

Rocky Mountain Husbandman.

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THE fruit growing interest is now the most important interest that demands the attention of our farmers. Our agricultural interests are in a prosperous and thriving condition. A spirit of inquiry seems to pervade the ranks of our farmers; the latest and most improved implements and machinery are being introduced, and the requirements of the climate and soil more carefully studied. Our stock interests are on a par with, at least, if not in advance of, many of the States. There is a lively interest manifested in the breeding of horses, and speed and draught have each their disciples. The flourishing condition of our horned stock business has caused great advance in this line; the most insignificant beef grower in our remotest valleys boasts of his thoroughbreds and high grade Durhams, in fact, good stock are becoming so universally popular that few are content with anything less than a three-quarter breed bull, and in many instances thoroughbreds roam at large on the range. The same spirit of progress is noticeable among wool growers. Though in its infancy, the most improved animals from the choicest flocks of the States and Canada, and representatives from over the water, have already placed Montana sheep husbandry in the front ranks with the industry in any of the older States.

But our horticultural interest, though it does not involve anything like the amount of capital, is none the less important to the progress and development of the country, and the welfare and happiness of our people. Like most new countries, the early settlers of Montana pronounced it a failure as a fruit growing country, but subsequent developments go to prove that they were in error. A great variety of small fruits are being grown, and in some sections some of the choicest varieties of apples are raised, and we believe that the time is not far distant when a large amount of fruits will be grown on most every valley throughout the country. Many of our farmers, though not entirely convinced of the truth of our assertions, are willing to make the experiment of planting an orchard if there was a nursery here where they could procure trees, shrubs, etc. What is now most needed is a good nursery. Any person who understands the business could, with a small outlay and a few years' labor, make a good thing. Our horticultural interests cannot flourish as they should until a good nursery is established. The Bitter Root valley has got quite a start, both in apple trees and shrubs of small fruits, but the farmers there have labored under considerable disadvantage on account of having to get trees and cuttings from Eastern nurseries.

Most of us can well remember the poor success that our fathers met with in the Western States so long as they relied upon getting their trees from the East. More than half the trees brought there died in the summer, or winter killed them, and remarkably few flourished. Before a country can become a fruit producing region it must have its own nurseries, as fruit trees must be acclimated, whether it be in a cold country or warm. This has been the only difficulty experienced in Montana. True, there is a science in cultivating and pruning an orchard. The proper locality should be selected, the soil should be adapted to the purpose, and, most of all, great care and skill must be exercised in irrigating, as this will have great influence in the size and flavor of the fruit. Neither should the tree or shrub be kept growing too late in the fall, as it is more liable to winter kill than would be the case if allowed to become dry and the tree harden before cold weather sets in. In view of the great importance of the matter, if no one is willing to engage in the nursery business on his own account, would it not be well to organize a fruit growers' association and get up a joint stock company for the purpose. The shares might be put down low, and well distributed among our most prosperous farmers, and in the event of failure the loss would be small, and if otherwise, as almost sure to be the case, the benefit would be well distributed. A united effort in this direction may accomplish much good to the Territory.

PHILLIPSBURG AND ITS RICH SILVER MINES.

There are few mining towns in Montana which have prettier locations than Phillipsburg. It is high up on the mountains, and, though the country about it is uneven, it is not rough. To the west is a valley several miles in extent with a picturesque mountain range, graced with many gaudy peaks, while around to the eastward the town is shaded by long pine covered ridges. The town is neatly built, with wide streets, and has a healthy look; has two hotels, two blacksmith shops and five or six business houses. The principal firms are Wm. Weinstein & Co., Smith & Caplice. The last named firm ship their goods from St. Louis and carry as large a stock as any house on the West Side.

In company with my genial friend, Hector Horton, who, by the way, is the discoverer of silver leads here, a miner and mason by trade, made a visit to the principal mines and mills. The first evidence of business after leaving the town and traveling a mile or more up hill, was the Northwest mill, which we found thumping away at 70 drop time. This is one of the best built mills in the Territory. It has ten stamps, crushing dry ore and four Buckner cylinders in operation. It is built on the hillside. The ore, which is received at the upper story first, passes through a Blake crusher, and then upon a drying table; then through the battery and down to the cylinders, coming out at last in bars of bullion ready for shipment. Mr. Frank Fresber, the gentlemanly superintendent, and Chris. Herbert, the clever foreman, appear to understand their business thoroughly. We are under obligations to them for the courtesy and pains which they explained the "ins and outs, whys and wherefors" of the silver milling, machinery and mines of which they have charge.

A few hundred yards above the mill and near the summit of the ridge, we reached the Speckle Trout mine, owned by the Northwest Company. This is one of the foremost mines of the camp, and in fact, the Territory cannot boast of many better than it is. It has been tested to the depth of 300 feet below the surface, 200 hundred feet of which is below the water level, at which depth there has been a 100 foot level that develops a fine body of ore. The ore is brought out by steam power, the water for running the engine being hoisted from the mine. The prettiest silver ore I have ever seen was at this mine. At a distance, one would take it to be a bright granite rock, but upon examination it is found to be very heavy and literally impregnated with rich minerals, some of it fairly glittering with native silver. The rock, though the outward appearance is solid, when broken, cells or cavities are found containing wire silver. I have not experienced a more delightful pleasure for many a day, than that of breaking the glittering chunks of ore and taking the first peep at the beautiful little coils of silver therein. In some of the cells the curls of fine silver wire stood up in the center, with their tiny prongs and prangles wound about each other with such minuteness of beautiful design that I could hardly help fancying that they were placed there by the delicate hands of the fairy. It would be difficult to estimate the value of twenty hundred pounds of the choicest of this ore. We were informed that the average yield of the whole body of ore as it comes from the mine, is about 100 ounces of silver to the ton.

The next mine visited near by, is known by the classic name of the Sharktown mine. It is owned by H. T. Murray and J. E. Dumphy. They have a shaft down 150 feet. They have run some levels and are taking out ore which is being crushed at the Northwest mill. They are also driving a tunnel from the foot of the hill and are within 150 feet of the ledge, having already gone in 300 feet. This tunnel will tap the lead about 250 feet below the surface. The lead is on the same hill with the Speckle Trout, and if not the same vein it is its first cousin, as the ore is quite as rich.

Further over the hill we visited the Salmon mine, owned by James Estell and Eli Holland. It has a shaft 50 feet down, a body of ore four or five feet thick, and pays from 70 to 80 ounces of silver to the ton.

There are a number of other leads upon the same hill, but I do not remember their

names. They appear to run parallel with the Speckled Trout, Salmon and Shark, and are, no doubt, species of the same tribe. The mountain upon which they are located is much the shape of a fish, and it is not unlikely that these silvery belts may yet prove to be merely the fires of a monster silver hole, whose mammoth body of the earth's richest gems lie hidden below.

A few hundred yards to the south from here brought us to the Algonquin of which Mr. J. K. Pardee is superintendent and part owner. This mine is 172 feet deep and has two levels run at that depth. At the kind solicitation of Mr. H. S. Showers, foreman of the mine, we went in and took a "see for yourselves" at the mine. Following Mr. S. we entered the mine by a tunnel which taps the lead about 80 feet below the discovery. Reaching the shaft we turned to the left and traveled along by the side of the lead 100 feet, to where we reached another perpendicular shaft. Here Mr. S. and my comrade mounted a ladder and commenced to descend, and seeing if I did not follow I would soon be left on the earth surrounded by massive rocks, huge timbers and darkness. I determined to "see the mine," too. Clinging from round to round I followed them down and down, finally reaching a platform just in time to see the glimmer of their candles disappearing among the posts and craggy corners of the massive silver wall some distance to the south, east, west or north, I won't be positive which. When I reached them they were at the end of the lead 50 feet from the shaft. Turning back we passed the shaft in place of our landing, and journeyed along in an opposite direction 150 feet, viewing with admiration the wonderful precision with which these mines are worked, and the care and painstaking, that is displayed in fitting the timbers that brace up the glittering walls by the side of our path. Here we turned about and faced across the lead, traveling in a rather low, rough tunnel, a distance of 45 feet. Upon reaching the end we were informed that the "end is not yet," and when we asked for an explanation, Mr. S. who was seated upon a glittering stone, said: "We have followed along by the side of this ledge 200 feet and then gone into it 45 feet, and the 'end is not yet,' because there is still ore in front of us. We have tried to cut it in two, but have not got across yet, and pointing to the front where the tunnel had narrowed down, and was full of broken ore which had not been moved since the last 'shot,' said: 'Do you see, there is still ore in front and it will mill over a hundred ounces to the ton?' Returning to the shaft, Mr. S. dropped a small stone through the floor of the platform and said "It is nine or ten feet from this platform to the water level, and the water in the shaft is 40 feet deep. At the bottom of the shaft levels have been run developing a most beautiful body of ore fully as many feet in length as we have seen, and the quality averages still better than the ore at this level. Ascending the ladder we turned about traveling along the lead about the same distance and direction as we did below, finally coming out of the mine, delighted with its beauty and richness and satisfied that there is millions in it. As yet there has been but little of the Algonquin worked. It is thought that the owners intend building a mill at an early day. I learn, however, that Mr. Pardee is not yet satisfied with the extent of the mine and will not erect machinery except hoisting works, until he has gone down 50 feet deeper and run levels and tested its depth and value.

Leaving the mine we passed over a ridge, and turning toward town traveled a mile or more down hill, looking at a number of leads on the way. One of them, the Clef lead, sticks up out of the ground a hundred feet, and can be traced by the cropings a half mile. It is from four to six feet thick, and where fresh worked looks as well and is represented to be as rich as the other leads above named, but as yet has been slightly developed.

Reaching town we met with Mr. I. I. Lewis, superintendent of the Hope mine, which belongs to the Montana Mining Co., near Jefferson City. He invited us to go with him to the Hope, but the pressing touch of the sun and worried knees compelled us to decline the tramp. This mine was one of the first developed to any extent in the camp, but for some time past has

been poorly managed. It has recently been placed in the hands of Mr. Lewis and since then has been materially improved. He has had a force of hands engaged the past two months in opening the mine in proper shape. Two inclines and a number of levels have been run. The ledge now exhibits ore which is estimated at over five hundred tons of most beautiful free milling ore. The company has a 10-stamp wet crusher mill, which on the day of our visit made its first start under its new management. Mr. David Carson, of St. Louis, who is now superintendent of the mill, is an old hand in the milling business, and his foreman, Mr. J. S. Collins, son of the foundry man Collins, of Collins & McClure, of St. Louis, is also an experienced hand, having been raised in a machine shop. Mr. Horton suggested that we take another day in exploring, agreeing to show me as many more mines—some of which he is the discoverer and owner of. He named over some very pretty names, of which was the Cordova, Alice and Lady Byron, which he said were rich, pretty and promising, but, as he could not name a HUSBANDMAN subscriber upon the route, I had to decline his offer. Phillipsburg needs more mills. There are a great many miners here who own good leads, but have not the means to develop them. They have held on to them several years in the hope that something would turn up, by which they could reap some benefits from them, and are still hoping better prospects. One 10-stamp mill that would do custom work would do more to develop the mines of this camp, than five such as are now here. If these miners could have their ore tested as they went down on their leads, they would be encouraged, and hundreds of new ledges would be opened. Give Phillipsburg two more mills and she will rival Butte in population and business. It has the ore—plenty of it, and only needs the mills.

I cannot leave the mines, however, without mentioning the clever manner in which I was received by the miners. I found them sociable and communicative. They appeared to have as tender feelings for a stranger agricultural man as for anyone else, and, had our pockets been large enough, we could have carried away a whole ton of their precious and beautiful ore, since scarcely a mine did we visit but we were offered choice specimens. In the town as well as the mines I might name the same hospitable disposition of the people.

At the meeting of the Band of Hope lodge, which it was my good fortune to attend, I found the same generous feeling to be the prevailing sentiment. The standard of the society of the town is gauged by Band of Hope. The "hope" is large and magnanimous, and the band is "big" and steadily growing, and it is a pleasure to record its progress. W.L.

NEWS FROM HOWARD—A BATTLE TO BE FOUGHT.

Geo. Sebbaski, the courier who arrived at Bozeman to-day, says he left Howard's command on the 10th, at 9 a. m. Howard was in communication with Sturgis and Merritt, and 1 o'clock p. m. was the hour set for the attack. Sturgis was at the lower end of the canyon, which runs eastward by Hart Mountain, and Merritt was near at hand and coming in from the south. Merritt had checked the Indians' march, and instead of crossing Hart Mountain and passing around south of Sturgis, they had passed down the creek toward Sturgis, and were camped at the upper end of the canyon. When the courier left, Howard's infantry were marching down the valley to give battle, having camped within five miles of the Indians. His cavalry were to go upon Hart Mountain, and prevent the Indians from escaping over to the southwest. Mr. Sebbaski says the canyon through which the Indians were about to pass is deep and rugged, and predicts that if Joseph and his band attempt to escape that way they will be badly whipped. He thinks a battle was inevitable, and that there was no possible show for the Indians to escape unless they abandon their horses and climb the mountains on foot. Howard's men, though short of rations and clothing, were in good spirits, and confident of victory. On the morning of the 9th, an Indian picket, who had perched himself up in the rocks near Howard's camp, was killed in the rocks near Howard's camp. Col. Gilbert and Lieut. Doane were passed 60 miles this side of Howard, and Howard is about 100 miles from the mines on Clarke's Fork. Bozeman, Sept. 14. W.L.