

IRRIGATION WILL DOUBLE VALUE LAND AND CROPS

W. W. Watson of Ashland Says Water as Vital as Smudging and Widening Business Horizon—Increase Fruits of Soil—Quick Action is Urged—

By W. W. WATSON, Ashland.

Suppose we consider an area of irrigable farm lands in the heart of the Rogue River valley intrinsically worth today \$20,000,000 without artificial irrigation.

Suppose we install an adequate system of irrigation for this area and thereby increase its intrinsic value to \$40,000,000.

Suppose there is a lonely landowner in this gem of mountain valleys who would hesitate a moment to avail himself of this opportunity to acquire his share of the \$20,000,000 increase.

Suppose we simplify the proposition a little by assuming that he owns a farm of forty acres valued at \$6000. Would he pause long to consider the propriety of joining a movement at a small individual cost, that would within a reasonable time after the completion of its work result in augmenting the value of his little farm to \$12,000?

What manner of man is he who would thus pass up the best, the foremost, the easiest and topmost chance he has to insure his own success?

Does he not know that the losses of farm and orchard crops in Rogue River valley this year alone, because of the drought, will aggregate a sum of money sufficient to pay the original cost of installing an adequate irrigation system or systems covering at least 250,000 acres, including every item of expense, from the survey of sources of supply to the cost of delivery of water to his own farm floodgate?

Small Value Without Water

It will be seen from the foregoing paragraphs that the naked land is herein considered only half of the value of the real property involved, the possession of water necessary to irrigate it constituting the other half. That is a very conservative estimate of the relative values of these two farm essentials in this valley. In some farm districts in which I have operated as an irrigator and general soil manager during the past twenty years the land would be worth absolutely nothing without artificial irrigation. Without a developed prospect of an adequate water supply the land would be positively unmarketable at any price. Artificial irrigation quickly gave it a true value, ranging from \$300 to \$1200 per acre.

Hence, it will be seen that I have given the farm lands of Rogue River valley a generous valuation without irrigation—entirely too generous, in fact, considered in intimate connection with the average meteorological conditions here in a period covering three to five years. Two years ago, for instance, valley producers barely "got by." Last year, on account of the drought, the average result, covering more than 250,000 acres, showed a loss. This year, for the same reason and because of lack of irrigation facilities, the loss will be lamentably greater.

A "promoter," interested only in "letting go" at good-times prices, would conceal this fact, but I am not a promoter of that class. The other fellow should be forbidden the privilege of "promoting" in any territory.

The Farmer Wants Facts

In this state of affairs fact is what the farmer wants. The existence of one important fact should now be indelibly impressed on his mind, namely, that farming in Rogue River valley without irrigation is not an alluring speculation. Comparison of his losses with his gains during the past few years indubitably attest that fact. If he be honest with himself, no doubt is left in his mind as to the imperative need of ample artificial means of sustaining his crop growth during at least three or four months of the year. His farm soil may have contained every element of fertility, but dearth of available plant food because of lack of the necessary moisture to release it caused the major portion of his crops to die of starvation. Those portions of his field and orchard yields that struggled through the season to imperfect maturity were crippled in form and sorrowfully devoid of quality.

The sincere agriculturist cannot patiently endure this sort of business. If he began with a bank account this misfortune consumed it. If he were impelled to faithful effort by the hope of creating one, his prayer was smothered in the arid much of his sunburnt fields.

Such a condition cannot be made

to conduce to the development of optimism on the farm.

What Are the Figures?

Is there a fruitgrower in central Rogue River valley who did not eagerly grasp the first feasible scheme to prevent the destruction of his crops by frost? Does he not today regard the smudge as absolutely indispensable to his success?

But before the smudge pots were installed extensively the fruitist obtained knowledge of the cost and efficiency of that system of protection. He discovered that in proportion to its value as a safeguard its cost would be inconsiderable in comparison with the losses he might sustain without it, in a given period.

Thus it will be in the matter of irrigation. The farmers certainly know what their losses are without it. In addition to ascertaining what their gains will be with it, they must know the probable cost of installing an adequate system, together with the cost of operating and maintaining it. When these estimates shall have been released for publication, public sentiment will not require a prolonged period of crystallization in favor of a unitized system of irrigation that will cover every arable acre in the valley.

Solution of the problem of preventing loss of crops by drought is practically as simple as that of preventing loss by frost. Its initial cost will, of course, be much greater, but the annual expense of maintenance will be much less. The smudge was intended primarily to protect only the fruits, while irrigation will protect every germ of domestic plant life covered by the system.

Important in Soil Management

Another important element of advantage in systematized irrigation will be found to be the ease and effectiveness with which the farmer can give to his soils the proper treatment. The Pacific coast agriculturist who depends, primarily and finally, on the agency of heavenly downpours for first aid in the scientific management of his soils is, indeed, unfortunate. Even in the Willamette valley, where rains are too frequently excessive during the period of crop growth, the farmers are installing extensive irrigation systems for the better development of their soils and the protection of their crops. They find that it returns them big dividends on their investment, both in added abundance of yield and quality of products.

Diversified farming yields excellent returns where climatic and market conditions are favorable. In that method of farming irrigation is found to be particularly advantageous and profitable. Plant growth on one part of the farm may be a glutton for water during its early development, while that on another part of the farm requires much less. The farmer saves both his soil and the growing crop in the latter case by giving it just what it needs, while he slakes the thirst of the former by releasing plant food as rapidly as the crop can consume it.

Thus the manager of the diversified farm may defy the pluvial indifference of the rain god or, on the contrary, check the flood of his overdone beneficence—for his irrigation canals and laterals serve as conduits for drainage purposes.

Which of the Two?

The question among the farmers and fruitists of Rogue River valley acent the problem of irrigation should not be, "Will it pay?" On the contrary, it should be, "How can we hasten the installation of an adequate irrigation system?"

Irrigation throughout the valley—preferably in a cluster of units—will not only double the yield per acre in a given term of years—but, properly applied, it will vastly improve the quality of every product of the farm and thus enhance its price. It will double the true value of our farm lands and more than double the average of our annual incomes, in a given term of seasons. It is crop insurance of the highest class at the cheapest rate. It will remove the mortgages from the farm and protect it against such embarrassments in the future, so far as average business conditions are involved in the cause of their existence. It will enlarge the business of the merchant and manufacturer, the shop-keeper and dealer of every legitimate class and it will take the scowl off of the face of your banker. It will enable your newspaper to give you better matter in greater volume and inspire the editor to herald abroad the news of our bountiful development in lines commercial, civic and social.

With such an impetus to general business in Rogue River valley, the world within our physical and mental vision will be immeasurably brighter and better.

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GERMAN PRESS UPHOLD LOSS OF LIVES ON LINERS

Vossische Zeitung Editorial Says That Yielding to Yankee Views an Admission of Guilt or Fear—Shows Hatred of Great Britain—Want to Finish With English.

BERLIN, Sept. 6, via London, 2:20 P. M.—After implicitly expressing dissatisfaction at the message conveyed by Ambassador Von Bernstorff to the Washington authorities, a three-column editorial in the Vossische Zeitung declares:

"Complete unanimity reigns in Germany in the wish to maintain unaltered peace between Berlin and Washington. Ambassador Von Bernstorff's explanation must not be taken either as an admission of any guilt or an indication of fear or weakness.

"It must be reiterated that the torpedoing of the Lusitania, no matter how lamentable from a humanitarian standpoint, left no stain upon Germany's honor.

"It must also be specifically pointed out that submarine warfare against merchant vessels will now, as formerly, be carried out.

"Our admissions to America have restrictions. Our agreement counts only in case British passenger steamers do not try to harm our submarines. If Great Britain in the future believes it will be possible to deal lightly with the lives of American citizens she will have to bear the consequences as before.

"Through our step we have proved to Americans in the most loyal way how highly we value the relations existing between them and us, it is surely known in the United States that even a declaration of war by America against Germany could no longer do real harm to the German cause.

"The British press is attempting to alter the case to make it appear that Germany's move was made with an intention to win the American president as a peace agent. We do not know whether President Wilson has this thought. Likewise we cannot prevent the pope, through Cardinal Gibbons, from expressing his peace desires to the president. We highly respect the humanitarian basis of this, but we would not like to leave any uncertainty concerning the fact that Germany does not even consider

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concluding peace through any agent whatever. He who wants peace with us may come to us himself."

The editorial concludes with the declaration that peace is possible with every opponent of Germany except Great Britain, which "forced on us the difficult task of conducting a world war. We, however, wish first a decision and then a peace which shall accord with this decision."

Cholly—I say, Potah, how often do the twains stop at this forsaken hole, anyway?

Station Porter—Only once, mister; then they start again.—Judge.

JAMES A WILSON, PIONEER, DEAD

James A. Wilson, aged 85 years, a resident of the Rogue River valley for fifty years, died at his home in this city, 237 North Central avenue, Saturday, September 4. He is survived by his wife and son and a host of friends. The funeral services were held this

afternoon from his late home, the Rev. W. F. Shields of the Presbyterian church officiating. Interment in Jacksonville cemetery.

Naturally Sambo—Rastus, what did you open de jackpot with? Rastus—A razor, man!

HARTFORD, Conn., Sept. 6.—The 2:08 Charter Oak trot, for a purse of \$5000 at the Grand Circuit races here today, was won by Peter Scott. Worthy Prince was second, and Bonington third. Best time 2:07 3/4.

OBITUARY.

SHADDOCK—At her home at Central Point, Mrs. Elizabeth D. Shaddock, aged 53 years. She is survived by four children and a husband. The funeral services will be held from Rogue River Tuesday at 10 o'clock a. m.

HENDRICKSON—At her home at Holloway orchards, Sunday, September 4, of consumption, Mrs. Lizzie Hendrickson, age 35 years. Funeral services will be held Tuesday.

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