

Ranche and Range.

ISSUED EVERY THURSDAY.

In the Interests of the Farmers, Horticulturists and Stockmen of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Utah and British Columbia.

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MILLER FREEMAN, - - - Editor.

Address all communications to RANCHE AND RANGE, Box 666, North Yakima, Washington.

SAYS WE HAVE QUIT.

Such a paper as the Mark Lane Express, published on the other side of the world, may be excused because of distance when it makes erroneous statements regarding the condition of the hop industry on the Pacific coast, but the Oregonian should know better than to say Washington is going out of the hop business. Because Ezra Meeker, a speculator, has abandoned his yards and gone to mining, does not give the right to any one to make such a declaration as that given below. In the Yakima valley there will be harvested this year between 15,000 and 18,000 bales of better hops, that will command a higher price than any the Willamette valley ever raised. Oregon possesses no advantages over Washington of soil or climate in hop production. The statement that Oregon is driving Washington out of the business is narrow, and such a great journal as the Oregonian ought to be ashamed of itself for letting a remark of that kind appear in its columns. There is not, nor can there ever be, any competition in hop production between the two states. Here is the clipping:

"Captain George Pope returned yesterday from a short trip on the Sound, where he was called Monday. While passing through the Puyallup valley he noted that not over 10 per cent of the hop yards in that once famous district are in hops this season, and where the yards are planted the vines looked small and were not of equal growth to those of the Oregon cultivation. From this he infers that, if the Yakima district is not in better condition, the Washington crop will fall very much short of the yield in former years. The large plantations of Ezra Meeker are in a wild and uncultivated state, and many other large holdings are in a similar condition. Great tracts that formerly produced 1500 to 2000 pounds of very fine hops per acre have been plowed up, and now are growing grain or market truck and grass.

"The deduction drawn is that the warmer and richer soils of Oregon have driven the Washington growers out of the market, which promises a great future for this state. The average yield of 800 pounds an acre in New York state, and the inclement weather in the early part of the season experienced in Wisconsin, are not regarded as dangerous conditions to compete against Oregon

growers. Captain Pope is of the opinion that, if due attention is given to proper cultivation of the Oregon yards, and the utmost care is taken in curing after harvest, returns that will compensate Oregon growers for holding over during the three years of depression will be realized."

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THE GYPSY MOTH.

We have this week in our horticultural department a review of the origin and habits of this great pest. A dispatch at hand of recent date from Boston informs us that "Massachusetts is at last, it seems, to be rid of the gypsy moth. The extermination is under way, and with vigilance, liberal appropriations and scientific methods it is believed that the end of the long battle is in sight. It is almost thirty years since a French naturalist brought the pest to this country for purposes of scientific experiment. Some of them escaped, and a hint of the harm they might do was recognized by Prof. Riley, who called attention to the rapid increase of the pest in New England. The real history of the gypsy moth and the battle for its extermination began in 1889. Hundreds of thousands appeared in localities where they had never been seen before, and destroyed everything they touched. In 1890 the first gypsy moth commission was appointed by Gov. Brackett and \$25,000 was appropriated to help exterminate the pest. In 1891 the matter was finally placed in the hands of the State Board of Agriculture, and laws were made governing the action of citizens in infested districts, and \$40,000 more was appropriated. This was followed in 1892 by an appropriation of \$75,000; and up to the present time \$1,000,000 has been spent, and only now is an impression being made on the pest."

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The range cattlemen "have money to burn" and they burn it with a branding iron. There is no question that they lose a very large amount of money every year because of the damage which branding does to the hides of their cattle, and yet there seems to have been no way yet devised whereby ownership can be proved on the ranges except by branding. A good deal might be done, however, by reducing the size of the brands so that as little of the hide would be spoiled for the tanner's use as possible. When large brands are used, and the cattle are transferred two or three times and rebranded each time, so far as money value goes the cattle might as well have no hide.

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The state of Montana has recently issued, through Governor Smith, a number of rigid regulations governing the transportation and admission of stock. Southern cattle, from the fever infected area, are admissible only between March 1 and November 1 of each year.