

The Famous Hood River Valley.

BY CAPT. JAMES P. SHAW.

Hood River Valley is a gem all by itself. It lies in the northwestern part of Wasco county, 23 miles west of The Dalles, the county seat, and 66 miles east of Portland, on the line of the O. R. & N. R. R., the valley extending to the Columbia river on the north.

This valley has an elevation of 200 feet in its northern terminus, and 1800 feet in the upper or southern part. Its width varies from one mile to five to eight miles, and from north to south 20 miles. The tillable land will reach 50,000 acres, about one fourth of which is in cultivation.

The surface is generally rolling, the elevated portions being considered the strongest soil.

The valley lies picturesquely environed between two mountain ranges that reach a general elevation of 2000 feet above sea level. These ranges are spurs of the Cascades, and are fringed with fir and pine that present a pleasing back-ground.

Mount Hood, snow-crowned and ever beautiful, forms an ideal barrier to the valley's further progress to the south, while the mighty Columbia stops its further extension to the north.

Hood River, a tortuous and ever restless stream, its icy waters flowing from glacial caves from under Mount Hood, divides the valley into East and West divisions. That portion lying east of the river being considered best adapted to the growth of the apple, while the west side is devoted to the raising of the famous Hood River strawberries.

The soil of this side of the river is composed of volcanic ash, thoroughly mixed and compacted with iron oxides, and mixed with a large amount of decomposed sandstone. When water is applied to soil of this nature, the fruits grown upon it are as nearly perfect as can be raised in temperate zones. Water for irrigation purposes is brought into the valley by ditches and flumes, the water being taken out of Hood River, supplying the ranchers with water through lateral flumes. The soil on the east side is somewhat varied in its characteristics; being of a more clayey nature in some parts, while in other sections the same decomposed granite and volcanic ash is met with, giving to fruits raised there a superior flavor, color and shipping qualities.

It is in the soil of this section that give superiority to fruits grown upon it, but the climate as well. Clear skies over head and balmy air just when the fruits are ripening perform no small part in giving to the world the finest apples that grow. The red on a Hood River apple is a deeper red and the yellow on a Newton is a richer golden color than is found elsewhere. Rub your hand over a Hood River apple, and you obtain a varnish-like appearance to the skin that marvels.

Nothers else has there been a spot of earth found where the apple, cherry and strawberry are grown that can approach the matchless size, flavor and color of those fruits as sent out over the country from Hood River.

The climate in this little paradise is all that the most critical could wish. Here are no cyclones to carry away our houses, neither do the rigors of winter nor the shifting extremes of summer prevail. The air comes laden from the mountains with sweet smelling fragrance of the fir and pine, giving health to the in-

habitants as it spreads over the valley. While this is not a damp climate, the precipitation is sufficient for most purposes. The weather bureau report for last year—1903—was 41 inches.

Fine fir timber abounds in the upper valley, sufficient to supply the inhabitants for many years to come. Gushing springs come from the foot-hills supplying the deliciously clear cool water; this is especially true of the upper valley. Here too, though not the best, several of the best apples come from around the base of Mount Hood. Unimproved lands in the upper valley sell today at prices ranging from \$12 to \$25 per acre, while improved ranches in the lower valley, that are planted to fruit and partially or wholly in bearing, command good prices, ranging up to \$400 per acre.

Hood River will ship this season 240 car loads of strawberries that averages to the grower \$1.75 per crate. An acre will yield, when properly cultivated, as much as 200 crates of berries. The cost per crate for cultivation is reckoned at 50 cents.

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CANTATA OF QUEEN ESTHER.

Musical and Spectacular Cantata to be Given at the Opera House Under the Auspices of the Congregational Church.



The musical and spectacular cantata of "Queen Esther" will be given at the opera house, Hood River, Monday and Tuesday, May 30 and 31, under the auspices of the Congregational church, assisted by many citizens.

The production will be under the management of A. H. Newton, musical director and costumer, who has spent considerable time and pains to drill the local talent for this superb production. There will be 125 performers. The fine oriental costumes add splendor to the scenes and the scenes promise to be very brilliant affairs. Reserved seats are now on sale at Clark's drug store. Admission 50¢ and 35¢, children 25¢.

It is the cast of characters:

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Ether, the Queen.....Mrs. A. J. Jayne	Ahasuerus, the King.....J. E. Dunbar
Haman.....A. H. Newton	Mordecai.....L. Henderson
Mordecai's sister.....Miss C. Copple-Zeresh.....Mrs. Margaret Reid	Boggar.....M. W. Dukes
Propheters'....Miss M. Baker, N. Clark	Median Princess.....Miss Cora Copple

KING'S ROYAL GUARDS.

Ethel Entrican, Mel Foley, Homer Woods, Mayor Dano, Will Baker, Clarence Copple, Harold Hersher, Elsie Sturgis, Arthur Cunningham, Estee Brosius.

QUEEN'S ROYAL GUARDS.

Ruth, Grace Prather, Pearl Bradley, Frances Bragg, Mignon Abbott, Virgie Crane, Nettie Abbott, Nellie Sanger, Ollie Sturgis, Catherine Wehr, Anna Ruth, Blanche Blowers, Edith Cook, Ruth Rigby, Nettie Peugh, Gwynnoly Dicken.

MAIDS OF HONOR.

Ida Brace, Grace Prather, Pearl Bradley, Frances Bragg, Mignon Abbott, Virgie Crane, Nettie Abbott, Nellie Sanger, Ollie Sturgis, Catherine Wehr, Anna Ruth, Blanche Blowers, Edith Cook, Ruth Rigby, Nettie Peugh, Gwynnoly Dicken.

THE CITY OF HOOD RIVER IS A PICTURESQUE TOWN OF 1400 INHABITANTS. IT HAS BEEN NESTLED ALONG THE SOUTH BANK OF THE MATCHLESS COLUMBIA RIVER, ON THE LINE OF THE OREGON RAILROAD & NAVIGATION COMPANY, 60 MILES EAST OF PORTLAND, AT A POINT ON THE BANK OF HOOD RIVER, WHERE THAT FAMOUS RIVER EMPTIES ITS WATERS INTO THE COLUMBIA.

THE RIVER ITSELF IS A MARVEL OF BEAUTY FROM ITS SOURCES TO WHERE IT MEETS THE COLUMBIA, AND TOGETHER THEY FLOW PEACEFULLY ON TO THE SEA.

THE CITY IS REGULARLY LAID OUT; HAS WIDE STREETS THAT ARE LINED WITH OAK TREES—A SPECIES OF TREE PECCULAR TO THE PACIFIC COAST—with their wide spreading branches under whose ample and inviting foliage restful moments may be enjoyed on a summer day. On the south is a rise of 200 FEET. FRAMED ALONG THE GENTLY SLOPING SIDES OF THIS HILL AND FACING THE RIVER IS COLUMBIA, ARE GROUPS OF SMALL OAKS AND PINES, AND HIDDEN AWAY AMONG THESE ARE SOME OF HOOD RIVER'S BEAUTIFUL HOMES.

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