

Yamhill County Reporter

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NO. 29.

GREAT COUNTY OF YAMHILL.

An Unexcelled Agricultural Region and the Garden Spot of Oregon.

Greatest Wheat-Growing Section in the State. Adaptability of the Country.

The Fertile Willamette Valley and its Soil, Climate and Productions.

Some Advantages Offered the Home-Seeker, Health-Seeker and the Investor.

A sketch of the history of Yamhill county, even when kept within the bounds of facts, reads like a tale from the "Arabian Nights." The development which has been accomplished within the past few years is but feebly described when it is called marvelous. The old simile of a desert converted into a garden has been so frequently applied to many localities in Oregon that it has indeed become a trite saying, nevertheless, there is not another portion of the state where it is more emphatically applicable than in Yamhill county. It is true that wonderful results have been attained in other places, but Yamhill ranks as high as any county in the state in the demonstration of the possibilities with a great variety of products. The spirit of unrest which now prevails in the states east of the Mississippi seems to have contributed to the widespread desire for a change of base, and as the star of empire courses its way westward, all eyes are turned towards the Pacific for some sign of encouragement and all ears listen for tidings of the new land of the sunset shores. The success of the majority of home-seekers in this favored portion of Oregon inspired multitudes to follow in their footsteps and to try anew, with renewed determination, their fortunes where success has crowned the efforts of so many. It has recently dawned upon the eastern mind that the amount of good agricultural land, in proportion to the entire area of this region, is greater than has been properly shown, or even supposed. All kinds and branches of farming known to northern latitudes are carried on more successfully in this section of Oregon than in the eastern or middle states.

The county is bounded on the north by Washington county; on the east by Marion and Clackamas; on the south by Polk and on the west by Tillamook. The derivation of the name Yamhill is supposed to be from Indian dialect, "cham ill," meaning bare hills, but there can be no significance in a name in this instance.

FERTILITY OF THE SOIL.

The soil of the hills is usually of a reddish color and the wheat grown is not excelled for flour in any other portion of the state, while the soil of the prairie is a rich, dark loam that is abundantly productive in all cereals. The greater portion of the county is prairie, and the foot hills that for years were thought to be only good pasture lands, are now being extensively farmed, and are producing the finest quality of grain. At least one-half of the soil is under cultivation, the major portion in wheat. Several varieties of timber—fir, oak, ash and maple, are found in the entire area, and from the fir in mountains bordering on the valley, a large amount of the best lumber is manufactured by the mills throughout the county. Grasses of all kinds, particularly timothy, grow to great

perfection here, hence this county is one of the best stock-raising and dairying sections in western Oregon. In the extreme western part of the county, the Cascade mountains furnish the very best spring, summer and fall range, while in the foot hills, in proximity to the mountains, fine dairy and stock farms are found. As a general thing, the soil on the mountains and hills is as rich as it is in the valley. Vegetables grow to perfection and gardens have never been known to fail. Hops are a prolific and profitable crop and are extensively grown. Berries of all kinds grow with but little cultivation and bear every year with unflinching certainty. Fruits of all kinds do well, with the single exception of peaches. Apples do splendidly and the trees begin to bear when young. Pears, plums and prunes do excellently well and the trees bear unusually early, at two and three years old. The raising of fruit and vegetables is not confined to the valleys, as they do equally well on the high lands. Experiments in bee culture in the foot hills and mountains have been quite successful.

The size of this valley is much larger than is generally supposed, not alone the narrow strip of low lands immediately adjacent to the Yamhill river, but including the valleys of the creeks flowing into the river and the farm lands between them, west of a line drawn north and south through Bellevue in this county, in some instances fifteen miles, the distance from Bellevue to the upper Salt creek. North to the upper settlement on Deer creek is twelve miles; from Bellevue west to Grand Ronde is fifteen miles. Then commences the Grande Ronde Indian agency which continues eight miles; also, the settlements of Salmon and Nestucca rivers have their inception here. This makes an area of country, without including the Indian agency, Salmon and Nestucca river countries twenty-seven by fifteen miles, that for salubrious climate, rich, fertile soil, timber for all purposes, water for use in house, on farm and propelling machinery, stone for building purposes, including the famous mammoth quarry, and romantic and sublime scenery, is not excelled on the entire northwest coast. There are nine creeks, large enough to propel any machinery, meandering through the valley, well supplied with trout; and the hills and mountains from which these creeks take their rise are well supplied with deer, elk, bear and other wild game. There are many branches and smaller creeks that flow from tablelands on either side of those creeks, making this a truly well-watered section. The Yamhill river is the largest stream and is navigable at all seasons of the year to Dayton, several miles from the mouth, and during the winter season boats ascend to McMinnville.

The shipping facilities from this county to the seaboard are excellent, both by rail and by water.

CLIMATE AND TEMPERATURE.

An important factor in the upbuilding of McMinnville and Yamhill county is the climate. It is proverbially excellent and cannot be excelled—in fact, it is a theme that every stranger visiting this favored locality loves to dwell upon with only words of highest praise. Its equability through all the seasons is its chief charm. As fast as people become acquainted with the natural climatic advantages, they become enthusiastic in their praise. In summer the thermometer seldom ranges above 90 or 95 degrees, and in winter seldom reaches zero. Summer days, that otherwise would be uncomfortable, are fanned by refreshing ocean breezes, which are at once healthful

and invigorating. In winter the ground is only occasionally whitened with snow.

PRODUCTS.

Wheat is the staple agricultural product of Yamhill county, and this cereal always commands the highest price, owing to its exceptionally fine quality. The yield per acre runs from fifteen to forty-five bushels and the berry is full and heavy, often exceeding by five to nine pounds the standard weight of sixty pounds to the bushel. Oats do well, yielding from forty to seventy bushels to the acre. Barley is also a profitable crop. On the river bottom lands hops are an important crop, running from 1,500 to 2,500 pounds to a single acre. Vegetables grow in abundance and they are of a superior quality.

FRUIT-RAISING.

The kinds and varieties of fruit which thrive and mature in Yamhill county really embrace the entire list, as the climate is well adapted for apples, plums, pears, cherries and prunes, and a failure of the fruit crop never occurs. The hill lands are better adapted to fruit growing than the valleys. All the small fruits—raspberries, blackberries, currants, gooseberries, strawberries and huckleberries are raised plentifully and profitably.

A WORD TO FRUIT GROWERS.

There never has been a time perhaps in the history of the country

those varieties that have proven best in the section, and success will crown his efforts. There is no need to experiment on a large scale, as was the case perhaps at one time when no one knew certainly just what species to select. The experiment stations have been doing timely work along this line and the results are open to anyone who cares to inquire. There is no earthly excuse for not knowing just what the lay of the land should be for the best attainable results. Those who have good orchards are reaping handsome profits from them, and those who set out still more orchards in the near future may rest assured that the demand will keep ahead of the supply for an untold number of years.

IMMIGRATION TO YAMHILL COUNTY.

It is not pretended nor claimed that Yamhill county affords any specific from the wealth of her soil and sunshine that will kill outright bad judgment and lack of faculty, or conform to the do-nothing into the doer. But there is legitimate basis for the belief that here the average man may work in greater comfort more days in the year and earn his bread by the sweat of his brow easier than under existing conditions in the east. Among the thousands of young men from the east who came to the Pacific coast and the greater west generally, there were many who found it profitable, made successful ventures, and

be more than a recoil of the wave. It is as true today as it was yesterday that "the star of empire westward holds its way."

LAND.

From what has been said of Yamhill county, it might reasonably be supposed that the lands of such a favored locality are held at too high a price to be reached by the average settler, whose small store of ready cash will be needed to lay out and start his new possessions. However, on the contrary, the prices of lands here are relatively and intrinsically lower than in any other agricultural county in the state. No real estate boom has been attempted here. Values are founded on actual returns and sales have been confined largely to actual residents for many years. The county has thus been peculiar in its progress and development, and its history is prophetic of its future. While it is true that a great portion of the prairie land has been settled for years, yet improved homes can be purchased at prices ranging from \$20 to \$100 per acre and unimproved land from \$5 up.

DAIRYING.

Butter and cheese-making in Yamhill county have been sufficient to supply the demand. The dairying, like that of fruit-growing, is capable of indefinite extension.

EDUCATIONAL.

The people of Yamhill county are

brick and tile, valued at \$12,500; brooms, \$1,800; sash and doors, \$12,000; poultry and eggs, \$35,000; harness, \$20,000; apples, pears and prunes, undried, 177,000 pounds, valued at \$25,500; butter and cheese, 200,000 pounds, valued at \$30,000; hay, 20,000 tons, valued at \$160,000; job printing, \$3,000.

Value of real estate, not including government, school and railroad lands, as follows: Land under cultivation, 116,670 acres, valued at \$2,148,796; not under cultivation, 203,373 acres, valued at \$702,871; town lots and improvements, valued at \$796,700.

Value of live stock: Cattle, 7,928 head, valued at \$95,136; sheep, 23,951 head, valued at \$57,902; swine, 6,193, valued at \$24,772.

The population of Yamhill county is, in round numbers, 16,000 souls; number employed in manufacturing, 500; number of school children, 5,000; number of public schools in the county, 85, giving employment to over 100 teachers; number of churches, 31; number of newspapers, 8; amount of bank deposits, \$269,000.

There are seven incorporated towns in the county, viz. McMinnville, North Yamhill and Amity, situated on the Portland & Corvallis line of railroad, and Newberg, Lafayette and Sheridan on the Portland and Sheridan line, with Dayton on the Yamhill river, at the head of navigation during the entire year. There are three first-class higher institutions of learning in the county, viz. McMinnville Baptist college, Pacific college at Newberg and Lafayette seminary.

SUGAR BEET CULTURE.

As the soil of a great portion of Yamhill county is peculiarly adapted to the growth of the sugar beet, an industry that is yielding well in other parts of the United States, something with regard to this profitable product may not be amiss in this issue of The Reporter. It seems about time that an effort should be made by the people of these parts to become producers as well as consumers. Nature has been bountiful in producing climate and soil for the growing of the sugar beet and every household in the land is a user of sugar. Our neighboring state of California does not produce one-fiftieth of this indispensable luxury and sends into other countries thousands of dollars annually for supplies. In our case, a beet sugar factory ought to be induced to locate in McMinnville and this money kept at home and paid out to our own people in wages and the like. Moreover, a beet sugar factory requires an enormous amount of fuel and lime, and the by-products of the factory are of great value as cattle food, fertilizer, etc., so that there are other industries that would be stimulated by the establishment of such a factory in our midst. It would require the cultivation of from 3,000 to 5,000 acres of land to supply an ordinary sized factory, and with beets at \$5 per ton, there would be a gold mine in it for the farmer.

From the report of the proceedings of the third general convention of the Nebraska beet sugar association, it is seen that the beet farmers in that state netted on an average \$50 per acre, which would mean \$75 to \$100 per acre in Yamhill county, Oregon. The value of sugar consumed in this country is greater than

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McMINNVILLE NATIONAL BANK.

when the outlook for horticulture was more encouraging as a pursuit of life than at present. The people of this county and country are rapidly coming to appreciate the fact that fruit as food is not only wholesome, but nutritious, and it has become an indispensable adjunct to the table of almost every household in the land. It is well that the consumption of fruit be encouraged in every way, as it is truly beneficial to health. The man who engages in fruitgrowing now is sure of a market price that will amply repay him for the time and care devoted to it. There never has been a time when a crop of fruit did not pay well for all its cost, and now that science has come to the aid of the fruitgrower and taught him how to combat disease and the deadly ravages of insects, he is more certain of a crop than ever before. The old way of setting out trees and letting them care for themselves is happily a practice of the past. Progressive men now fully realize that fruit trees require attention as well as any other crop. Orchards should be furnished with the proper plant food and the soil kept under cultivation the same as if it were a crop that could be grown in a year. The day for large orchards is passing, except where large companies and corporations or wealthy individuals have them, and the day of excessive fruitgrowing is at hand. The small orchard, say of five or ten acres, is to be preferred by the average farmer rather than the large one, which cannot be given the proper attention. Let the man who sets out an orchard now attend to the location and select

settled themselves permanently in the new land. Those who failed had nothing left them to do but to return home as best they could. The effect of this on public opinion in the older states might have been calculated on from the start. The successful settlers in the west were far from their old homes and were soon forgotten. The unsuccessful ones were at home continually, talking to their friends and neighbors, and each one by a natural impulse endeavoring to account for his failure by denouncing the land, the cities and the state in which the failure occurred. As a natural result, the better features, advantages and inducements of the greater west were lost sight of, while its drawbacks and defects, few as they were, were incessantly repeated and magnified in the ears of the people. It will take the Pacific coast some time to overcome the evil effects of the by-gone booms. That it will ultimately do so, however, admits of no doubt. Our progress in the future, though, must be laid upon lines materially different from these on which progress has been conducted in other parts of the state. The drift of American population is now towards cities. The factory draws better than the farm. The workshop is more attractive than the town lot. The people wish employment and they tend to those commercial and manufacturing centers where it is most likely to be found. The wave of immigration will turn westward again as soon as we develop on the Pacific coast a diversified industry. The reflex movement toward the east can hardly

keenly alive to the benefits and importance of education and public morals, and consequently schools and churches are quite numerous and unusually well patronized.

STOCK-RAISING.

The foothills in the immediate vicinity of McMinnville present a fine field for sheep-raising. The climate does not differ materially from that of the valley, the hills not having a greater elevation than 600 feet above the level of the sea. The grass is luxuriant at all seasons of the year, and the snows of winter do not remain more than three weeks at the outside. Numerous farmers in this county are interested in the sheep business in the foothills and many are going into it exclusively. Climatic conditions is one of the important features in stock-raising, and the evenness of the climate, the abundance of pasturage, the presence of running streams, make Yamhill county a most desirable section of the country for the raising of stock.

SOME STATISTICS.

Last year the estimated export of wheat from Yamhill county was 1,000,000 bushels, valued at \$750,000; oats and barley, 628,000 bushels, valued at \$150,000; hops, 1,350,000 pounds, valued at \$168,750; 100,000 bushels of potatoes, valued at \$25,000; wool, 300,000 pounds, valued at \$29,000; dried prunes, 100,000 pounds valued at \$150,000, and 30,000 cords oak wood, valued at \$60,000.

Among other products and manufactures for 1897 may be mentioned; Lumber, 600,000, valued at \$40,000;

Royal makes the food pure, wholesome and delicious.



ROYAL BAKING POWDER CO., NEW YORK.