

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Not infrequently we hear much dissatisfaction expressed regarding existing conditions in Central Washington. If the grumblers would only widen their sphere of observation, and as carefully note existing conditions elsewhere, they would be far better satisfied with their present locations. Compare the climates, soils, roads, variety of crops and yields per acre, qualities of fruits, vegetables, forage plants, etc., and even our markets. Instead of grumbling we should all be optimists regarding our county and our future.

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Do our farmers see a steady depreciation in the values of their lands, while the exhausted soil requires expensive phosphates as in New York and Pennsylvania? Do we lie awake nights fearing the effects of drouths, floods and tornados, as in Ohio, Illinois and Kansas? Do we have to shelter and feed our stock six months in the year as in the Dakotas and Wisconsin? While we have been having delightful weather for a month past, and our farmers have been ploughing in every field, we have daily read of a succession of blizzards and floods in the agricultural states of the Mississippi valley!

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Owing to our favorable location regarding the markets of the Pacific Coast and the Orient, and the superlative quality of our farm products, our prices compare very favorably with those in the older agricultural states. Corn, potatoes and apples command here more than three times as much as in Kansas or Nebraska. Our farmers realize fully three times as much per acre for their hay as they do in Iowa. All vegetables are bringing remunerative prices while buyers are eager to contract the products of our hop fields for ten cents a pound. Letters by the score are being received from farmers in Nebraska, Kansas, the Dakotas and other states telling the same story—that hundreds of families are eager to seek new homes the moment they can realize anything for their present possessions. It is most certainly true that we cannot fully realize the exceedingly adverse conditions which confront the farmers in the eastern states, and which must bring us a large immigration in the near future.

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The very fact of assured crops of such a diversified character as those we can cultivate would densely populate any eastern state and must attract farmers to our valley from all over the land. Then let us stop grumbling on every street corner and cheerfully proceed to better our conditions as much as we possibly can.

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There is much for all of us to learn regarding farming by irrigation. Last year some crops were ruined for the want of plenty of water during the three weeks of hot weather; while, as a rule, most of our crops are injured by the injudicious application of too much water, and the lack

of more cultivation. A large portion of the potato crop was poor because of bad or worn-out seed, planted too often on the same lands. Hundreds of tons of hay have been rendered valueless by having no platforms underneath the stacks, and no covering over them as protection against the snow and rain. Potatoes are often frozen or spoiled by being "holed" in the fields without sufficient earth over them, or without proper ventilation, while root cellars can be so cheaply and easily constructed. Economies could be practiced in so many ways by our farmers, which are absolute necessities in the East.

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With so much to learn, we do not take sufficient interest to organize and sustain a farmers' institute. With so many unscrupulous commission men, and the railroad and express companies to deal with, we will not perfect an organization for co-operation and protection in grading, packing, shipping and marketing our products. Is it not time that we wake up to the great advantages and opportunities of our location, and get together to secure all the possible benefits.

OBSERVER.

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The Great Northern is showing itself alive to the interests of the settlers along its line of route by calling a convention of the fruit-growers of the Wenatchee valley to meet in Seattle about the 15th inst., and discuss with representatives of that railroad, matters in common such as just and equable transportation rates, markets, etc. W. L. Benham, general western freight and passenger agent, has courteously extended to the editor, as Secretary of the Northwestern Fruit Growers' Association, an invitation to be present. The invitation has been accepted; and our readers will be given a complete report in the issue succeeding the meeting.

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It would be well for every subscriber to file away the copies of this journal. Commence with this issue to save them, and at the end of the year you will have a volume that will be invaluable for reference. As it goes on it will be a record of the agricultural progress and development of the Northwest and an encyclopedia of experience that will be unsurpassed. A file may be purchased for a few cents at any stationers, or one can be made at home with little work. Preserve the copies in good order and at the close of the volume send them to this office and we will bind them neatly in book form.

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Contributions on all topics relating to farming and stock-raising are earnestly solicited. Every subscriber should feel privileged to send us in bright, crisp notes gleaned from his particular field. The columns of this paper are always open to you who wish to exchange thoughts with or bring out the new ideas of your co-workers.