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IRRIGATION PROSPECTS BRIGHT

It is not exaggerating the situation, nor making a rash statement not justified by conditions, to say that the outlook for the beginning of actual work on the proposed West Okanogan Valley Irrigation district project has never looked more favorable since the inception of that great watering enterprise than just at the present time. Of course there will be no absolute certainty of the realization of that long cherished hope until the bonds are placed and the construction crew is on the ground but a movement is on foot, with an individual interested in the consummation behind the movement—who is in earnest in his efforts and confident of their ultimate success—which warrants the announcement that present prospects are most assuring of early results.

And it is about time that a favorable change was taking place, as the long delay has naturally created discouragement and dissatisfaction among owners. For three years this reclamation of valley lands on a large scale has been under consideration. There has been organization and reorganization, surveys, reports and estimates, promises unfulfilled, prolonged delays in securing information, together with heavy expenses that the owners had to meet with nothing tangible to show for the money expended, that is tangible in the way of progress toward the one single and great aim of securing water.

The favorable change in the prospects of this locally important enterprise has been brought about by the presence of O. Laurgaard, and the statements he freely made while here as the directors of the district, and others directly interested in the project. As stated in the last issue of the Gazette Mr. Laurgaard arrived in Oroville Tuesday evening of last week. Early the next morning, in company with Ernest Riste, he went over the ground from the proposed intake on the Similkameen river to Oroville. After remaining here just long enough to lunch the gentlemen continued on to Tonasket, where Mr. Laurgaard met with the directors and expressed himself freely upon the feasibility and importance of the enterprise. He was most favorably impressed with the character of the lands under the proposed system, their extent and possibilities under irrigation. He not only considered the project practicable, but that he considered as a safe and inviting investment for capital. In fact he was enthusiastic over the enterprise after having made his investigations. He expressed it as his opinion that for the amount of bonds issued metal pipes and fluming could be used, which would greatly increase the stability and permanency of the work. He announced that upon his recommendation material could be procured in exchange for bonds, which is one of the heaviest expenses attached to construction, and seemed to have no doubt that he could meet with little difficulty in placing the bonds. He spoke his mind freely and without reservation, so that this publicity is abusing no confidence. Mr. Laurgaard wasted no time here, but after his conference with the directors he departed for the outside for the purpose of presenting the proposition to good investors, and if meeting with a favorable reception to perfect arrangements to start construction at an early date.

As was stated last week Mr. Laurgaard is a civil engineer of high reputation. Some years ago he had charge of the construction of the big dam at Conconully, built by the government to conserve the water of Salmon creek for use on the vast government reclamation project on the west side of the Okanogan river between Riverside and Okanogan. After the completion of the dam Mr. Laurgaard retired from the government reclamation service, and since that time has been connected in an engineering capacity with private irrigation enterprises. That experience, coupled with the construction of the Conconully dam, has tended to make him an authority on irrigation systems, both as to physical construction and as to the utility of applying irrigation to any given body of land. It further gives him great prestige with investors and contractors having confidence in his judgment, and a favorable report from him after personal inspection of a proposed project carries great weight. He feels confident that upon the representations he can rattle will make him experience little trouble in plac-

AN ACCREDITED HIGH SCHOOL

Prof. Edwin Turntreyer, of Seattle, state high school examiner, arrived in Oroville Saturday, and put in Monday examining into the standing of the high school at this place. He conferred with teachers and directors, and gave a very interesting and instructive address to the students, pointing out the cardinal studies that best fitted boys and girls in every day life. The professor expressed himself as being very well pleased with the methods of teaching, the general appearance of the school and standing of the scholars, and had no hesitancy in stating that he would recommend making the Oroville high school a fully accredited four year school. As the action of the state school authorities is based almost wholly upon the recommendations of the examiner, it is safe to promise that the full four year high school course can be secured in the Oroville school beginning with the next term. This means more to Oroville than is generally supposed. It will be no longer necessary for a pupil having finished a two year course seeking some other school at which to finish the four year course. It can be had right here at home, and graduates from this school can, and will, receive the full four years credits. Moreover, pupils who have advanced as far as they can in neighboring district schools may now come to Oroville, where the surroundings are so pleasant and attractive, to finish their school work. This advantage will be noticeable next year and all succeeding years by an increased attendance at the local high school from the surrounding country. In many instances it will have the effect of drawing families here to spend the school months in order that children may enjoy the advantages of a high school education. The residents of Oroville are to be congratulated upon securing what has long been anxiously hoped for, a full four year accredited high school, and the teachers are entitled to a just measure of credit that that much desired object has been obtained.

THAT IMPRACTICABLE GRADE

Percy Davis was engaged by the town council last week to set the grade stakes on the streets to be graded in compliance with the request of property owners and in conformity with the formation of a street improvement district. Mr. Davis simply followed out the grade data under a previous survey made some years ago, and when he finished driving the stakes the streets looked very much as though they were enclosed with a picket fence. From Vancouver street east for several blocks the grade provided about a two to four foot fill on Central avenue, and some of the side streets were little better in that respect. If such a fill were made it would require heavy retaining walls on each side to confine the dirt and gravel, and the streets would look like the embankments of a dyke, or a fill for a railroad. It would cost more to do the work than could be raised by bonding the entire town, and when completed would be a municipal fiasco. The top of the street in some places would be higher than the window sills of the buildings facing the street, compelling the owners to make a basement of the first story. Of course no such monstrosity in the way of street improvement will be carried out, but how such a grade was originally established surpasses all understanding. That the streets need fixing no one will deny, but that fixing should be rational and the cost not such as would work an unupportable burden on every lot owner.

DON'T FORGET TONIGHT

If at this late date any one has not made up his or her mind to attend the Civic League entertainment to be given in the Orpheum theater this Friday evening, let him, or her, do so, and see that it is made up right so as not to miss one of the most amusing and interesting performances that has yet been staged by that organization. This is a bold promise, but not a rash one when the program is taken into consideration. There will be laugh-provoking one act skits, choice singing and dancing. There will be nothing dull nor somnolent about the entire performance. It will be a stringing out of one laugh after another, and there is nothing so conducive to longevity as good, hearty laughter. As entertainers the members of the Civic League have established a reputation by previous efforts along these lines, and as intimated above the efforts of this evening will surpass those of hitherto. The performance is given for the benefit of the building fund, and if it were to be the dullest kind of an affair that in itself should be an incentive for everybody to turn out. But there is not going to be anything dull about this particular divertisement. It will be one continuous source of joy from the call of the first number until it is time to get into your wraps and high yourself homeward.

A PLACER GOLD FLURRY

From items recently appearing in the Wenatchee World it would seem that placer mining on the Columbia river is being revived and again attracting wide attention, made more sensational with the assistance of daily papers. Working the bars and banks of the Columbia for gold is a kind of counterirritant for hard times, and like hard times strikes the country periodically. The black sand along the Columbia river, from Priest's rapids northward, and probably from even a point lower down on the river, is impregnated with fine particles of gold, so fine that no process has as yet been discovered that will save the minute flour scales in sufficient quantities to pay operating expenses on a large scale. The strata of sand and gravel containing this gold is plainly marked and perceptible to the eye at low water. Any one who will take the trouble to do so will note a narrow ribbon of a distinctly yellowish tinge along the river shores wherever the banks are washed down. Take a pan of this dirt from anywhere along this streak, wash it out, if you know how, until nothing is left except a slight coating of black sand—and it will be there—give the pan a slight twist and you can distinctly see a string of specks of gold, with occasionally one of goodly size.

From a time running back beyond the memory of man white men and Chinamen have panned and cradled for gold along the Columbia. The white man as a rule soon gives it up as an unprofitable job, as he can not make ordinary wages. The Chinaman is more tenacious, more persistent and is satisfied with a smaller gain. On what he would consider pay dirt a white miner would starve. For years and years an old Chinaman worked a crude rocker up and down the river from the mouth of Foster creek. That he was extracting gold, and was satisfied with what he was getting was evident from the fact that he stuck to the work. But how much he took out no man ever really knew. He lived alone, worked alone, and kept his business wholly to himself. He had a crude outfit, worked the cradle with one hand while dipping water from the river in a tin can fastened to a stick. When asked how much he made a day he would reply: "Maybe sometime four bittee; some time six bittee; some time little more." He was the gold hunting Sphinx of the Columbia river.

A NOBBY VEHICLE

Lew Prentice came in Monday from Spokane with a big Studebaker combination delivery and passenger car, and was accompanied by Geo. Bartell, who traveled in a new Studebaker touring auto. This new delivery car is one of the swiftest gasoline vehicles that has ever come into the county, not only in general appearance but for its usefulness. It is solidly and substantially built, without detracting from its beauty, with every modern appliance such as electric lights, electric starter, and all the new fangled features to make its operation easy and convenient. It can be used as a general delivery car, for which purpose Mr. Prentice purchased it, and has a capacity for carrying large loads either of merchandise or passengers. It has upholstered seats that swing upward forming sides for the vehicle. They can be instantly let down for use. It will be run between the depot and the Hotel de Grubb for carrying passengers to and from trains. It can also be utilized for carrying excursion parties. The enterprise of Mr. Prentice in supplying the town with such an up-to-date auto and passenger truck should secure that gentleman ample reward.

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Morning prayer and sermon at 11, Sunday school at 12, no evening service. The Rt. Rev. Herman Page, bishop of Spokane, expects to visit this mission in order to administer confirmation in June. Any who would like to consider the matter are asked to notify the vicar.

SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTING

As predicted by this paper the crowd that collected at Okanogan last Thursday, upon the occasion of the laying of the corner stone of the new court house, was one of the largest that has ever assembled in the county. People were present from all the surrounding country, up and down the valley from Brewster to Oroville, delegations even coming from Wenatchee and Waterville. Oroville sent a very large contingent, including many members of the local Masonic lodge and the full band. Those who were present from this place whom we have met express much dissatisfaction over the manner in which the proceedings were conducted. For some reason there seemed to be no pre-arranged program, or if there was no effort was made to carry it out with any system. There was a long tedious delay in getting started to the court house, the proceedings seemed to drag when the court house was reached, and people could not hear the Masonic proceedings a dozen feet from the corner stone. By the time speaking was to commence most of the crowd had left the grounds. Furthermore, this place was invited to send a speaker and did so. That gentleman made inquiries of several persons when and where the speaking was to take place, and no one could give him any information. The consequence was he was not called upon at all, or if called he knew nothing about it. The loss was on the side of the crowd, as the Oroville representative was primed to make an interesting speech. This is not intended as carping criticism, it is mentioned as an unfortunate circumstance. It is evident that the attendance was much larger than was expected, and the Okanogan people were not prepared to handle the mob. Aside from the unfortunate delays which were felt more grievously on account of the extreme heat, those present had a pleasant time meeting old acquaintances, the music was excellent, the ball game interesting and those who remained for the dance heartily enjoyed themselves. Take it all in all it was a grand day for Okanogan, both on account of the purpose it commemorated and for the number of people that assembled on the occasion.

AN EARLY BIRD

Oliver Tufty, the pioneer merchant of Tonasket—which, in the present sense, means only a few years in business at that wide awake town, as its existence is measured by only a short period of time,—was in town Monday in his car. Our friend Oliver is not the active individual he was when we first knew him, and that is so long ago that we are not going into details as it would throw a question upon our youthfulness. Perhaps it is a stretch of the imagination to attach the word "active" to any movement that Mr. Tufty ever made in days beyond recall, for ever since our first acquaintance that gentleman has been able to boast of much beef in his general make up, and hence activity in the matter of agility has never been his long suit. But he was sturdy, able to endure exertion, until recent years, when rheumatism, or some other ailment, put a crimp in power of locomotion, thus abbreviating his ability to get around. However, he is much better in that respect than he was a few months ago, and his suffering has not soured his genial disposition, or entirely corrected the weakness occasionally of showing a grouch, for that matter. Mr. Tufty is one of the old timers of eastern Washington and Okanogan county. He was a resident of Spokane as far back as '84. He had a penchant for mining and chased the elusive buried riches for years. He took a fling at the Coeur d'Alenes, in the first blossom of that wonderful mining district, and secured claims that he failed to hang on to. Like others of up he lost a fortune by letting go his grip at the wrong time, as the property that he once owned has been sold and resold at figures that reached the half million mark. Through some hook or crook he was wafted into Okanogan county, and here he was connected with mining ventures, in which there was much hard work, experience and a minimum of returns. He put in a long period at the old Golden camp, a few miles west of Oroville, turning his hand to almost anything to make a more or less honest dollar. At last he entered the mercantile business, opening the first store at Tonasket, and at that he has succeeded famously. He has enjoyed a large patronage, accumulated considerable means, and is doing his part to build up that town. May he round out a full century and enjoy every year of the residue of the time he has coming if he holds out the hundred.

HELP THE BOYS OUT

The girls of the high school will hold a food sale in the vacant store room of the Hotel de Grubb, Main street front, tomorrow afternoon, at which will be offered pies, cakes and candies. The object of this sale is one that should appeal to all the residents of the town, creating a greater demand for the goods than can be supplied. The annual high school track meet takes place at Okanogan next Friday, April 30. The local high school will send several young men to enter the contests. Those boys go down to hold up the record the local school made last year. This sale is for the purpose of raising funds to meet the expenses of that trip. Every one interested in the athletic feature of the public school will feel a desire to see our boys make a record at this annual meet, and should be ready and willing to help them get there. By patronizing the sale they will be helping in that object. The girls are showing the right spirit in trying to help the boys out, and it is up to the citizens to make that effort successful.

PRESBYTERIAN SERVICES

Divine Worship next Sunday morning at 11 a. m., subject of sermon, "The Greatness of God's Power Toward Us." Sunday school at 10 a. m. Come and share in the privilege of worship and work. All cordially welcome.

M. E. SERVICES

Sunday school at 10, preaching at 11. The Junior League will meet next Sunday. Epworth League at 7, leader, Mrs. P. M. Snider. Preaching at 8. Prayer meeting Thursday evening at 8. All are cordially invited to attend.

State Fish Commissioner L. H. Darwin and two assistants, L. E. Maryhall and E. E. Sherwood, of Seattle, stopped over in Oroville Monday night on their way to Curlew lake, where a state fish hatchery is to be established. The gentlemen were met at this place by a number of residents of Tonasket and Oroville interested in the propagation and preservation of game, both fish and fowl.

in processes that it was claimed would save the gold, but after a few weeks the pure waters of the Columbia flowed toward the sea unpolluted by the muddy contents of the pan, and gradually the gold chasing excitement was forgotten. The present flurry is only a repetition of that of nearly a quarter of a century ago, and it will end the same way. There is gold in the sands at Orondo, as there is along every mile of the stream. That can not be gainsaid. But saving it in paying quantities has never been accomplished, although tradition has it that Virginia Bill took out \$30,000 many years ago at the point of rocks just below the present town of Bridgeport. It may have been 30 cents that has grown to more vigorous figures with passing years.

Reading the vivid accounts of this revived placer excitement carries memory back over twenty years ago. Just another such furor broke out at that time. We were at Waterville and fabulous stories of rich finds climbed up the bluffs from the nearby river, growing in vividness with every foot of the ascent. It was about the time that the Cleveland administration was doing to us what the Wilson administration is doing to us today, and a prospect of getting a little ready cash with no more exertion than was necessary to pick it out of the ground appealed to a number of us, who were long on daily demands and short on the means to meet those demands. A party of Waterville citizens, of which we were one, lost no time hiking to the new and rich discoveries. Armed with pans and provisions for a stay as long as the gold held out the crowd descended upon the Columbia river, buoyed up with visions of flour sacks full of gold. We worked the banks and staked out the river frontage from Orondo to Hell Gate, and lying out under the stars planned the spending of the fortune that we thought was within our grasp. Alack and alas, like other fortunes that we have missed, this one passed away as a vapor. We put in hours and hours of hill climbing and tramping worked long and diligently, gathered an assortment of aches and creaks in our backs and limbs packing dirt and twisting a pan while knee deep in the chilly fluid of the Columbia. Anywhere we searched, under a boulder, at roots of trees, or in the yellow marked bank of the river, we could find and wash out colors, fine pin points of the coveted dross, but work as we could it was impossible to save enough to pay the price of the bacon required to feed the distorted appetites created by the excessive exercise. After several days the dream of riches passed away, and that disappointed crowd trickled back to their several homes.

At that time scores of excited men were engaged in the same roseate chase, and much money was invested

W. C. Muldrow, of Okanogan, was among the visitors in town Tuesday.

Episcopal services will be held in the Congregational church, at Loomis, on next Sunday evening at 8 o'clock.