

HISTORY OF THE BEAVER VALLEY.

Correspondence of the Pittsburgh Gazette. BEAVER VALLEY, August, 1873. [Paper No. 22.]

THE ADVANTAGES OF BEAVER VALLEY for commerce and the various enterprises of men in business are of the most favored character, and not less so are they for the enjoyment of social and domestic peace and tranquility. Here are found the requisites for almost unlimited manufacturing enterprises; for the fullest development of the capacity and skill of our business men, and, as well, all the needed elements, surroundings and restraints, to make it a home of prosperous people, and give them a character worthy the good name of the race. As already shown, the resources of the valley for manufacturing are great. The resource most fully dwelt upon was the immense water power, which

YED BY A THOUSAND SPRINGS, rivulets and creeks, afforded a power capable of running mills and factories that would keep in occupation a city of mechanics and tradesmen.

THE ADVANTAGE OF WATER POWER over that of steam must be admitted when, first, its power is such that the various kinds of manufacturing industries may be driven to the fullest capacity; second, when the water can be uninterruptedly used; third, when it can be used at a moderate cost, and fourth, when its use will not place the product of manufacture beyond the reach of a ready market. These essentials of a really valuable water power, when found combined in one stream or succession of water falls, places that power beyond doubt as the best manufacturing power that can be utilized, in so far as it relates to those factories and mills to which it may be applied. Beyond any question Beaver valley water power possesses in the highest degree every one of these essentials of power and availability.

POWER GIVEN BY THESE FALLS.

The first essential laid down, and it is readily seen that in this one particular it is by no means lacking.

Four hundred suppositions shares are now located on the Falls, about two hundred and fifty of which are put to use, leaving the balance out of use and available for other industries. In addition to these four hundred shares, I am assured by a gentleman fully qualified to know, and whose judgment in such matters is beyond dispute, that the power at Dam No. 4 could be very largely increased by raising the dam, which he says could be done without damage to property. This would be the better utilize the large body of water in "seven mile level." In addition to this, the abandonment of the canal will very materially add to the power already possessed. This would seem to set at rest any fears that might arise that the power and capacity of the water may not be sufficient to meet the demands made upon it.

It is beyond question that there is power enough in these waters to run all the factories that could be located on the water's edge. The second essential, that this water power can be almost uninterruptedly used, has been demonstrated to a certainty, and there is no need here of guess work. One manufactory in New Brighton has been run, without losing a single day except holidays, for over two years. It is wholly dependent on the water power; and though in that period of time we have had a drought so severe that nearly every well on the flat above the water's edge was run dry, and the creek fordable between and near the dams; in the same period have had a succession of very high waters, rising almost out of the natural boundaries of the river, yet this factory has never been compelled to stop. From my place of business I can hear

THE STEADY STROKE OF HAMMERS

in a factory that is scarcely ever compelled to lay aside its water power in drought or flood, although it is located at the water's edge. It is true that some of our establishments lose a few days when floods are upon us, but this loss is not so large as that suffered in repairs, accidents, &c., in establishments wholly run by steam. So long as the rains shall fall, and the hills and valleys pour forth their treasures of waters in springs and creeks to supply the water of Beaver river, so long will the water power be uninterrupted, in its use by our manufactory. The third essential, the cost of the water power, is a striking element that enters into the great advantage derived from its use. If the cost of running it be great, be in excess of that of steam, then it has lost one of its greatest attractions. But the facts are that it is "dirt cheap." It would be utterly impossible to provide a cheaper and more economical motive power than that afforded in the water power of the valley.

But figures, when correct, are more conclusive than mere general statements, and happily I am able to give the precise

COST OF RUNNING THE FACTORIES, mills, &c., now in operation in Fallston, where 100 shares of water power are in use, and which will be a fair illustration of the cost in the rest of the valley. In 1870 the expenses of the whole power were \$96.50, making an average of 96 1/2 cents per share. In 1871 the ordinary expenses were \$70,—or 70 cents per share, and in 1872 the expenses were

\$150,—or \$155 per share. In addition to this, there was an additional expense in 1871 of \$385, in fitting in a new sluice, to renew one which had been in use 20 years. Allowing this new sluice to last the same length of time, would make a cost of \$18.25 per year, and for each share about 18 cents per year. Here is shown an actual expense in three years, of ordinary expense, of about \$3.20 per share, and adding the repair of sluice and its pro rata cost, we have \$3.39 for three years, or an average of \$1.13 per year on each share.

The wire mill, employing over twenty hands, costs about \$28 per year for power to run it; the keg factory, employing over thirty hands, and doing a large business, costs \$8.56 per year; a large flouring mill, run by Messrs. Rogers & Co., costs about the same; and the two foundries each \$4.28, and the extensive saw mill of Messrs. Miner & Co., only costs \$21.14 per year for running power. If any of our neighbors outside of Beaver Valley can beat this, let them show their hands. It is superfluous to dwell longer on this point, after this knock-down argument of facts and figures.

But with all the power and cheapness of the water course, it would be practically useless, were it not contiguous to a good and well located market. This element of advantage is not excelled by any town in Western Pennsylvania. A good market for most of our mills is given us right at home by a neighborhood composed of 20,000 people, using the flour, &c., prepared for use at our doors. For our wire, kegs, shovels, axes, saws, &c., we have the same facilities as our neighbors.

THE RAILROADS LEADING TO NEW YORK, PHILADELPHIA, CHICAGO,

or any other part of the East, West or North, while flowing at our feet is the Ohio river, the willing servant that will carry our products to New Orleans, the Gulf and Southwestern States, and intermediate ports. There is not a point that we wish to reach except the lakes, that is not more accessible to us than to New Castle, Sharon, Middlesex and other towns that are outstripping us in the race for a manufacturing centre. If they wish to send goods to Chicago and the West, they must travel fifteen miles toward it, and within six miles of Beaver Falls to do it. If they wish to send their goods to the East or Southeast, they must pass through our towns, and the same must be done to make use of the Ohio river. Their goods must go to Rochester by rail, through Beaver Falls and New Brighton, and there be unloaded and shipped on boats to be sent to New Orleans, and yet with not a tithe of the resources and advantages we have, they are far out-reaching us. But in addition to all this, our manufactory are so located that the railroads and rivers run to their doors, and save the cost and wear of extensive and heavy drying.

But let us add to these four essentials, as an advantage pertaining to the water power,

THE CHEAPNESS OF LANDS AND PROPERTY, the smallness of rents and taxes. Not many months since, a manufacturing site, controlling several good shares of water power, with the necessary factories, was bought for a less sum than the buildings could be erected in the city of Pittsburgh. Fabulous and extravagant prices for such sites are not the rule among us. While this spirit may apply in some parts of the valley, it is a fact that nowhere in this region of country where the advantages are so great, can there be bought as cheap property.

RENTS AND TAXES

also, we are certainly highly favored. There being no expensive city government, no expensive gas-works and water-works, and other conveniences of city life to draw the life blood from the pockets of the people, they can thus offer greater inducements in the way of rents and taxes. A factory run here under fair and economical management, with the advantages of small expenses, cheap rents and taxes, cheap fuel and cheap produce, ought to make a fair return to those engaged in them. And, in truth, there is more than one factory in Beaver Valley to-day, that nets its proprietors thousands of dollars per year, and there ought to be more than a hundred such factories, and then, and not until then, would the valley bloom with beauty and make all glad in it.

In addition to the water power, there is every needed facility for the use of

STEAM POWER.

Along the several races for water power, there is abundant room for all buildings needed for utilizing the water power, leaving the hundreds of acres back and around them for the location of other business houses. But as this power for manufacturing is common wherever enough water can be found, Beaver Valley people lay but little stress upon it, basing their claim for superiority alone in the water power. The facilities are unexcelled for the manufacture of any goods or wares usually manufactured in this region. Iron may be as cheaply prepared for use here as in many of our neighboring cities, with advantages in some respects over any of them. Its manufacture has given the city of New Castle its position of prominence, and yet

LOWER BEAVER VALLEY

has as many advantages for it as New Castle. Why iron manufacturing is not a feature here, may be briefly touched in another place. We have, perhaps, as

good facilities for the making of terra cotta ware, woolen and cotton goods, paper and flour, as any other manufactured goods. There is not a single element that enters into the making of terra cotta, but is found here in abundance—the very best of clay, which can be obtained with but very trifling cost. It is indeed strange that more in this line has not been done by capitalists. I hear of no failures or threatened bankruptcies among those who are in the business, but on the other hand it seems to be a profitable and permanent branch of our valley industry.

Those who have followed the manufacture of paper have met with great success and almost uninterrupted prosperity. The one mill now in operation is doing a safe and paying business, and is one of the most substantial enterprises in the valley. The half dozen or more flouring mills are doing an excellent business, and are in the finest prosperity. But enough on this point, with the simple statement that there are as good openings for manufacturing industries here as can be found in Western Pennsylvania, that may be had and worked to a great profit, by safe capitalists.

BRIEF REVIEW OF THE VALLEY'S advantages and capacity for business shows but faintly the full qualifications in it for the development of what is best in human nature, the social element, the quiet and enlightening influence of a home in peace and plenty. It is not proposed to urge more people to come here who are dependent on their strong arms and willing hearts for a living, unless they bring with them some branch of industry. We have enough people to do our work, and any greater number would but bring disaster or removal of some of them. But for those who desire homes, or in the event of a further addition to our factories, &c., those who contemplate joining their fortunes with us we can offer the very best inducements for home sites that can not be surpassed. So far as our opportunities for employment extend they are exceptional. Good wages are paid and very little time lost in the course of the year by reason of being thrown out of employment. It would be very difficult to find a happier or more contented class of people anywhere than may be seen here. And in this regard full appreciation is not had of the innumerable blessings that a kind Providence has so bountifully showered upon us. There is no want among us. It is a rare thing for one to become so unfortunate in our community as to need the kindly, helping hand of neighbors and friends. When we remember that in the

GREAT NATION OF IRELAND

one person out every 77 is a pauper, and that less favored part of Britain, Ireland, one out of every 19 persons is a pauper, and that also in many parts of our own prosperous country there are multitudes who are literally crying for food, it certainly ought to speak well for this neighborhood, where, in a population of 20,000, there is comparatively no want whatever. The greatest attraction for homes financially, is in the cheapness of the houses. Nearly every laboring man or woman of thrift either has a home already possessed, or in a fair way of possession. The pretty cottages and smaller dwellings that dot the valley all over, and give it grace and beauty, are the homes of the mechanic and laborer and tradesmen. At some points home sites are very cheap indeed, and sold on such easy terms that he must be a thrifless man, who is in health and will work, who cannot rest on soil of his own. Combined with this advantage for the working people, there is the additional one of a community that is at once intelligent and moral. Our schools are scarcely surpassed anywhere in Pennsylvania. From the principles to the most abstruse and complicated problems of collegiate lore, we are taught faithfully and well the elements that enter into a practical and complete education. No more intelligent people can be found in our State than those of this valley. In moral the greatest care is taken to provide against every form of vice. Every kind of sin finds an enemy in the churches, to fight a relentless war until the right shall prevail over evil and injustice.

THE SENTIMENT OF THE PEOPLE

is a decidedly moral one, making a desirable place for those who love peace and its train of blessings. Our towns are also most admirably located for health and comfort. Indeed, the crowning blessing is the healthfulness that is given to us. Dwelling amid the pure air that permeates every spot of the neighborhood, it is no wonder that the mind and heart expand until the men and women who breathe it are blessed with refinement and the highest of morals.

Last, but not least, I must speak of the excellencies of the beauties that surround us on every side. These have been dwelt upon at some length in former letters, and add very much to the desirability of the valleys among them. The whole of the valley is like

A GARDEN SPOT.

under the cheering influence of the summer sun and rains and beauty, peace and quiet reign supreme.

In the several articles already published, I have endeavored faithfully in a brief way to show just what Beaver Valley was and is. The

FACTS AND INCIDENTS GIVEN, though necessarily hurried and imperfect, have been honestly recorded with impartiality. From them some idea may be formed of what we are in our business and social life. What the valley might and ought to have been, is beyond the power of the writer to know, though there is no doubt that not a tithe of what it ought to be accomplished. Why this is so is a matter more easily understood, and with the indulgence of the readers of these notes, I shall devote a few words in another letter to some of the needs of Beaver Valley, in order to its prosperity and future success. BEAVER.

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LETTER FROM BISHOP SIMPSON.

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A GOOD DAIRY, STOCK OR GRAIN FARM In Big Beaver township, Beaver County, Pa., containing about 140 acres—of which 120 acres are cleared. 35 acres first bottom land; 30 acres in oak timber; balance of cleared land, gently rolling; all under fence, on the P. F. W. & C. Railroad; building on a good township road one-half mile from Homewood station; soil is first class and all can be worked by machinery. Improvements, etc.: one newly weather-boarded log house of 5 rooms, two stories high, veranda and frame kitchen, with pleasant surroundings; one new two-story frame house of 4 rooms, parlor in front, a good cellar, spring of water and well close to house; one new bank barn, with stone foundation, 40x60, with plenty of stabling for horses and cows; one brick smoke house, and all usual outbuildings; a first rate orchard of various kinds of fruit trees in good bearing condition, and a young orchard. This place is in a very pleasant part of the county, with every surrounding object to make it agreeable and attractive, and is a first-class farm in a good neighborhood, close to schools, churches, post-office and station—will subdivide this tract if desired by the purchaser, for sale. Price, \$80 per acre, in payments. George E. McCready, owner.

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ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE.

Letters of administration on the estate of Sarah Turley and Elizabeth Lacey, of Economy township, Beaver county, deceased, having been granted to the undersigned, all persons indebted to said estate are requested to make immediate payment, and those having claims against the same to present them properly authenticated for settlement. RUBEN HENDRICKSON, Adm'r. j18-6t.