

# Ranch and Range.

ISSUED EVERY WEEK

OLD SERIES, VOL. 5, NO. 23. }  
NEW SERIES, VOL. 2, NO. 32. }

SEATTLE, WASH., NOVEMBER 11, 1897.

\$1.00 PER YEAR

## WASHINGTON OPPORTUNITIES.

Contributed.

In the excitement resulting from the recent discoveries of gold in Alaska, the people of the state of Washington are in danger of overlooking the opportunities they have at home for profitable employment in the production of grain, meat, fruit, vegetables, wool and other necessities which will be required by the thousands and tens of thousands of people who are going to that bleak and inhospitable country in the near future. That all of these people will require food and clothing whether they find gold or not is indisputable, and that our own state will furnish the nearest and most convenient base of supplies is also a fact which will not be questioned. If any one will stop to consider but for a moment the vast amount of provisions, hay, beef, mutton, pork, eggs, chickens, turkeys and produce of all kinds required for food alone for the multitudes coming through the state of Washington, or depending upon us for these supplies, to say nothing whatever of clothing, in addition to the population we are already trying to support, it will be readily seen that our resources, grand as they are, will be taxed to their utmost capacity to meet the calls which will be made upon us in this direction. Complaints are already being made of the high prices at which these articles are now selling, even before winter has commenced and before the emigration to the Klondike has begun to set in. If these prices are high now, what are they likely to be when 100,000 more men call upon us for supplies of all kinds, with money to pay for what they want, and men, too, who will not stop to haggle about prices so long as the desired articles are to be had at any rates at all reasonable. Here are now, or will be soon, opportunities without limit for the producers of our state to realize a veritable Klondike at home, without the risks and dangers attendant upon trips to the Arctic circle. Here their labors are certain of a handsome remuneration and good prices beyond anything heretofore realized are certain to be secured by those producing anything whatever which may be useful in supplying the wants of the immense number of people who will in a few months be making their way to Alaska. That Seattle will be the chief point for obtaining and forwarding supplies to that region is now settled beyond question, and it is for the farmers of Eastern as well as Western Washington to determine whether or not they will avail themselves of the golden opportunities now afforded them to realize a stream of wealth beside which even the Klondike will sink into insignificance.

## NOTES AFIELD.

The railroads have finally granted lower freight rates on potatoes to be shipped East. If this had come earlier it would have benefited both the railroads and the farmers, but it is too late now. For the farmers either have most of their potatoes sold, or if they have not, they are afraid to ship them East now because of the danger of snow blockades in the mountains and frozen potatoes at the end of the journey. In talking with some of the farmers, they have told us that if this had come sooner they would have shipped instead of selling for such a low price here in Spokane. Many still have potatoes in the ground and are not hurrying to save them; they feel that it is not worth while.

In places the yield is very large. On one place on Pleasant

prairie we saw 28 good sized potatoes and six small ones dug from one hill.

Is this prosperity? A rancher on Half Moon prairie in Spokane county bought 40 acres of land last spring. He sowed it to wheat. This fall, after threshing, he sold the wheat raised on the field for enough to pay the sowing and threshing bills and to pay what the land cost him.

In Eastern Washington the weather has been dryer than usual the last two months, seemingly evening things up for the wet months of the summer. Most of the farmers, however, desire this good weather to continue so as to finish harvesting the potatoes and other root crops and also finish the threshing. Much of the latter yet remains to be done in many sections of the country, both the straw and grain being so heavy that it has taken longer to thresh than usual.

On account of the high price of wheat, not so much of it has been saved for hay as is generally done, consequently the price of hay is rising. Wheat hay is now selling at \$9 to \$10 per ton in Spokane and is quite certain to go higher by spring.

The dry weather has prevented much of the late fall wheat, sowed broadcast, from sprouting, while that drilled in is doing nicely. One farmer, who runs a 240-acre ranch out west of Spokane, said he was going to drill all his wheat in the future. He was confident it would pay.

Spokane, Nov. 4, 1897.

H. M. WALLACE.

A Canadian dairyman milked 24 cows, which required two men besides himself. He got after the cows with a Babcock test, and found eight robbers. These robbers and one man went. At the end of the year, he found that the 16 had paid as great a profit as the 24, and he finally got down to 12 good cows that made just about as much money for him as the 24 formerly did. There are plenty of American dairymen who could tell much the same story. Good dairying does not consist in producing a great volume of milk or butter regardless of time, labor and expense. Plenty of men who keep poor stock are slaves to hired men. It would be better for them to let the men go, and keep six or eight first-class cows that can be fed so that they will do the work of 12 or 15 scrubs. Another thing: The milker need testing as well as the milk. Milk after them once in a while, and see how much they leave.

The extent to which the horse influences general agriculture, and that independently of the work the horse does in farming, is not generally understood. A few leading facts about the horses on duty in Greater New York will make this plain enough. In Greater New York there are, in round numbers, 500,000 horses. It is calculated that "these horses consume an average of 10 pounds of hay and 12 pounds of grain per day. This means 812,500 tons of hay and over 1,000,000 tons of grain in the course of a year. There are only 11 states in the country that, singly, produce hay enough to feed these New York horses. As for grain, it is enough to say the entire oat crop of New England would feed these horses only about 13 months. When we consider the tons of iron required for their shoes, the leather and thread for harness, the blankets and other horse fixtures, we can understand what a business is kept alive by the horses in New York." What will the success of the horseless carriage mean to agriculture?

Horace Greeley once said: "If you will show me what use a man makes of the whitewash brush, and how he cares for the manure pile, I will tell you what kind of a farmer he is."