

LEAGUE MEETS AT ALBANY

Interesting Papers Read in Which Senn of Silverton Grows Optimistic

That One Bright Town Is Doing.

By F. S. Senn of Silverton.

Silvered before Willamette Development League at Albany January 24.

ask what is Silverton doing? I have no better way of answering than in the words of the newly married when he said of his bride, grow better and better every day.

view of Silverton's unprecedented prosperity of the last few years I think I have been assigned to an unduly fertile field. I wish that I could do it justice.

has been truly said that we live in an age of associations. The individual has lost his place, and it may be said that the isolated town and city has also lost its place.

of Silverton in common with the towns of the other valley towns and we feel the need of closer commercial relations with the various sections of this part of the state, and we believe there is no better way of attaining this than through these boards of trade, chambers of commerce and development leagues.

like so many of the valley towns and cities, Silverton has made its greatest progress within the last few years. Five years ago business was at a standstill, trade languished and enterprise was dead; today the progressive spirit has seized our people, energy is concentrated, enterprise is stimulated, capital is invited and we are creating the conditions which attract population.

located forty-five miles south of the metropolis of Oregon and sixteen miles east of the capital of the state, Silverton occupies a vantage ground surrounded by few of the Willamette valley towns or cities. Nestled at the very foot of the Waldo hills, this unrivaled grain producing district pours its golden products into our growing town. To the west of us lies the matchless Howell prairie country, the farmers' paradise of Marion county, and to the north and east, far into the Cascade range of mountains, lies the vast Abiqua country, with its numerous streams, exhaustless forests and untold mineral deposits. It is here, within the quiet recesses of the hills of the Cascade mountains,

about thirteen miles east of Silverton, that we find the celebrated Wilhoit mineral springs. The water from these springs is as medicinal and almost as well known as the water from the Shasta springs. During the summer as many as 3,000 people visit these springs in a single day, and with better transportation facilities to and from this resort it is destined to become one of the most popular recreation places on the Pacific northwest.

A few miles to the south of our city we have the Silver creek falls, one of which is 180 feet high. Thousands of people spend their annual summer outing at these beautiful falls. Aside from this, these natural waterfalls will afford abundant motive power for any factory or industry that may come to our town. Indeed, Silver creek, which flows through our town and from whence Silverton takes its name, with a fall of over 125 feet to the mile, can furnish sufficient water power for many a factory or industry.

Silverton proper has two daily trains each way, an up-to-date fire department, a first-class water system with a pressure of 150 pounds, and an electric lighting service second to none in the state.

The private industries of our town and immediate vicinity are many and varied. Two large flouring mills, one with a capacity of 225 barrels per day, are continuously in operation. Two sash and door factories within our town, and eight sawmills within a radius of six miles of Silverton will give you an idea of the immensity of the lumber industry of our section of the valley.

Two stable banking institutions, with deposits running into the hundreds of dollars, is an infallible criterion of the financial standing of the people of our community.

Yet with all this no town or city can enjoy a lasting prosperity unless the surrounding country is capable of sustaining it.

The towns and cities of this valley are prosperous just in proportion as the outlying country from which the town or city draws its sustenance is prosperous. Thus it behooves us to not only encourage the growth of our towns and cities, but to devote much of our energy to the development of the country upon which the town or city depends for its prosperity. No better illustration of this can be found than that of our own town.

Of late the farmers of our vicinity have devoted much time and attention to the culture of hops, and in return the hop industry has brought much wealth to Silverton. Within a radius of five miles of Silverton there was raised this last year 10,000 bales of hops. This represents one-tenth of all of the hops grown in the state of Oregon and one-thirtieth of all the hops raised in the United States of America. During the year 1904 over \$400,000 was paid to the hop growers of the immediate vicinity of Silverton. And mind, this was all accomplished by the farmers within a radius of five miles of our town.

The production of potatoes and grain has been scarcely less phenomenal. Within this same territory there is produced annually 100,000 bushels of potatoes, 120,000 bushels of wheat and 150,000 bushels of oats.

In the matter of dairy products and stock raising, the results are no less flattering. The little creamery, yet in its infancy, of our town brought more than \$15,000 into our community last year from the sale of butter fat alone. And the value of stock shipped from Silverton each year is conservatively estimated at \$40,000.

With us no year has been so productive of progress as the last one. The spirit of advancement, so prevalent throughout the valley, is no less pronounced in Silverton. We have caught the spirit of the times and everywhere improvement is noticeable. With our population increasing at the rate of 20 per cent per year and an annual expenditure of \$100,000 in building operations alone, we feel that Silverton is entering upon a new era of progress and prosperity.

And in the farming district adjacent to our town the advancement is no less apparent. The farm of six and seven hundred acres is rapidly disappearing, and the forty and eighty acre tract is taking its place. Farmers are beginning to realize that diversified farming on a forty or fifty-acre tract brings the best returns on the amount of capital invested and labor performed. Allow me to cite an instance. Ten years ago a party residing near Silverton owned a farm of 700 acres of a 1 land. With the necessary employed help he cultivated the farm himself, raising nothing but wheat and oats. Yet with all of this vast area of land he made no improvements, no progress and scarcely made a living. Since that time the farm has been divided into 40 and 60-acre tracts and today we find twelve families living on this same farm, and every one of them prosperous and well-to-do.

In the matter of good roads we have

accomplished much, but still more remains to be done. Next in importance to railroads and electric line is this matter of good wagon roads, and every community should appreciate the great loss that results from bad roads. The community with good roads will outstrip its rival in settlement and business prosperity. Allow me to give another illustration.

Five miles north of us is located the rival town of Mount Angel. About six miles northeast of Silverton and seven miles southeast of Mount Angel we have what is known as the Scotts Mills district, a very populous and wealthy community. Both Mount Angel and Silverton have struggled to secure the trade and business of this community, and until within about a year ago Silverton, because of its closer proximity to the Scotts Mills district, secured the great bulk of the trade. However, about a year ago the public spirited citizens of Mount Angel foresaw the great advantage of good roads and through the aid of the county and by private subscriptions and donations these people built a macadamized road from Mount Angel to the Scotts Mills district. What is the result? It is the old story of trade following the line of least resistance. This has taught us a lesson, and Silverton has already awakened to the situation. This coming year will see a macadamized road constructed not only from Silverton to the Scotts Mills district but good roads will be the watchword of our town, and an effort will be made to better every road that leads from Silverton.

And when the roads are built we trust that they may be of the very best. It is said that the Roman military roads, built almost two centuries ago, endure today. Friends, let us be Romans and make our roads endure for all time.

In connection with this matter of transportation facilities I wish to mention one of the pressing needs of Silverton, and that is an electric line to Salem. Ever since the line from Salem to Portland has become an established fact the people of Silverton have anxiously waited for developments that would give them a line to Salem. The country over which the line would pass being level and prairie-like, construction work would be easy and comparatively inexpensive. The unlimited amount of waterfall near Silverton would provide abundant motive power at little cost. And the wealth and highly developed state of the community through which the line would pass would make the road a paying proposition from the start. We trust that the time is not far distant when Silverton will be linked to the other valley towns and cities by an electric line.

In conclusion allow me to say that we have absolute faith in the continued growth and prosperity of our sections of the valley. Our destiny is certain. Believing in co-operation, we long for closer commercial relations with the other towns and cities of the Willamette valley. There should be no antagonism between the various sections of our state. Justice to each and all is possible, and we plead for the spirit that knows the interests and rights of every section of this state, for, after all, we are building for a greater Oregon as well as for a greater Portland, a Salem and Albany or a Silverton. Our aims and purposes are identical, our interests are mutual. Let us help each other and thereby help ourselves. Let us have equal and ex-

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net justice to all, a just distribution of the public burdens, strict economy in the public service, faith in our destiny and trust in the future.

Albany's Interest in an Open Willamette.

The Willamette river is an Albany asset. Take away the railroads, block the highways, surround the landward side of the town with wall and moat, and there is still the river, nature's way to the sea, the natural connecting link of the inland country with its seaport. Portland is set down in the list of the world's great seaports, yet Albany is just a little farther up the Willamette than Portland and has therefore some claims to seaport classification. Every town on the Willamette has right and title to the river and should manifest living interest in its improvement.

The river is the oldest and most effective route bill. Water transportation is the cheapest method of moving freight, there being no roadbed to equip and no right of way to secure. Trade, ancient and modern, followed the streams and metropolitan prosperity has found its seat by the sea or the rivers.

Departing from the zone of river influence, rate sheets are stimulated into advance. It costs proportionately more to ship from Portland to the interior where river transportation fails to enter. The river is too valuable a safety valve to lose.

Take a look at the Willamette this evening. The stream is fair and pleasant. Its course is marked by scenes of wonderful beauty. Nature here is in her most expressive humor. To look at the Willamette is trade's most effective ally. But snags and shoals cause the navigator to see visions and dream dreams of danger, disaster, bankruptcy.

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If any of the river steamers now in service have not sunk a time or two, it is because they are new on the route and their time to touch bottom will come soon enough. For the Willamette is a mass of shoals, a network of changing channels. Floods in spring bring down water from the forests, sediment and sand from secret hoards. Sharp-pointed snags are placed in position by the currents, only lacking opportunity to puncture the keel of passing boats.

Albany is interested in river betterments. Here is opportunity for the engineer. What man has done, man can do. It is an easier and less expensive proposition to make the Willamette really navigable than has been the case with successful river improvements in the Mississippi, the Columbia, the Ohio and many of the rivers of the Atlantic coast. Federal appropriations for the important work of river improvement are hard to secure.

Senator Fulton has worked earnestly to this end and his lockage bill is one of the most encouraging features of this national legislation, as Oregon is immediately affected.

Fair means have been provided to keep the Willamette open. There is a snag boat owned and operated by the government which is seen and heard of occasionally in these parts. There is plenty for it to do. Then, after much hard work, in which Albany commercial organizations had their part, a river dredge has been constructed and is ready for work. It is proposed as the river falls in the spring to have this dredge maintain a channel through the sand bars of sufficient depth to permit of the passage of the light draught steamers of the Willamette. It is thought that a channel so made will last through the season and that operation of this dredge need not

(Continued on Page Seven.)

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