Montpelier, Premier City of Bear Lake County, Idaho

MONTPELIER, Idaho, is the metropolis of the great Bear Lake valley and its population within the city limits proper which include territory one mile square and the surrounding environs number at a very conservative estimate 3,000 souls. No historical data concerning Idaho would be in any sense complete without relating the history attending the settlement of this thriving city and surrounding country.

FIRST SETTLEMENT.

Bear Lake valley was first explored in 1863. Charles C. Rich and a band of hardy pioneers were first to enter the valley. Of the original discoverers John Bunney and Charles Raymond remained and had the honor of building the first house and cutting the first hay crop produced in the now fertile valley. It was of course with much difficulty the first crop was cut, and in order to accomplish the thing a scythe was used by the two sturdy pioneers. This first crop, too, was produced on land which is now designated as Paris Bottoms.

SNAKES WERE PLENTIFUL.

At the time the pioneers entered the valley snakes were plentiful and Pioneer Bunney killed the first one put to death in the interests of future civilization.

After seeing to it that things would be conducted in a manner calculated to build the country up Pioneer Rich returned to Utah for his family and later the same season returned to the vicinity of Montpelier bringing all with him. Accompanying Mr. Rich were other pioneers with their families. In this connection it is interesting at this time to note the names of the pioneers who wintered in Bear Lake valley during the season of 1863 and 1864. The complete list follows:

WITHSTOOD HARDSHIPS.

John Clifton, Hezekiah Duffin, David Roberts, David Savage, Alonzo Bingham, Robert K. Williams, William Severn, John Cozzens, John Bunney, Charles Raymond, Hezekiah Moore, William Leipler, Clarke Anns, Gideon Harmonson, William Bird, Charles Atkins, Louis Ricks, John Turner, William Gassman, John F. Carlson, Matthew Fifield, Sidney Savage, Levi Gifford, Thomas Mantle, Ebenezer Lauders, Charles Mallory, Orson Merrill, James Dunmick, John Hendricks, Gilbert Weaver, James Poulsen, Christian Hogensen, Phenius Cook, Alexander Lowe, John Dee, John Wahlmsley, George Ellis, Sr., George Ellis, Jr., Edward Ellis, Alonzo Merrill, John Maughn, Thomas Sleight, John Wreston, Isaac Thorn, Joseph Bowen and Lauder Wreston.

FIRST BABE OF COLONY.

It was on Nov. 9, 1863, that a baby girl was born in the colony and the proud father and mother were Mr. and Mrs. Christian Hogensen. They were justly proud of the contribution to Bear Lake of the first white child. This particular family arrived in the valley on Nov. 7, 1863, during a severe downpour of rain.

The first winter was a rigorous one and provisions were very hard to obtain. Everything at that time had to come from Cache valley, Utah, which was the nearest trading point. Even then it was a very difficult matter to carry on trade relations because in order to secure supplies everything had to be packed over the mountainous country and this had to be accomplished by the pioneers on snow shoes.

FURTHER EXPLORATIONS.

Early in the spring of 1864 further exploration of the immense valley was prosecuted. It was at once discovered that the east side of the expanse afforded better facilities for settlement more particularly because here the snow went off a little earlier than on the west side. This led to the partial depopulation of the little town of Paris. From the latter then settlement many pioneers crossed the river and settled what was at that time styled Clover Creek, so named by trappers and marauding bands of Indians. This settlement it was that was later to become known as Montpelier. The present name was given the place in honor of the man who laid out the town. A complete list of the first pioneers of the city follows:

John Cozzens, who was chosen by unanimous consent first leader of the band; William Severn, Christian Hogensen, John Turner, John Bunney, William Tiefles, Clarke Anns, Gideon Harmonsen, Charles Atkins, Eben Landers, John Manzhn, E. Moore, "Doc" Ellis, William Vaughn, Isaac Thorn and Thomas Mantle.

GROWTH CONTINUED.

The growth of the new location grew steadily. In June of the same year and later in the season other families settled in Montpelier. Among the more prominent earlier settlers were James Holmes and wife and Harriet W. Phelps Holmes, who upon Aug. 12 of the same year gave to Montpelier its first white child, which was named Almira.

It was in April, 1865, that the first marriage was solemnized in the valley and the contracting parties were John A. Handcock and Antonetto Anderson. The groom at the time resided at Paris, and his bride was a resident of Montpelier. Some better idea of the hardship necessary in order to attend the wedding can be had when it is stated that Paris by stage today is but an hour and a half from Montpelier. However, when this ceremony was performed, a heavy snow was on the ground, it required two days to make the round trip between Montpelier and Paris. This marriage ceremony was performed by C. C. Rich.

AMUSEMENT ENTERPRISE.

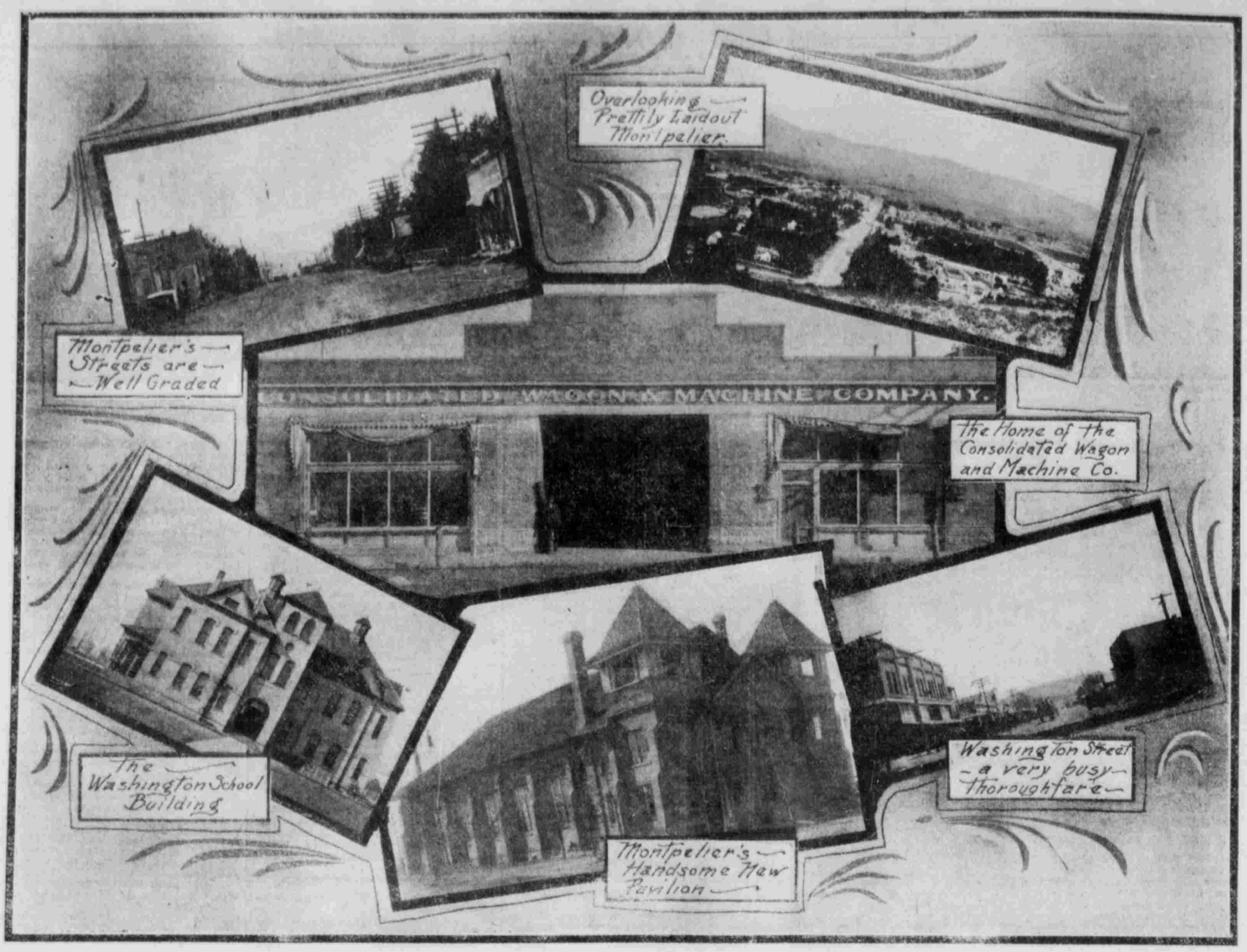
As early as 1865 it was decided that amusement of a theatrical nature was necessary for the town, and accordingly, a local company was formed with one of the leading citizens as manager and for several years the people of Montpelier were splendidly entertained at various times.

Early in the history of the present city a church was erected and a Sabbath and day school organized. In connection with the day school it is well to add that teaching was along very primitive lines and the rod was never spared.

During the years from 1865 to 1867 flour was a very scarce article in Montpelier. What little was purchasable sold at $12 per 100 pounds. Sugar was likewise very hard to secure and it sold as high as $1 per pound. It was only possible for each family to secure one pound at a time.

STOCK WAS RAISED.

Attention was gradually turned by Montpellerites to stock raising, owing to the fact that the grasses were unlimited in the vicinity. Pasturage being abundant it was little to be wondered at that this method of putting the land to good use should not be quickly adopted, but still there was a very serious drawback and that was the severe and long winter to be contended with. The winter of 1872 was perhaps the most severe and during that period the loss of stock to ranchers was very heavy. Exposure to cold in those days was practically speaking unpreventable and cattle froze to death. Even as late as the winter of 1880, which was also a very severe one in the valley, farmers lost heavily on stock, some of them loosing their entire herds.



TRAMPED THE HILLS.

During winters such as above described men and women could be seen tramping the hills to the tops of mountains where there might be sheltered spots into which surviving herds of stock were carefully driven for protection.

It was in the year 1884 that the Oregon Short Line Railroad company built a line into Montpelier. At that time the city was about half a mile west of the location of the railroad depot and shops which the company erected. At once a new city began to grow and gradually the old and new Montpelier merged together until today one cannot discern which was which. This fact is entirely due to the perfect pulling together of all interests for a larger and greater city. Much of this splendid harmony was brought about through the efforts of the Montpelier Commercial club, which is today one of the strongest boosting organizations in the entire Gem state. Included in its membership is every prominent business man in the city and the club maintains elegantly furnished quarters in one of the principal office buildings of the city.

SPLENDID SCHOOLS.

Montpelier is very well supplied with schools having three graded institutions and a splendid high school in course of erection. It requires the services of 12 teachers to attend to the needs of its 600 pupils.

One of the important changes brought about in the city with the coming of the railroad was the changing of the business section from Main street at the base of the foothills to Washington avenue. The latter thoroughfare is a wide street and is lined on both sides with splendid business buildings. On the other hand Main street is today rapidly becoming one of the desirable residence streets of the city. True, some business buildings yet remain on the thoroughfare, but they are slowly but surely giving way to homes.

A SPLENDID VALLEY.

Bear Lake valley is approximately 30 by 70 miles, and it is hemmed in on all sides by spurs of the Rocky and Wasatch ranges of mountains. It is, indeed, an inspiring sight the traveler witnesses as he approaches Montpelier through the gap by which the railroad enters the valley and city proper.

Here in this valley can be raised all the hardy grains. Everything grows well. Large crops of oats, wheat, rye, barley, potatoes, hay, apples, pears, plumbs and all small fruits are annually raised. The soil is well adapted to raising strawberries gooseberries and currants. Dairying an dstock raising are diligently prosecuted.

One particularly profitable feature of the country is the raising of horses for importation. Carloads of the latter sell annually in the various California markets.

DRY FARMING PAYS.

All land at the base of the foothills is being brought rapidly under cultivation and dry farming is prosecuted with splendid success. No such thing as crop failure is ever heard of in the valley and all farmers raise splendid crops every year.

GREAT BEAR LAKE.

Just 12 miles distant from Montpelier is the great Bear lake, where is located the mineral hot springs resort. This establishment is largely patronized in the summer months by invalids, particularly those suffering with rheumatism. This place is likewise a resort for Montpelier residents in general. Here will be found in the season two splendidly equipped bath houses, a splendid hotel and everything that goes to make up a summer resort in general. Boating is one of the pleasant pastimes on the lake, and an abundance of small craft is always rentable. Here also during the season many tenters enjoy themselves on the shores of the lake.

BRINGS BEST PRICE.

It is a fact worthy of comment in connection with dry farming in this section that all dry farmed wheat raised in this splendid valley invariably commands the very highest price at the mill.

Poultry raising is another industry in connection with farming in the valley which is very remunerative. Farming land sells throughout the entire valley according to location at from $10 to $50 an acre. All this farming land lies adjacent to Bear lake which is 20 by 30 miles. The lake itself is one of the prettiest stretches of water in the entire intermountain region. It abounds in fish and in the hills surrounding there is plenty of excellent small game hunting.

MINING INDUSTRY.

The mining industry in and about Montpelier is just in its infancy. A number of important copper leads have been developed. Last September several eastern capitalists brought in a carload of machinery and will prosecute the industry with a will.

Here also is found in almost inexhaustable quantities phosphate which is used for fertilizing purposes. The mineral found in leads about Montpelier is said to be of the very highest quality for this purpose.

NEEDS OF THE CITY.

Montpelier needs a permanent brick yard and such an enterprise is assured splendid support. The city supports two lime kilns but all brick must be imported. A starch factory would also do well in the city and a properly conducted slaughter house could also supply a very large territory.

Montpelier supports eight general mercantile establishments, three grocery and green fruits stores, one gents furnishing goods establishment, three furniture stores, two undertaking parlors, tow implement and hardware houses, two exclusive hardware stores, two harness shops, two shoe stores, which carry on wholesale and retail business, three drug stores, two of which do wholesale and retail business, two jewelry stores, one bakery, three meat markets, two music stores, two hotels, two restaurants, two billiard parlors, a like number of tailor shops, two liveries, one lumber yard, which carries cement and building materials, one roller mill, an electric lighting plant, mostly controlled by local capital, nine physicians, four dentists and three attorneys.

CHURCHES AND LODGES.

No city in Idaho of equal size boasts of more fraternal orders than Montpelier. Every order of prominence is represented. Likewise in the matter of churches the city is represented by places of worship in the name of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Catholicism, Episcopalianism, and Presbyterianism.

It is but proper here to state that no Idaho city is better looked after from a financial standpoint than Montpelier. Two splendid banking institutions are supported in the city and one—the oldest—is conducted by Mr. Gray, a man well known all over the state for his sound business methods in connection with financiering. The other bank is ably managed by Lieutenant Governor Burrell of Idaho. For be it known, Montpelier claims the distinction of being the residence city of the second man in the commonwealth. Besides presiding over the destinies of the banking institution, Hon. E. A. Burrell is the local manager of the mammoth establishment maintained by the Consolidated Wagon & Machine company, an illustration of which appears in connection with this history of the city. This building is one of the largest and most modern in Montpelier.

Aside form his banking and mercantile interests Lieutenant Governor Burrell has many other important interests in and about Montpelier.

HEAVY PAYROLL.

Here at Montpelier is manitained a railroad division point for freight crews on the Oregon Short Line railroad and the yearly payrolls at this point amount to between $150,000 and $200,000.

A splendid new water works has just been completed and turned over to the city. It was taken over December 1 last and water is now being used. The tests were perfectly satisfactory before the plant was accepted by the city. To handle this project the city was bonded for $50,000. A splendid filtering bed has been constructed, all necessary pipes are under the ground and a reservoir amply large enough to supply the needs of the city for fire and personal usage for several years to come makes the plant one of the best in the state.

PROPERTY VALUATIONS.

Real estate is always active in Montpelier. City lots according to location sell from $100 to $1,000. The frontage and depth varies. Certain building lots average 50 by 120 feet and others are sold in acre form.

All Montpelier streets are graded in the business section and most of them are similarly improved in the residence portion of the city. Also in the business section of the city cement sidewalks are the rule.

One of the crying needs of the city is competent domestic help. Excellent wages are paid for all classes of hired help, but the latter is very difficult to secure.

SPLENDID PAVILION.

One of the handsomest structures in Montpelier and likewise one of the most recent additions to the city is the large pavilion building. This spacious amusement palace was completed last spring. It is a two-story affair of brick with a commodious basement below ground. The latter is arranged for banqueting purposes and besides contains spacious kitchen and engine rooms. The second floor of the pavilion is equipped for dancing and the dance floor is large enough to comfortably entertain the largest possible crowd Montpelier can turn out. This splendid dancing surface is constructed of polished maple wood and it rests on a base of rubber cushions. This has the desired affect of giving rhythm and vibration to the music and sway of the dancers.

Other appointments of this pavilion are ladies and gentlemen's retiring rooms, smoking rooms for men and checking rooms for wearing apparel. An orchestra of seven pieces discourses music for the dancing parties and during the winter season regular dances are held twice a week. In the summer time the management contemplates holding one dance weekly.

ATTRACTIVE SURROUNDINGS.

The management contemplates seeding a lawn in front of the building and planting trees so as to make the place even more attractive than at present. Spacious stone sidewalks lead up the approach to the building.

This splendid building is one of the best of its character in Idaho and it was built by a company organized with a capitalization of $10,000.

It is a fact worthy of mention by way of conclusion that the city owes very much to its energetic Commercial club members. This splendid club occupies spacious quarters in the Brennan, Davis & Poynter building. At its head is J. A. Barrett, local manager for the Studebaker company. Mr. Barrett is one of the younger business men of the city and he is likewise one of its most ardent workers when it comes to anything which will tend to the upbuilding of the city. He stands ready to work early and late in the city's interests at any time.

SOME MORE BOOSTERS.

Intending visitors or those who may desire to make Montpelier their future home can do nothing better than to communicate with any of the persons mentioned in this account. Besides those already mentioned the following people will be glad to answer any and all inquiries regarding Montpelier's resources and desirability as a place of visitation, residence or to engage in business: W. M. Haskins, W. W. Clark, Francis M. Winters, L. L. Cruickshank, H. H. Hoff, Fred Grunig, Dr. D. J. Sutton, Dr. G. T. Smith and J. A. Rastan. All are business and professional men in the very highest standing in the community.

Preston, *The* Progressive City of Oneida County.

PRESTON, the busiest, cleanest, thriftiest, most progressive city in Oneida county, is situated 28 miles northwest of Logan, at the upper end of Cache valley; is 4,721 feet above sea level; has an ideal climate; is surrounded by a rich agricultural district; maintains educational institutions noted for their thoroughness and excellence, and bears all the birthmarks that make for greatness.

Preston was founded in 1872 and was named out of respect to and in memory of Presiding Bishop William B. Preston.

For more than 20 years George C. Parkinson has acted as president of the Oneida stake, of which Preston is the center. The city has grown steadily and uninterruptedly, now has a population of 2,500 souls.

The municipality now boasts two banks, a $25,000 central school, a secondary school (the Oneida Stake academy) with an annual attendance of 300 students and buildings valued at $80,000, a $25,000 opera house, two drug stores, five implement houses, two livery stables, two lumber companies, a very large flour mill, two knitting factories, two modern furniture stores, three hotels, four restaurants and 15 mercantile institutions.

Primarily, agriculture is the paramount industry, althoug stockraising, mining and manufacturing are carried on quite extensively. During the season just closed, more than 200,000 bushels of wheat were raised. The sugar beet industry has claimed the attention of many farmers, the returns of this crop have been quite flattering.

Owing to the completion of the Oneida irrigating canal, a large tract in the Gem state has been brought under cultivation, and already the influx of settlers has begun. Preston is destined to become a big city. The people, as a whole, are prosperous, progressive, well-to-do. The recent financial panic has scarcely been felt. Thousands of acres of grain have been planted. Everyone is happy, and the sky of the future is studded with the shining stars of hope and promise.

DRIGGS, IDAHO.

Special Correspondence.

DRIGGS, Ida., Dec. 10.—New people are coming in to build up this beautiful valley. A new real estate company has been formed by adding to the firm of Young & Wenger the name of John D. Killpack, Jr. The new company will begin business under the name of the Teton Valley Real Estate company, successors to Young & Wenger. In 1906 the Young & Wenger Real Estate company did a $50,000 business, which was doubled in 1907. Mr. Killpack, the new member, is a representative man of Fremont county, widely known and respected as a man of influence and ability. The old company has done much to advertize the resources of the Teton valley, but the new company will do more. It is opening up the new townsite at Pratt, north and east of Driggs five miles, which will settle and develop the richest section of this valley, that has long been vacant and unproductive, whereas it is well adapted to the raising of fruit, grain, vegetables, alfalfa, clover and all other products that need the canyon breeze to keep away the frost; there is plenty of water and good soil.

The people generally are prosperous hereabouts, sheep, horses and cattle are fat, giving evidence of the splendid range the country affords.

REAL ESTATE

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PLENTY OF WATER :: :: :: :: GOOD CLIMATE
Come to a country where you don't have to work your head off to make a living; where farmers net $40 to $50 per acre Call on or address

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MRS. WM. STRUVE
First-class Milliner
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MR. F. F. BINGGELI
All kinds of Pump Work Done
Shop at Preston, Idaho

PETERSON & SONS
Painters
Preston, American Falls, Idaho
Logan, Utah

ALLEN R. CUTLER
Surgeon and Physician
Preston, Idaho

ADOLPH WURSTON
Up-to-Date Candy Kitchen
Preston, Idaho

A. J. FIFE
Leading Livery of Cache Valley
Preston, Idaho

FRENCH SILK WEAVING

CONSUL W. H. HUNT of St. Etienne, in response to an American request, has prepared the following article on the manufacture of ribbons at that French city:

The production of ribbons at St. Etienne amounted in 1906 to $19,000,000, being an increase of $3,000,000 over the previous year. Exportation was somewhat over $6,000,000, or an increase of $2,000,000 as compared with 1905. Ribbons are exported from St. Etienne more or less over the world, but the countries which are the largest purchasers are England, Germany, United States, Canada, Argentine Republic, China, Italy and Spain.

The present number of looms in St. Etienne and the vicinity is estimated at 36,559, that of spindles, 311,866, and the total number of men, women and children employed in the industry is estimated at 75,000. The number of ribbon manufactories is about 170, but they are not all confined to the city, a large number being scattered through the small towns of the departments of the Loire, Haute Loire, and the Isere.

Within the last few years electric motor power has been distributed not only to the large ribbon factories of the region, but also to every weaver who works at home. Hitherto the weavers, who generally possess from two to three looms, did all the work by hand, but now handmade ribbons may be considered a thing of the past. The output has consequently increased, and the wages are a little better than some years ago.

WEAVERS AT HOME.

The weavers as a class are sober and intelligent men, living frugal lives, and seem totally absorbed in their trade. A large number are not only proprietors of their looms, but also of their houses, and it may be said that many quarters of this city were built by them. A model weaver's home consists of three rooms (all the working people live in tenement houses), one long and large enough to contain three looms, two family rooms, of which one is the kitchen, eating, and bedroom combined; the other is the bedroom of the parents and contains the best household furniture.

The homes are always clean and neat, presenting frequently a contrast with those of workmen of other trades. Their diet consists of soup, morning and evening, made or a curious mixture of bread, potatoes, and cabbage, to which a slice of bacon is added to give it a flavor. The dinner is composed of meat, vegetables, cheese, coffee, and a quart of red wine, while the supper is made up of soup, the remainder of the dinner, and the usual bottle of wine. As will be seen, the French weaver lives fairly well, but without any extravagance. He seeks no pleasure beyond a walk in the country on Sunday or an occasional visit to the theater.

WAGES AND HERITAGE.

The earnings of a weaver are difficult to calculate, but $1.35 per day may be considered as an average for the year around. At some seasons he will earn as much as $2 to $3 a day, while at others he will not make more than 60 cents, or his looms may lie idle for a few days. In the factories the work is more regular, but frequently short time is imposed for obvious reasons. The ribbon industry, depending entirely on the caprice of fashion, is subject to constant fluctuation.

The prominence given to St. Etienne in the production of ribbons is due to two factors, one of which is the nature of its water, which, free from any mineral substance, is chemically pure and is ideal for dyeing purposes. It is thus that the most delicate shades or tints can be produced to almost perfection. The number of dyeing establishments in the city is 21, and these houses not only supply the local needs, but execute large orders from Lyon and elsewhere. The second reason is that of the well known special aptitude of the weavers. The weaver of St. Etienne is by nature an artist in his trade. Handed down from father to son, all the secrets of the industry, the delicate manipulation of the threads on the looms and the varied combinations of the design to obtain the most artistic effects, are, and will remain, the distinctive and attractive features of the St. Etienne ribbon industry.

St. Etienne, with its 150,000 inhabitants, possesses other industries which, although less known perhaps than ribbon making, yet are sufficiently important to give employment to thousands of workmen and contribute materially to the prosperity of the city. Among these may be mentioned coal mines, iron and steel foundries, gun making, hardware of various kinds, bicycles, etc.

CHRISTMAS ON CHRISTMAS ISLAND.

"They never have any "white" Christmases on Christmas island. The thermometer never falls below 70 and never rises above 90 in the shade.

Christmas island lies about 250 miles southeast of the western extremity of Java. It is in the Indian ocean and belongs to Great Britain, having been annexed in 1888. This interesting little bit of land in midsea appears to have been originally a coral reef, which by volcanic forces has been raised so high that at its highest point it sticks out of the water 1,600 feet. In shape it is an irregular quadrilateral. It has an area of about 20 square miles. The British have formed a settlement on the island for the development of the phosphate beds, which are said to be rich. This material is used for fertilizer.

A globe trotter who spent last Christmas very appropriately on Christmas island says: "Christmas morning I bathed in the sea. Christmas afternoon, dressed in white flannel, I played tennis. It is always summer there. A pure, cool breeze always blows from the southeast. In January the fresh fruits and flowers and vegetables are as plentiful as during July or August in the United States. Christmas island is a little paradise nine miles wide and about 10 miles long."