

PEAR BLIGHT AND ITS CONTROL UPON THE PACIFIC COAST

This is the Second of a Series of Articles That Will Be Printed Daily Until Subject is Completed—Every Orchardist in the West Should Save These Issues for Future Reference, as They Contain Valuable Information.

By PROFESSOR O'GARA, Assistant Pathologist United States Department of Agriculture. Written especially for the Medford Mail Tribune. Copyright, 1910, by the Medford Mail Tribune.

Damage in the Eastern States and California.

In the eastern states pear blight has done an enormous amount of damage in the past, more so than the Pacific Coast orchardists realize. In fact, one of the reasons of the commercial success of pear growing on the Coast has been the difficulty or inability of growing the better varieties of pears in the face of attacks by this disease in most sections of eastern states. During the past two years pear blight has been very serious in New York, Michigan and generally throughout the east. The same may be said of the southern states, such as Georgia and Florida. Usually, blight has been less severe in Michigan and New York states around the cooler, more damp sections in the vicinity of the Great Lakes; however, last year in Niagara county, New York, which borders on Lake Ontario, many Bartlett pear orchards throughout the northern portion of the eastern states, but southward of this, Bartlett pear growing is almost abandoned. The Oriental pears are more resistant and more adapted to the climatic conditions in the south, and hence are grown quite extensively, or were at one time. Within the past few years the La Conte and Kieffer varieties, grown principally in Georgia and Florida, have been practically wiped out by pear blight. At one time these varieties were shipped into New York from the south by the train load, but even a car load has now become rather rare. Apples have also suffered to a very great extent, although, as a rule, in the commercial section of New York, New England and Michigan but little damage has been done. Occasionally, Spitzenberg, Ben Davis, and other varieties have been very badly blighted; however, most of the trouble on the apple comes from blight in the blossoms or in the twigs, but on the Pacific Coast it is not at all uncommon to see the Spitzenberg apple entirely killed. With the Russian apple, such as the Yellow Transparent, Alexander, Red Astrakan, etc., the disease has killed trees just as it does pears. In the middle west in the states of Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas, the injury to the apples is found to be very severe. The rich prairie soils of these states, together with an ample supply of rainfall during almost the entire growing season, produces a rank growth which causes the trees to become very subject to the disease. The disease has moved steadily westward with the settlement of the country, but for a long time the wide stretch of plains free from orchards and giving no opportunity for the disease to lodge, resulted in complete freedom from this pest on the Pacific Coast. It is only about twelve or thirteen years ago that the disease became known in Colorado, and about the same time we find its occurrence in the neighborhood of Vancouver, B. C. About nine years ago the disease appeared in force in the San Joaquin Valley, California, but it was probably two or three years developing before it had attracted much attention. It has finally destroyed practically all of the orchards in San Joaquin Valley, and has moved up into nearly all the districts of the great Sacramento Valley, and in many of the smaller adjacent valleys. I know of only one valley, namely, the Santa Clara Valley, which, so far, seems to have escaped infection. It is only through the efforts of the commissioners and inspectors in this valley that the valley has been kept free from this dreadful disease. To show the extent of the injury to California I may state that fully two-thirds of the pear trees of the Bartlett variety have been destroyed. As an instance showing the extent of this calamity, I note in the report for 1901 and 1902 issued by the California State Board of Horticulture that Fresno county had 125,000 pear trees, Kings county, 43,700 pear trees; in 1903 and 1904 we find that Fresno county had only 1,500 and Kings county had none. The disease has moved slowly up the Sacramento Valley, and by slow stages over the mountains into the Rogue River Valley in Southern Oregon, where its distribution is general, but under complete control.

The blight infection now extends into the Umpqua Valley some distance beyond Roseburg, but, under the writer's instructions, the same methods of control employed in the Rogue River Valley have been adopted

and the disease is being vigorously fought. Many have asked how the disease could have come from the upper Sacramento River near Redding, which is the northern limit of pear growing in California, into the Rogue River Valley, since there is a great mountain range separating the two localities. However, anyone riding over the Southern Pacific Railway and being observant would notice that at every station along the railway, and even at intermediate places, pear and apple trees may be found; furthermore, it may be noted that these pome fruits have blighted more or less seriously, depending, of course, upon the varieties as well as upon the care given the trees or the type of soil in which they are growing. These small plantings, together with the native pome fruits, have been stepping stones for the blight germ in its passage from the upper California orchards to the orchards of the Rogue River Valley.

The blight infection which we find in British Columbia is an extension of the Colorado infection which has passed through the Salt Lake country in Utah, and northward through the state of Idaho and through eastern Oregon and Washington. Therefore, the Willamette Valley, together with the orchards northward and west of the Cascades, have not yet been invaded. In other words, the two infections from the south and the north have not yet met, but it is only a question of time when they will come together. When blight does finally reach these untouched districts, the climatic conditions will tend to favor infection to a great degree. The increased rain fall as well as the late spring and summer precipitations favor infection, and add difficulties in the way of control. The above statements are made in order that all districts which are still free from blight will make a hard fight to keep it out. There is every reason to fear blight and to fear it all the time.

There is a common impression among some of the older residents of the Rogue River Valley that pear blight existed in the Valley eighteen years or more ago. An unpublished "History of Pear Blight in the Rogue River Valley" is one of the best historical evidences that the blight did not exist so long ago. The statements that certain varieties of pears known to be practically immune were badly affected and those very susceptible to the disease remaining untouched even though alongside the blighted varieties, is proof positive that the trouble was really something else. Furthermore, the quince and the Spitzenberg apple were not noted as having been attacked at all. Again, several orchards in which it was said blight occurred eighteen years ago, had not come into bloom at that time. It is very rare that blight is troublesome before the trees come into bloom, and the reason for this we will show later on. The explanation which seems best to fit what may of the old settlers thought to be blight is that unfavorable soil and weather conditions was the real cause of their trouble. We know that undrained soils, especially if they are cold, have had effect on many varieties of trees, especially apples and some varieties of pears. The common term, "sour sap," is certainly the thing they had in mind and not blight.

Pear blight did not infect the orchards of the Rogue River Valley until the spring and summer of 1907. As a matter of fact, the real outbreaks were not found until past mid-summer. We know that this is true by our knowledge of the blight conditions in the upper Sacramento River Valley. Beginning with the fall of 1907, when the writer first saw the Rogue River Valley, up to the present time the loss in the commercial pear and apple orchards has been comparatively small. A careful estimate taken from the inspector's books shows that a total of about 2,000 trees, both apple and pear, will cover the loss, for the entire Rogue River Valley and its tributary valleys. This is a remarkable showing for a period of three years. It should be said, however, that fully 1,000 trees had already been so badly affected before the writer came to the valley that it was necessary to remove them immediately. The losses which have occurred since 1907 have been largely due to the unwillingness of a very few to co-operate. In one instance this unwillingness caused a loss of 600 trees—a very severe lesson which will never be forgotten. So far as keeping the blight under control in the pear orchards of the valley is concerned the work is very easy, but the most difficult problem is the Spitzenberg apple which is more seriously injured than practically any

TO THE PUBLIC.
We are now located at West Main, corner Laurel, next the Washington School, where we are unloading and arranging for display several carloads of high-grade and moderate priced furniture, stoves, rugs, carpets, and floor coverings, lace curtains, refrigerators, etc. We will open a complete show line of all the above named goods in the next few days. In the meantime, we will be pleased to have our friends call and inspect our goods.
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West Main and Laurel Streets, next to Washington School.

pear. The time is now at hand when the uncared-for family orchard, whether it be in town or in the country, must be eliminated. The commercial orchardists feel that with these out of the way, the problem is a very simple one to solve.
(To be Continued.)

TO TAX AUTOMOBILES PER HORSE POWER

Governor Hay of Washington Advocates Taxing Motor Vehicles for Maintenance of Roads.

SPOKANE, Wash., May 9.—Maintaining the public highways in Washington by a tax of \$1 for each horsepower on all automobiles, trucks and motor cycles operated in the state, is advocated by Governor Marion E. Hay in a letter to J. A. Perry, secretary of the Spokane County Good Roads association. Owners of cars are generally in favor of the new tax, the importance of which will be brought to the attention of the Legislature at its next session. Licenses for 3,748 motor vehicles, with a total of 83,316 horse power, were issued for the year ended April 30. This would bring \$83,316 into the roads fund, or more than enough to maintain all the existing roads and those under construction, thus leaving a balance to be expended upon highways which are without care of any kind, because the present laws make no provision for such work. Officers of the various good roads associations in Washington are keenly interested in the proposed law and will do everything possible to secure its enactment. Governor Hay suggests that the moneys collected by taxations be disbursed to the various counties by the secretary of state.

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Farmers' and Fruit Growers' Bank Building.

CENTRAL POINT NEWSLETTER

Ernest Hathaway bought a lot in the new Shields tract this week, just east of the lots now being built upon by the Whiteside brothers. Mr. Hathaway will erect a home this summer.

Ward Whiteside, who last week conducted the sale of the Maddux orchard, is coming rapidly to the front as one of Central Point's most prominent and useful citizens. He is a fearless advertiser, a booster of nature, as well as by profession, and with a young man of fine sterling business qualities. Long may he wave.

The ladies of the Civic Improvement club are going to ask the council for the privilege of renaming the park. They believe that it should have a name more euphonious and significant than the present one—Central Point park.

At the last meeting of the Ladies' Civic Improvement club officers were elected for the year ending May, 1911. The officers who have so faithfully served during this first strenuous year of the club's existence were unanimously re-elected, their names being as follows: President, Mrs. George Fox; vice-president, Mrs. Louis Hatfield; secretary, Mrs. W. E. Kahler; treasurer, Miss Parks. A committee was also appointed at this meeting to take up the matter of supplying temporary accommodations for the tourists and prospectors now flooding the city, the hotels being unable to meet the demand for accommodations. The members of this committee were: Mrs. Evelyn Mavis, Mrs. W. H. Norcross and Mrs. W. J. Freeman.

John W. Holibird of Moline, Ill., was in the city Saturday looking over the valley for a suitable location in which to establish a cleaning and dyeing business.

E. T. Neal, who purchased the Monkers place about three months ago, was instrumental in bringing L.

H. Smith, the new owner of the Maddux orchard, to this spot to invest. One of the best evidences of the recognized value of this locality is that people who come here to live recommend it to their distant friends, and the result is that the locating of one family invariably means the coming of more of the same permanent, desirable class.

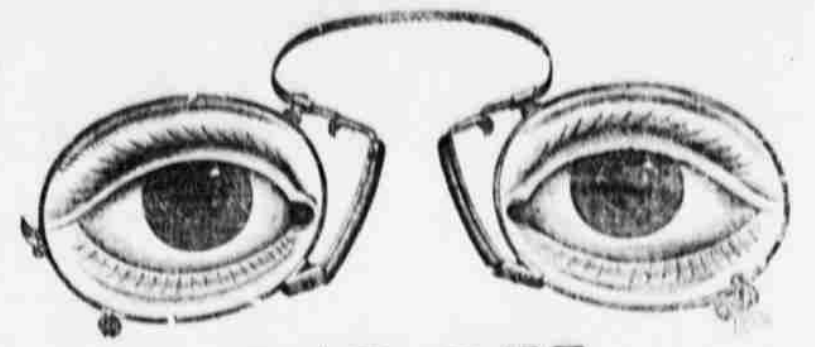
The Civic Improvement ladies will ask the city council to appoint an annual "clean-up" day, probably on or about June 18, at which time the ladies will co-operate with the citizens in the laudable and necessary work of making Central Point resemble "Spotless Town" as near as may be.

A letter received by the writer from friends in New Hampshire this week states that, while the snow is now gone, the maple trees are not yet leaved out, the fruit trees are just beginning to show the buds, and that the ground froze quite hard a few days before. Strange that anyone who may live in this charmed valley would choose New England's rigorous climate!

Evangelist Robert E. Johnson of Minneapolis, Minn., will conduct a series of meetings here beginning May 19. The Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians of Central Point will unite in supporting these evangelistic services, which will probably be held in a large tent or tabernacle. Mr. Johnson has a most excellent reputation as a successful worker in this line, and it is hoped that much good may result from his efforts.

A little daughter of Frank Gregory and wife was operated on for adenoid tumors last Friday. The operation was successfully performed by Drs. Anderson and Pollentz and the little one is greatly relieved and doing nicely.

"Haskins for Health."



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