

# RANCH AND RANGE

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## THIS GREAT NORTHWEST

By P. L. Axling.

The Pacific Northwest in general is having considerable trouble with the army worm now, but the pest seems to be especially numerous in the section west of the mountains and down in Oregon. Its ravages are quite serious, nearly every kind of vegetable suffering, and in some sections of Oregon it is reported that prune trees have been denuded of every vestige of foliage. Some orchardists have used tar to encircle the trees near the base and succeeded in keeping the worm down. Salem, Oregon, reports the worm there in large numbers and doing great damage to the hay crop. It is particularly fond of the second growth of clover, which it devours below the surface of the ground. In some cases it is reported to have commenced on potatoes and other garden vegetables. Those who have purchased clover hay and put it away in their barns are experiencing a great deal of trouble by the worms dropping down from the lofts and covering the barn floors.

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Some of the sections in Washington that report the appearance of the army worm are the Chehalis Valley and Snohomish county. In the former place it made its appearance before any one was aware of it, and when discovered it had done a great deal of damage to the hay crop. The extent of the damage is not yet known, but many of the farmers place the value of the hay that will be destroyed at several thousands of dollars. The worm came in such numbers as to startle the owners of the big meadows that look so fine from a distance. The attack was usually made in the centers of the fields where the sun shone hottest during the day, and in nearly every instance the grass and clover stalks were stripped entirely of their blades, and often the timothy heads were entirely devoured. Up to the beginning of this week it was not known whether the ravages of the worm were general over Chehalis county, but it is said that if the eastern end shows the destruction to be as great as the western end the damage to the hay crop in that section this year will entail great loss on the farmers.

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The reports from Snohomish county indicate that the army worm, also called "the cutworm" and "the caterpillar," is to be found in Everett, Snohomish and Stanwood, with other sections yet to hear from. The fruit inspector of the county is on a tour of inspection and will use every effort to stamp out the pest. In addition to the sections named there can be no doubt that the pest is already quite general over the Sound country, on account of so many white butterflies to be seen all over this summer. When the large, white butterflies are to be seen around cabbages, potatoes, turnips, peas, and other garden vegetables it may be reasonably expected that in a short time there will be trouble with the worm. The butterfly deposits its egg in the plant, and in a few days the larvae develops into a worm, which feeds on the leaves of the plants, changes into a cocoon and finally into a butterfly. The white butterfly, however, is not the only one of its class to breed these worms, for the month also propagates them, and the aim should be to destroy the

moth and white butterfly by every feasible means.

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Dr. Withycombe, of the Oregon state agricultural college at Corvallis, has been making investigations on the specimens he has received from different sections in his state and southern Washington. He says there are notched larvae, of a variety of cutworm, of which there are many specimens. About the only method for controlling the pest is by spraying infested vegetables with Paris green, or what is ordinarily called trapping them in poison. This is done by taking some fresh green clover and treating it with a pretty strong solution of Paris green, then placing it underneath some boards or cabbage leaves, or under a light covering of earth. This method has been found successful in poisoning a great number of them. Land that is troubled with them this season should be plowed late in the fall, as by that time the larvae will have pupated in the ground. The plowing will break them up and expose them to the weather, hence result in their destruction.

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The Belgian hare interests are to be fully recognized at the Spokane industrial exposition this year. A report from that city says that the Northwestern Pet Stock Association met the other evening and took advanced steps for its exhibit at the industrial exposition. Spokane has never had an official score of Belgian hares, but it was decided at the meeting that one will be brought from California for the fair. No hare will be allowed to enter for prizes unless it scores 90 points or over. Those under that may be exhibited, but can not enter for prizes. Forms were made for the registration blanks for Belgian hares and will soon be in the printer's hands. Forty dollars' worth of premiums have already been guaranteed, and a great many more are expected. More enthusiasm was shown at that meeting than at any held for some time past, and the officers of the association hope the pet stock association will have one of the best exhibits in the show, if not the very best.

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George W. Cowgill, the secretary of the pet stock association, is busy making final preparations for the exhibit and says more displays are being promised each day. "We will have exhibits from all the surrounding country," said Mr. Cowgill. "Washington, of course, will be the best represented, but Idaho, Oregon, British Columbia, and even California, will have their departments. Spokane has taken hold of the Belgian hare fad in earnest, and it will not be long till she is supplying all the Northwest and even shipping to Alaska. Belgian hares are the best eating rabbit there is, but on account of their scarcity few are being eaten. As they increase in number more will be sold for meat. Even in Denver, which was the first city to take up the industry of raising Belgian hares, the meat sells for 50 cents per pound. Although the chief part of our exhibit at the fair will probably be Belgian hares, yet we will have displays in every other kind of pet stock, and feel assured we will have the best department in the fair."

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A gathering of considerable interest

to the farmers of the Northwest, but one that has received very little advertising in this section is the annual convention of the Farmers' National congress to be held at Colorado Springs next month. It will probably be the largest gathering in the history of the organization. The governors of nearly every state and territory have appointed delegates, and in addition there will be present scores of representatives of railroad and other commercial bodies in the leading cities. The convention program covers four days. While matters pertaining to agriculture will be the chief topics of discussion, numerous other questions relating to manufactures and trade generally will come in for consideration. Prominent among those who have promised to address the gathering are Governor Thomas of Colorado, Benjamin F. Clayton of Ohio; H. J. Redding, secretary of agriculture of Georgia; Booker T. Washington of Alabama, Prof. Elwood Mead of Wyoming, J. B. Kilbourne of Tennessee, G. M. Whitaker of Massachusetts, A. J. Lockbridge of Indiana, F. D. Coburn, secretary of agriculture of Kansas, and Baron Herman, agricultural attache of the German legation at Washington.

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According to the official report of the United States land department, Spokane county has had a larger per cent. of increase in the lands disposed of over the amount of that disposed of during the fiscal year of 1899 than any other county in the district. There has been about two and a half times as much land transposed into assessable property this year as last. The county which comes nearest to Spokane is Stevens, which has increased to about 2.4 times the total of the previous year. There have been 11,178 acres added to the taxable property in Spokane county this year. There are a number of other counties which have large tracts of land still unappropriated under the homestead and timber claim laws, and it will be some time before all the good and most available lands in our state are taken. From the same source mentioned above we learn that the mineral land entries show that this has been the greatest year in this line for a long time past. The entries for the year 1898 were 38, and those for the year 1899 were 34. This year they are 54. This is a third more entries in this land district than for last year.

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During the past three or four weeks the wheat markets have been undergoing some surprising changes and it is evident it will be some time before the most tranquil feature is again noticeable. The crop in the far western wheat states—Washington, Oregon and California—is good and will make both a heavy yield and a good grade, but in the middle states conditions have been very much demoralized. Three weeks ago the wheat buyers regarded the crop failure as a calamity. Farmers were plowing up their land, selling their stock and accumulating long options in the market. Most of them talked "total failure." The panic spread to the cities. Many large business houses called in their traveling men and several leading railroads arranged for sweeping and radical economies. It was difficult to discriminate between panic and actual damage, but it was apparent that no crop situation so bad had ever been seen before in the Northwest. And every day of drought made it worse. A couple of weeks ago the panic and the drought were broken. Rains fell

generally throughout the wheat sections the latter part of the week preceding, and in a few days the grain that had appeared burned beyond any chance of recovery gained one-third in growth and the berry filled out beautifully. Experts doubled their estimates of the probable total yield, and the Northwest found its feet again.

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The wheat markets on the Columbia river are now receiving large consignments of the new wheat crop, and reports are to the effect that the yield throughout the grain sections will be very good and a good price is anticipated. One report from Pendleton, Oregon, says that on the John Hagen place the wheat went 38 bushels to the acre, but this is not to be taken as an indication as to what will be the average yield there. On the ranch of G. Miller, a dozen miles south of the Hagen place, the wheat has been threshed and Mr. Miller is hauling it to Pendleton. He has sold a lot of 700 sacks to W. S. Byers at fifty cents a bushel. It is red chaff and bluestem mixed, and grades No. 1. It tested 59 pounds to the bushel. Mr. Miller threshed 142 acres and got a yield of 1600 sacks, or about 3796 bushels, for the entire field of 142 acres.

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The wheat that has so far been sent to market—of the new crop—is said to grade No. 1 club in nearly every case, and the average price offered now is 50 cents. There is not so much strength in the movement of wheat to the shipping points on the Columbia that was noticeable two or three weeks ago, due to the reports coming lately that there will not be such a shortage as expected. Dealers expect a slow selling movement at first, which will continue very slow until September, as farmers are so busy harvesting and threshing. The feeling among Portland dealers may be seen from their statement that reports indicate the farmers have elevated ideas as to values, and seem to look at the statistical position of wheat from the results of the crop of Oregon and Washington, and appear to labor under the impression that there is more or less of shortage east, and that they ought to get stiff prices. To refute this impression the dealers try to make it out that these ideas are the opposite of the real situation. "The United States," they say, "not only has a large carry-over, but will harvest an average crop. Based upon present freight rates, which are high, selling prices in Europe, and other necessary items of shipment, Walla Walla wheat on dock here is not worth more than 55 cents per bushel, and Valley the same; bluestem, about 58 cents. These are present quotations, which, however, are largely nominal. High prices this season are rather problematical, all depending upon European countries and the London cargo market."

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The stockholders of the Angora Goat Record Association met in Salem last week and elected the following directors: H. B. Thielsen, Salem; J. B. Early, Macleay; J. B. Stump, Monmouth; H. M. Williamson, Portland; William Brown, Salem. The directors elected J. B. Early, president; J. B. Stump, vice-president; H. B. Thielsen, secretary and H. M. Williamson, treasurer. By-laws were adopted providing, among other things, that the annual stockholders' meeting shall be held on the first Wednesday of the state fair.