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MONTANA'S BEST YEAR.

Citizens of Montana who are familiar with conditions in various parts of the state give testimony that the year 1915 was the best in Montana history. In no former period of twelve months has there been such general prosperity in the industrial pursuits in which residents of Montana are engaged, and which contribute to the material welfare of the community, says the River Press.

The tide of immigration has continued throughout the year, and an increased acreage of the public domain has been brought under cultivation. New settlements have been formed, and the older towns and settlements have expanded to larger proportions. Among the beneficent results of this growth and development is a large increase in the number of schools, churches and other institutions in which the educational and moral welfare of Montana's present and future citizenship are given encouragement.

The Montana farming industry was especially favored by the exceptional conditions that prevailed during the year 1915. The season was unusually favorable for crop production, and the yields in various parts of the state were considerably larger in the average per acre and in acreage under cultivation than in any former year. Most of these crops found a market at wartime prices that brought well-earned profit to the producers, and which were considered

ably in excess of the average returns received under normal conditions. Large crop production and a demand that resulted in high prices formed a combination of circumstances from which the producer derived exceptional benefit.

Montana livestock products also shared in the general advance in prices that was due in part to the conditions caused by the European war. Meat animals have found purchasers at a high range of values; Montana horses have sold at remarkably good prices and Montana wool has brought greater returns than have been obtained in the past thirty years.

The Montana mining industry, according to advices from Butte, was never in a more prosperous condition. More men are employed in Montana mines than in any former period, and the output of the various metals is the largest on record. In all the various industries in which Montana citizens are engaged, the year 1915 was a season of exceptional activity and satisfactory reward.

It is believed similar conditions will obtain throughout the present year, although conservative business men counsel prudence in basing expectations upon a continuance of abnormal conditions. They suggest a policy of "preparedness" for the future, when the stimulating effect of the European war may cease to exist. The warning may be worthy of consideration by Montana citizens who are tempted to assume that the unusual conditions of the year 1915 may continue indefinitely.

PAPER FROM FLAX STRAW.

Attention is called to the feasibility of making paper from flax straw and thus utilizing the waste of the flax crop, where it is grown for seed, by a bulletin just issued by the United States department of agriculture, says the Billings Gazette.

In this bulletin it is shown that the paper making possibilities of the waste flax straw which now goes up in smoke, is equal to the annual production of wrapping paper and more than double the annual production of writing paper. The investigations have also shown that it is feasible to make counter boards and other paper products from the flax straw. Emphasis is laid upon the fact that the materials for which the flax straw could be substituted are now imported and its use in the manufacture of writing paper for instance only depends upon whether it could successfully compete with the foreign products.

It is made plain therefore that another infant industry might be developed in this country if it were given the benefit of a wise protective tariff. Not only would the protection of such an industry mean an increased revenue of several million dollars annually to the American farmer, it would mean an increase in millions in wages to American workmen and the upbuilding of several prosperous manufacturing institutions.

It would seem that with the elimination of freight rates on the straw to the eastern centers where it can now be used in paper making which Montana, in the heart of the flax country, offers the development of a paper making industry from flax straw in this state might become very profitable.

The rapid depletion of our forests means that some other kind of pulp besides wood must be found from which to make the great amount of paper that is consumed daily throughout the country. With cheap power, plenty of water and a territory adjacent that produces an unlimited amount of flax straw annually Billings offers good opportunities for the development of the paper making industry.

NO SIDESHOWS IN 1916

In the presidential election of 1912 the donkey ran first, the bull moose second, and the elephant third. In the state election of 1915 the elephant ran first, the donkey second and the bull moose was left at the post, says the Fort Worth (Texas) Record, a democratic paper.

There may be crumbs of comfort for the democrats in these election results, but it will take a telescope to find them.

THE BACHELOR'S DREAM-----BY BART



There is a presidential campaign coming next year. Democratic politicians should pray for the European war to continue until the year 1917.

There will be a battle royal in 1916 and the democratic party must be prepared to face in the arena its hereditary enemy.

There will be no side shows to speak of.

There will be a united republican party and the slogan of its leaders will be "preparedness for national defense and a tariff for the protection of American manufacturers and American labor."

The handwriting is on the wall. Though we may think the winter dear, And love the blizzard bitter; We wouldn't kick one bit to hear The little bluebird twitter.

—Exchange.

THE WHERE AND WHEN.

On the thirty-second day of the thirteenth month, of the eighth day of the week;

On the twenty-fifth hour of the sixty-first minute, we'll find all things that we seek.

They are there in the Limbo of Lollipopland, a cloud island resting in air,

On the nowhere side of the Mountain of Mist, in the Valley of Overthere.

On the nowhere side of the Mountain of Mist, in the Valley of Overthere,

In a solid vapor foundation of cloud, are palaces, grand and fair; And there is where our dreams will come true and the seeds of our hope will grow—

On the thitherward side of the Hills of Hope, in the hamlet of Hocus Po,

We shall see all the things that we want to see, and know all we care to know,

For there the old men will never lament, and the babies never will squeal.

In the Cross Roads Corners of Chaosville, in the County of Hideand-gooseek,

On the thirty-second day of the thirteenth month, of the eighth day of the week,

We shall do all the things that we please to do, and accomplish whatever we try—

On the sunset shore of Sometimeor-other, by the beautiful Bay of Bimeby.

—Sam Walter Foss.

WEEKLY WEATHER REPORT.

Generally fair and much colder, making typical holiday weather for this latitude, prevailed during the week ending Saturday, January 1, 1916. There were snow flurries all day Tuesday, December 28 and a light snow fell all day Wednesday, December 29, with the temperature ranging from 2 to 7 degrees below zero. The mercury fell below zero for the first time this season Thursday morning and at 11 p. m., Thursday, it fell to 16 degrees below zero, at which time a chinook occurred and the temperature suddenly rose to 9 degrees

above. There was an average daily deficiency in temperature this week of 5.1 degrees as compared with the normal. The highest temperature was 33 degrees on Tuesday, December 28, and the lowest was 16 degrees below zero on Thursday, December 30, making a weekly range in temperature of 49 degrees. The highest temperature for this week, taken from 36 years' of record was 56 degrees on December 29, 1904, and the lowest for the same period was 47 degrees below zero on December 31, 1884. The total precipitation for the week was 0.14 inches, equivalent to 1.4 inches of snow. Five inches of snow lay on the ground at the end of the week. The duration of sunshine was 22.7 hours, the sun being 57.8 hours above the horizon. There were 2 clear days, 2 partly cloudy and 3 cloudy days. The wind force was fresh to strong with the prevailing direction of wind from the southwest. The extreme velocity was 36 miles an hour from the north on December 28.

C. W. LING,
Observer, Weather Bureau.

ODD BITS OF NEWS.

Dassel, Minn.—Nels Benson, 77, and Johanna Dahlberg, 81, were married here recently. Mrs. Benson is the oldest bride Minnesota has ever had.

Chicago.—The mysterious "pepper bandit," who has been holding up pedestrians for many weeks, was arrested recently. He was an anemic boy, 18 years old, named Fred Logue. He confessed nineteen holdups, all accomplished with a toy glass pistol.

South Bethlehem, Pa.—Joseph Danzko arrived at this place recently with a 10-month-old child strapped to his back, on his way to New York. He had walked with the baby on his back from Canada, a distance of 250 miles, keeping the child alive on crackers and water.

Persia, Iowa.—For eleven hours Mrs. August Sedden lay in a trance and saw her friends and relatives preparing for her burial. When the undertaker was about to place her in the coffin, she succeeded in sighing and thus prevented her burial alive. She is expected to recover.

Hood River, Ore.—A sturgeon, which has been a captive in a small pool for over 30 years, has been released by Mrs. Sue M. Adams Armstrong who owned him. The fish had grown from a small one to over six feet in length. Dazed, at first, by his freedom, he quickly recovered himself and disappeared in the deep channel of the Columbia river.

Richardsville, Ia.—A dog belonging to L. M. Datisman, who rents the home formerly occupied by James Maxwell near here, was seen digging recently, when something glittering appeared in the dirt. Datisman investigated and found a box containing \$1,000 in gold coins. It is presumed that Maxwell, who was said to be miserly, used to bury his money. Maxwell was killed in a railroad wreck.

St. Louis, Mo.—"Hands up!" The command came from one of two robbers who entered a saloon recently. The crowd at the bar raised their hands, all except one-armed Michael McCarthy. Then a pistol spoke and McCarthy dropped dead. When the robbers saw McCarthy's empty sleeve, they fled panic stricken.

Society News

By Our Society Editor

Young Mothers' Club.
The Young Mothers' club will meet on Friday, January 14, with Mrs. T. H. Markle.

Card Party.
The members of Mrs. Dixon's band of the Catholic aid will give a card party at the rectory on Tuesday, January 11.

Spiller-Satterlee.
Charles W. F. Spiller of Saco and Miss Carrie R. Satterlee of this city were united in marriage Thursday morning, Judge L. R. Evans officiating. They will make their home at Saco.

McConigle-Hartley.
Milton C. McConigle and Miss Deborah A. G. Hartley, both of Glentana, were married by Rev. B. F. Meredith at the Methodist parsonage Wednesday evening. The groom is a prosperous farmer in the north country and they will make their home on his farm.

Smith-Millington.
Lanski L. Smith and Goldia E. Millington were united in marriage at the home of Clarence Roberts on Second avenue south Wednesday afternoon at four o'clock. Rev. R. D. Brittain of the Baptist church officiated. They left Thursday morning for Glenburn, North Dakota, where they will make their home.

Tuesday Bridge Club.
Mrs. K. H. Keith entertained the Tuesday Bridge club at her spacious home on the south side Tuesday afternoon. Besides the regular members of the club there were five guests present, Mesdames Lezie, St. Clair, L. E. Jones, McFarland and T. J. Hocking. Mrs. J. M. Lewis held high score and was awarded the club prize. At the conclusion of the playing, the hostess served a delightful luncheon.

For Mrs. Stratton.
A delightful neighborhood gathering was held on Tuesday afternoon when Mrs. Owen Yerkes entertained in honor of Mrs. George Stratton of Saco, who has been visiting in the city. Auction bridge was played at three tables and prizes were awarded to Mrs. Gordon Jamieson and Mrs. H. A. Yotter. At the close of the afternoon Mrs. Yerkes, assisted by her daughter, Della, served dainty refreshments.

Helping Hand Society.
The Helping Hand society of the Baptist church will meet Thursday, January 15, at the home of Mrs. Thos. Pierce, 305 First avenue south, and a cordial invitation is extended to all friends and neighbors or any one else who wishes to come. Lunch will be served by Mrs. Pierce and Mrs. C. H. Roberts from 1:30 to 3:30. A special request is made for all members to be present. Please come as early as possible, as there is some business to transact.

M. E. Ladies' Aid.
The Ladies' Aid society of the Methodist church held their regular weekly meeting Wednesday afternoon in the church parlors, which, considering frigid weather, was very well attended. Reports of the work for the year 1915 were given and the annual election of officers was held. The financial report showed that over \$600 had been raised during the year, the greater part of which had already been devoted to the good purposes of the society. The following officers were elected:

Mrs. Fred Wilson, president; Mrs. C. E. Smith, vice president; Mrs. Roop, secretary; Mrs. W. W. Hurd, assistant secretary; Mrs. B. F. Meredith, treasurer.

FLAX STRAW VALUABLE ASSET

Approximately 1,400,000 tons of flax straw are burned or permitted to go to waste each year on American farms. At the same time the country is annually importing large quantities of flax waste from foreign countries for paper and board manufacture. The inconsistency of this situation has led specialists of the United States department of agriculture to investigate the feasibility of using home grown straw in the paper and fiber board industry.

The results of this investigation have just been published in bulletin No. 322. At the present time about 2,200,000 acres are devoted to the raising of flax, chiefly in North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota and Montana. The flax is grown primarily for the seed from which linseed oil is manufactured. The annual crop amounts to about 20,000,000 bushels of seed and is valued at approximately \$33,000,000.

The crop also yields approximately 1,600,000 tons of straw, but of this only about 200,000 tons are put to any profitable use. The utilization of the remaining 1,400,000 tons, says the bulletin, would be of immense economic importance since its paper-producing possibilities are equal to the annual production of wrapping paper and more than double the annual production of writing paper in the United States. Its use, it is estimated, would represent an added revenue to the farmers of about \$5,000,000 annually. This additional profit would mean a very powerful factor in maintaining the flax crop in our agricultural system and would probably result in the establishment of paper manufacturing industries in sections where there are none at present. It would also aid in making our paper industry more independent of foreign raw paper making materials and would produce a keener realization of the latent value of some of our enormous crop wastes.

Flax in this country has always been a pioneer crop, being sown on the upturned virgin soil. If planted again on the same land it does not do so well unless other crops have intervened and the land has been put back into grass. The old idea, however, that the flax crop is very exhausting to soil fertility is an erroneous one. As a matter of fact, flax does not tax soil fertility as much as either wheat or oats.

The investigations of the government specialists have already been carried to a point where it has been demonstrated that domestic flax tow can be used in the manufacture of fiber counter boards which are now used largely in shoe factories. In co-operative commercial tests, counter boards made of this domestic flax tow have been actually sold to the trade at the regular price for counter boards, viz: 5 to 5 1/2 cents a pound.

The demand for flax tow for this purpose, if fully developed, would open a market for about 20,000,000 tons of straw annually. This, of course, is a very small quantity compared with the total supply available.

It is proposed, therefore, to extend the investigation into the manufacture of wrapping and writing papers. Should domestic flax straw for writing paper be able to compete successfully with foreign material, a market for between 200,000 and 400,000 tons of straw per annum would be opened and an additional revenue obtained for the flax region of about \$1,600,000 per year. At the present time over \$2,000,000 worth of rags is being imported each year into the country, chiefly for use in the manufacture of writing paper. Similar possibilities are offered by the wrapping and paper bag industries.

(Continued on page 12.)



Paramount Feature "Sold," With P. Line Frederick, at the Orpheum, Thursday, January 13.

GLEN MARIS Cash Hardware

For Better Hardware at a better Price

Burke Building Glasgow, Mont.