water intelligently onto your crops and—presto! the magic change is made. You are entirely independent of rain. You apply the moisture when it is needed, and only as much as needed.

Irrigation is not new or mysterious. Way back before Columbus took it into his head to discover America, irrigation was being successfully practiced here. Ruins of huge irrigation systems in the southern United States and Mexico prove this beyond a doubt. If these prehistoric individuals found it profitable to irrigate, why should not we? Irrigation intelligently practiced will increase your yield anywhere from 50 per cent to 200 per cent. The writer has spent most of his life in an irrigated farming country, and has seen dry sagebrush deserts converted into waving fields of grains, grasses, fruits and gardens by the intelligent application of water. Land that today produces one crop of hay a year can be made to produce three crops under irrigation in this climate. Your berry patch will be worth twice as much if properly irrigated. This summer the writer saw a row of raspberries in this valley loaded with green berries at the end of the picking season when the remainder of the patch had ceased to bear. This row was near the pump where the pickers slaked their thirst, and so far as the ground was moist, the berries were good. The owner of the patch said he could pick berries for his Christmas dinner from that row. It has been thoroughly demonstrated that the quality of all fruit, as well as the yield, is increased by the application of water at the right time.

There is nothing mysterious about the artificial application of moisture—just common sense.

If you have a large farm it is best to hire an engineer to run out the main ditches; but this is not absolutely necessary. The satisfaction of knowing it is right at the first, however, will more than offset the extra expense.

In the absence of an engineer, just get out your old spirit level, find a place on your barn floor, or anywhere else that is exactly level, dig up a board about 1 1/2 x 4 x 16, fasten your level securely onto it, then nail a leg about two feet long onto each end, being sure that it is exactly level when stood up on the level place mentioned; now saw a half inch off from the bottom of one of the legs (some people make it only a quarter inch). Put some distinguishing mark on the end where the short leg is, split a lot of stakes and take the boy, the hired man or the hired girl and go to the highest point on the place you wish to irrigate, and keeping the short leg in front, set the contraption down so that it is level, drive a stake there and move up the length of your board. Continue this in as nearly a direct line to the main ditch as you can; then plow out the ditch along the stakes. This will bring the water from the main ditch to your land.

Now, the problem of putting the water on the land is equally as simple. To irrigate fruits, berries or anything in rows, it is best to make a small headgate at the end of each row. This will make it easy to regu-

late the amount of water and prevent an overflow. Run a small ditch down the center between each row and turn in all the water that it will carry without washing the soil; let it run until the water reaches the end of the row; then close the gate down until there is just enough water to reach the end of the row, and let it run in this manner until it has moistened the ground thoroughly from one ditch to the other. Move the surplus water along to some fresh rows. Do not let the water run very long down the rows after the moisture meets from row to row. Too much water is as bad as no water. Do not apply moisture again until you are sure it is needed. Most people irrigate too much.

In all cultivated crops the ground should be thoroughly worked when in the right condition after each irrigation. This prevents baking and conserves the moisture.

In irrigating grains and grasses the process is largely the same, except that the ditches should be plowed out soon after the crop is seeded. Do not attempt to run these ditches in a straight line, but give them as nearly the same fall as possible as you did the main ditch. Just how far apart to make the ditches will depend upon the soils. A little experience will soon demonstrate that. If you irrigate before the grain is in the "boot", it should be harrowed afterward.

In constructing the ditches for grass the process is the same as for grain, but, of course, the ditches remain until the meadow is broken up. In irrigating clover and alfalfa it is best to give it a thorough wetting before cutting—just long enough before to let the ground dry sufficiently to run the machine over it. The shade of the old crop prevents the ground from baking and puts the roots in just the right shape to give the next crop a good start.

The above method of "subbing" will be found better than flooding in 99 cases out of each 100, and I believe in the hundredth case also. I have heard of ground that would not "sub", but have never seen it. Don't irrigate too much—just enough and no more. Heavy ground requires more water at an application, but less frequent than the lighter sandy soils. Because soil is dry on top is no indication that it needs water. Dig down and see if it is dry underneath. The experience of L. J. Getchell, who lives near Creswell, will verify these statements.

TEACHERS ASK RAISE

At a meeting of the school board held Wednesday evening a petition was received from the teaching corps of the Springfield public schools asking an increase of pay, reading as follows:

"Because of the fact that living expenses have increased 206 per cent, since 1913, while the salaries of teachers in this district have increased only about 35 per cent, we, the undersigned, feel that we are underpaid and respectfully request that our salaries be increased by approximately fifteen dollars per month."

The petition is signed by all of the teachers except Superintendent Hamlin, who, while stating that he did not believe the present salaries of the teachers are sufficient, does not ask for an increase of his own salary; also H. M. Mabrey, who attached to the petition the following statement: "Feeling that the compensation awarded is adequate for the services I perform as manual training instructor, I endorse this petition as favoring a material increase for the Springfield teachers, other than myself."

No action as to the petition was taken by the board Wednesday evening other than a decision to refer it to the annual budget meeting, which will take place November 24.

Reports from Salem are to the effect that there are now 1351 real estate agencies operating in the state of Oregon. This is the greatest number ever known and the report says that the total is constantly increasing. This fact is said to point out that various sections of the state are actually booming and that business is improving everywhere.

TIME CHANGE SUNDAY MORNING

In accordance with the provisions of the war-time daylight saving law, next Sunday morning, October 26, clocks are to be set back one hour. Railroad offices and workers and public places open at night-time will make the change at 2 o'clock in the morning. The change will, so far as reported, make no difference in train schedules, trains merely delaying an hour to get on right time.

With the changing of clocks Sunday morning the daylight-saving law ceases to exist, as the act repealed by congress during the present extraordinary session, it having been passed over the president's veto.

INDUSTRIAL REVIEW

Roseburg.—Five thousand boxes of tomatoes from five acres of land is the record made at Dillard by T. B. Evans & Son, the largest growers in this section.

The small-fruit area in Marion county is to be increased by two thousand acres.

Enterprise.—Rebuilding of the sawmill here of the Oregon Lumber company is delayed on account of scarcity of labor.

Dallas is reported so short of houses that the jail rooms are being used by one of the hotels.

Prineville has started a new Masonic temple and has a building boom.

The total pay received by apple pickers in the Hood River district this season will reach \$225,000.

Ashland has sent out seventy cars of fruit so far this season.

Klamath Falls.—A \$900,000 bond issue to irrigate Landell valley has been approved.

The Santiam Woolen Mill company has been incorporated, with capital stock of \$75,000.

Lebanon capitalists are organizing to drill for oil and gas.

A shortage of apple boxes is causing loss to growers around Corvallis.

Ore has been found near Baker claimed to go \$1,000 to the ton.

Klamath Falls.—A large tract of land is to be thrown open to homestead entry.

The fishing industry on the lower Umpqua pays \$600,000 a year to employees.

Salem.—Murray Wade, cartoonist, is establishing the Oregon Monthly.

Albany is doing building in spite of the high cost of materials.

The Hood River Fruit company has erected a \$10,000 concrete building.

Oregon has thirty-two banks with deposits of over one million each.

Portland bankers are reported financing the construction of a tourist hotel at Seaside.

State bank deposits, September 12, totaled \$228,447,823. Increase since June 30, \$32,312,636. Pendleton is second to Portland with \$8,471,435.

Thirteen and a half miles of paving between Hubbard and Salem is now completed.

The Silver Lake Irrigation district has issued \$300,000 bonds.

Twelve thousand dollars cash was paid for an eighty-one-acre farm near Aurora.

The Pacific highway between Gold Hill and Central Point is completed.

A new fruit dryer is being built at Sheridan.

Plans are being made to get 50,000 additional acres of land planted to small fruit in Oregon and Washington, to produce ten million dollars' worth of raw materials for canneries and the juice industry.

A Crater Lake company is to build a new tourist hotel for next season.

North Bend faces a revenue deficit of \$10,000.

The state highway commission has taken over the Coquille-Marshfield paving contract.

Astoria port elevators have handled 247 cars of wheat to date this year.

Lakeview is looking for railroad connection and a box factory.

Douglas county's prune crop totals 7,500,000 pounds, worth \$1,000,000.

Lacomb has organized to push drilling for oil.

Southern Benton county, it is reported, will get a \$400,000 saw-mill and logging road.

A 5,000-acre drainage project near Lebanon has been revived.

Silver Lake.—The Anna river irrigation project is taking shape.

An orchard of 2,900 prune trees near Myrtle Creek is reported to have brought in \$10,900.

Reedsport saw-mills have payrolls of \$1,100 per day.

FARMERS SHOULD HAVE A VOICE

Washington, Oct. 22.—The Republican Publicity Association, through its president, Hon. Jonathan Bourne, Jr., today gave out the following statement from its Washington headquarters:

"No incident in the labor-capital conference now in progress in Washington is more significant or important than the statement made by C. S. Barrett, president of the National Farmers' Union, presenting the interests of the agricultural producers, and complaining that in this controversy between employers and the labor unions proper consideration has not been given to the farmers. First and last, the prosperity of America depends upon the success of our agricultural industries. Moreover, the very stability of the government depends chiefly upon the rural residents, who are largely home-owners, or tenants under a leasing system which gives them a proper interest, making them permanent and substantial residents of their communities. For 'safe and sane' and yet progressive action, the country can always depend upon the tillers of the soil.

"Few will question Mr. Barrett's assertion that during the war the farmer's welfare received no consideration. So far as the administration took any action bearing upon the interests of the farmers, that action was in the direction of limiting profits, while the action affecting organized labor resulted, in every instance, in increase of compensation. With the one hand, the administration repressed the agricultural producer, while with the other it gave special assistance to organized labor.

"Past records will fully bear out Mr. Barrett's assertion that farmers want no special privileges. His demand for equality under the law, and for due consideration in the shaping of policies at the present conference, is as meritorious as it is timely. Before beginning its deliberations, the conference has had its attention called to the danger of attempting to satisfy the demands of capital on the one hand, and organized labor on the other—leaving forty millions of agricultural population to take the leavings.

"But reasoning a priori, we cannot share Mr. Barrett's fear that many farmers may 'rush into organizations which are not 100 per cent American,' or that 'many thousands of them may depart from that narrow path which is laid down by the Constitution.' However unjust the treatment he may have received, no farmer or other owner of property which he has accumulated by industry and thrift will fail to realize that his only hope of continued possession and enjoyment of that property rests upon the maintenance of law and order. However much the farmer may resent injustice and however earnest his efforts to change conditions, he will never be found aligning himself with the enemies of the Constitution. He will proceed to secure his rights by orderly and lawful means through the election of legislators and executives who believe in government by and for all and who oppose government by and for a class."

The Florence West: So far as we have learned, Conrad Beach, son of E. A. Beach, of Tiernan, is the champion blackberry picker of this section, if not of Lane county, and perhaps of Oregon. In one day Conrad, who is about 13 years' old, picked evergreen blackberries which sold for \$18.92. At 8 cents a pound, which is the regular price, this would take 236 1/2 lbs. A pretty good day's work for a boy. Who can beat it?

Cottage Grove Sentinel: An addition to the varied agricultural resources of the Cottage Grove country is a freak popcorn that pops on the ears before being removed from the stalk. J. S. Allen is the grower. It is probable that the corn became damp and the hot weather immediately following caused the peculiar action of the corn. The popped kernels remained on the ear.

—THAT ROUND-TABLE



THOMAS