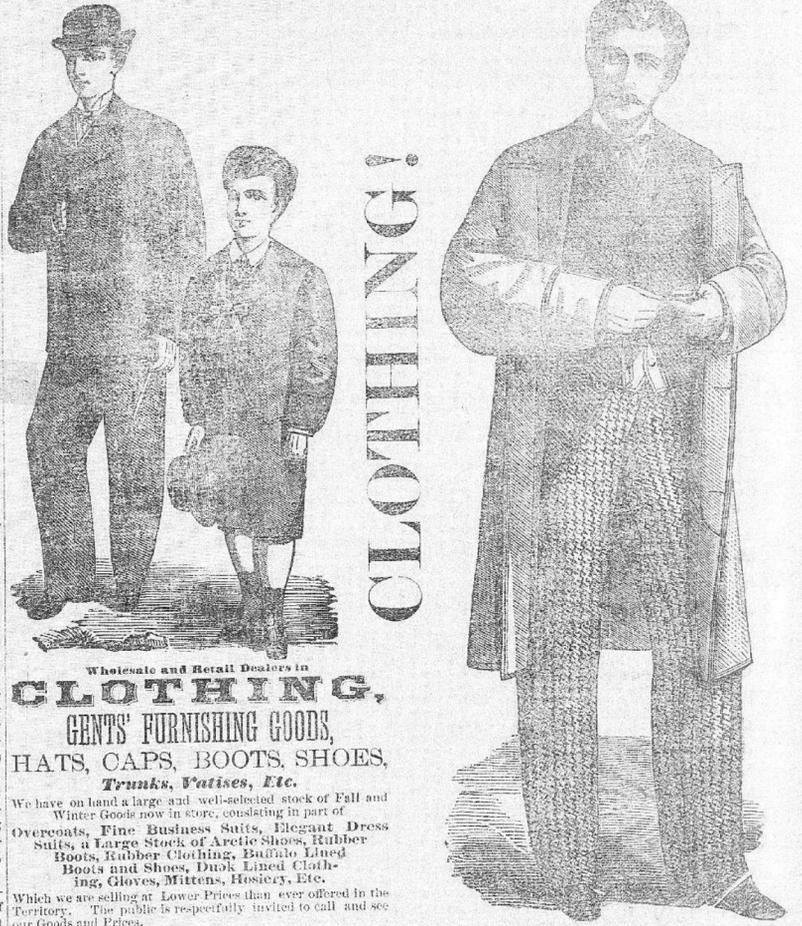


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and making a mealy Johnson brought four wagon loads of whisky to a point on Belly River, where he intended to build a fort. The Blackfoot Indians, under the lead of their war chief, Bull Bark Pat, came to Johnson's. They confronted the whisky and drove the white men out of the Blackfoot territory. Johnson swore to have revenge on the whole Blackfoot tribe. Going to Fort Benton, on the Missouri river, they found that a steamer had just arrived from the lower river but small-pox on board. Johnson eagerly fought the infected blankets, packing them on two ponies he started at once for the upper Milk River. High up on that stream, about opposite to the Sweet Grass hills, he saw six Indians riding down the valley. With well-aimed arrows Johnson reversed his course, driving in apparent haste his ponies before him. He was mounted on a three-quarter blood horse. He knew that he could run away from the Indians. Soon the Indians saw him. Instantly they gave chase. Making repeated stands, Johnson tried to kill some of the six that were pursuing him. Soon, noticing that his fire was not returned, that the Indians were apparently endeavoring to head him off, Johnson became alarmed for his safety. Turning his horse, he put spurs to him, and swept over the table-land in the direction of Fort Benton. A short, sharp pursuit followed, and he was alone in the solitude of the northern steppes. That evening the Blackfoot scouts saw a party of six men, driving two pack horses before them, enter a draw near the Indian camp on the Belly River. The scouts supposed them to be one of the numerous war parties returning from the south, as the war of 1898 and 1899 was then raging. The next morning, when the Indian sentinels took their stations on the bluffs, two ponies loaded with good blankets were seen grazing on the upland. They were promptly driven into camp, and the prize, a steamer of the dry sea, was distributed among the Blood clan. The next day the Piegans came in from the great plains. The day after some clans of the Blackfoot proper came down the far north. In the gambling spree that followed the annual meeting of the tribe, the infected blankets were widely distributed among the different clans. Soon around the gambling fire, in the great council lodge, in the moonlit shadows of lodges that lined the brown streets, ominous whispers were heard of the reappearance of the specters. The scouts who daily scoured the plains for signs of Sioux or Cree returned to camp morose and dejected. They reported that the specters, one with a baby on her back, were hovering over the uplands, now before them, now behind. So real were they that repeated chase had been given by the young braves to these apparitions. Soon the Indians of great village began to complain of headache and of chills. One night the wretched dogs, lying in the eastern end of the camp, jumped up, gave tongue, and rushed in a berserker toward the fringe of the cottonwood trees by the river. Instantly almost they turned and fled back toward the camp with curiish yells of terror. As they tore through the village the sleeping dogs took up the alarm and joined the pale-striken pack. All rushed to a hill a short distance west of the camp. Here the savage animals halted, and sitting on their haunches, mournfully bawled at the nearly deserted windows of the lodges, the Indians peered down the valley toward the timber that skirted the river. Some stripped for battle, thinking a war party of Crees were in the woods and were mounting their horses. Out from the dense shadows came from the cottonwood trees six figures emerged and slowly advanced in line. Their bodies swayed to and fro, and high above their heads their arms waved, as if in denunciation of the camp. Over the brown grass they swept, nearer, nearer, to the village. The six were seven, as over the shoulders of one of them peered the smiling face of a baby. Without paying attention to the group of affrighted Indians, the seven specters slowly passed down the village street to the great council lodge. But Bull Bark Pat, war chief of the Bloods, Mountain Chief, of the Piegans, and Many Spotted Horses, chief of the Northern Blackfoot, opened fire with their rifles on the seven. Instantly they wheeled and wildly danced toward the riflemen. Steadily standing their ground, the chiefs waited until the seven were within ten yards of them, then drawing their knives, they closed for combat. The seven were gone. Instantly they reappeared in a circle, dancing around the council lodge. Laying aside their arms the Indians hovered near, and at once recognized the dance as the death of the Crees. The seven swirled around faster and faster. The dance, in the devilish intensity of his movements, became awe-inspiring. The great Blackfoot Medicine man, Naskapiin, who, in a three day's trial of mesmeric power with an almost equally famous Sioux Medicine man, had killed the latter by putting him to sleep and commanding him to die, entered the council lodge. War and council chiefs passed through the circle of the dancing apparitions. Medicine was made and a solemn council held. The dance of the spectres changed to a war dance, and the seven slowly passed out of the village. The dogs returned. The next day the small-pox broke out. The Indians, panicked at the presence of this dreaded disease, scattered in small parties over the lands of their empire. Of the ravages of this disease, introduced among the Blackfoot by Johnson, enough is known to justify the statement that one-third of the nation was swept away by it.

George was silent an instant. Then he said in a slow earnest tone: "What horrible sights I saw when the disease was at its height! Entire families were swept off in some small camps of three or four lodges all the Indians lay dead in the streets or lodges, or in the ice-cold waters of the shallow river."

Resuming the story, George continued: "They appear only to the Blackfoot. They have driven the tribe from that famous hunting ground. No other tribe sees these men and women as specters. Often six mounted figures are seen by Sioux or Cree war parties. Being chased, they lead the way to the small camps of Blackfoot buffalo hunters, and so add to the long list of the Blackfoot killed by the enemies of the tribe."

Turning to my comrade I said: "Do you believe this story?" He hesitated and said: "Frank, there are many uncanny things to be seen and heard in the solitude of the north. There are lakes and streams I do not like to fish in, and there are valleys

and glens in the dark recesses of the mountains that I prefer not to hunt in. I may have attached undue importance to the tales told me by the medicine men of those northern Indians; but at times I am inclined to believe we saw the wraiths of the Saskatchewan. I may not believe it tomorrow."

Sleepily I made answer: "It may be, I know I did not want to see those six Indians again."

The old pipe fell from my tired hand, and I was awakened by the coyotes yelping their natal greeting to the new-born day. Mounting our horses, we rode to southwest to the Marias Pass, and were soon among the fallen timber the encumbers the trail through the great depression in the mighty Rocky Range.

FRANK WILKERSON. DRIVING OUT THE LEAKY SPIRIT. A Mining Story.

Miners never whinge at their work. Sometimes they sing while toiling in the dark damp, narrow chambers of the mine hundreds of feet below the surface, but never loudly, and only plaintive folk-songs and ballads that have been crooned over the cradles of generations of their class. Most old miners believe that a "good-luck spirit" lurks in every mine, and that at a sound of whistling it flies and leaves the miners at the mercy of the spirit of evil. If it befalls any of the workmen that day the believers in the superstition ascribe its cause entirely to the frightening away of the good-luck spirit by the fatal spirit.

In 1846 there was a great mine disaster at Carbondale. Several miners were buried in one of the Delaware and Hudson coal company's mines by a sudden caving in of the roof. Although the cause of the caving was known to have been a lack of proper support by pillars and timbers, at least one old miner, a survivor of the disaster, still living there, maintains that it was caused by a dare-devil, named Jack Richards, whistling in the mine while working with his gang, against the protests of his comrades. Richards was a skeptical young Welshman, who ridiculed all the superstitions of his fellow-workmen. With the old miner mentioned above and fifteen others, he was working in the mine, a mile from the entrance, on the day of the catastrophe. The mine was well-known to be scantily proped, and the miners were "robbing" it preparatory to its abandonment. He was a merry fellow, fond of teasing his companions. On this occasion he suddenly laid down his pick, and announced to his fellow-workmen in the chamber that he intended to "whistle them up the 'Rigs o' Barley.'" The miners were aghast at the thought of Richards thus deliberately dying in the face of mine luck, and they begged of him not to chase the good-luck spirit away. He laughed at their fears, and with clear, loud notes made the chamber ring with the lively Scotch air. Not content with that, says the old miner, shuddering at this late day over the sacrilegious temerity of the merry Welshman, he rattled off a jig known by the miners as the "Devil Among the Tailors," and ended by telling the good-luck-spirit to "dance to that, and be blown to it." None of the miners could speak for some time. Some of them tried to go to work again, but they were met by the same preparations to quit the mine. The old miner who recalls this incident says that he had a brother and a son working in another part of the mine, and he made up his mind to go to them, tell them of Jack Richards' foolishness, warn them of its consequences, and escape with them from the mine. Jack Richards could not convince any of them of the childishness of their intended course.

Suddenly, while they were gathering up their tools, a noise like the sound of distant thunder came to the ears of the agitated miners. They knew too well what the sound presaged. The roof "working," and a cave-in threatened. The miners turned to Jack and charged him with bringing disaster upon them by his defiance of the good-luck spirit of the mine. Jack replied that if the roof was falling it was because of insufficient support, and not because of his whistling, and knowing the danger that encompassed them all, he counselled his comrades to lose no time in "getting stop."

But before they could take the first step toward reaching the surface, a second shock ran through the mine. This time it was like a clap of thunder near the earth. It was followed by a crash that could be made only by the falling masses of rock and coal from the roof, and by a gust of wind that hurled the miners against the jagged walls of their chamber. Then the mine fell in all about them, and the seventeen miners and the car-horse were imprisoned behind a wall of fallen coal and rock, in a space of not more than forty feet square. The lights were extinguished, and there was not a match in the party. With death awaiting them in one of its worst forms, they cursed Jack Richards, and one of the miners tried to find him in the dark to brain him with a pick. To ascertain whether any of the gang had been killed by the falling coal, the name of each one was called by one of the miners. All responded but Jack Richards. He was found dead, half buried beneath the wall of rock and coal. The miners gave themselves up in despair, as they did not dream it was possible for any aid to reach them from without, and to dig their way through a mile of rocky debris was a task they knew was hopeless.

Among the imprisoned miners was a young man named Boyden. He was a son of Alexander Boyden, the superintendent of the mine, and, like his father, was a man of great nerve and courage. He encouraged his imperilled companions with the assurance that the air in the mine would not be poisoned by the gases for at least two days, and that, as long as the horse's body lasted, they need not starve. He said that his father would leave nothing undone to rescue all who were in the mine, and that, meantime, they themselves could aid his efforts by digging out to meet him. Only three picks could be found, the others being buried beneath the coal. With these the men went to work with a will. Those who had no picks worked with their hands in digging into the barrier between them and freedom. The body of poor Jack Richards was uncovered and laid tenderly in a safe place in the chamber. The horse seemed to understand the terror of the situation, and gave voice to frequent piteous neighs.

The men worked for hours, many of them working their flesh from their fingers in the sharp coal. Some of them lost all heart, and threw themselves upon the damp floor of their underground prison

and bewailed their fate. Suddenly a ray of light broke through a small opening in the wall. Then a lantern was pushed through, followed by a man's head. The man cried out: "Is there a man here that is alive?" A glad shout from the miners was the reply. The man pulled himself through the opening into the chamber. It was Alexander Boyden, the superintendent. The miners took him up in their arms, wept tears of joy, and kissed the man whom they believed had come to deliver them. Mr. Boyden had found his way to the spot where the miners were imprisoned by crawling along a narrow passage that had been left in the fallen coal and rock by the lodging of roof-timbers all along the way. It required a struggle for hours to make the perilous journey. He did not expect to find one man alive in the chamber, his great desire being to rescue the body of his son, if possible, and to save it from being devoured by the rats.

He soon had the miners in readiness to follow him back toward the mouth of the mine. He took the dead body of Jack Richards on his back and led the way, and two hours afterward the miners were in the arms of wives, parents, and sweethearts on top. Richards' had no relatives but a crippled sister, who was dying of consumption. She died the next day. The brother and son of the narrator of this tragic incident, and twelve other miners, were never found. Three days after the fall, Mine Boss Hodge, who had been in a distant part of the mine when the roof caved in, emerged from its depths, worn to a skeleton. With his pick he had dug his way for more than a mile through an almost solid wall, without a taste of food or a drop of water to strengthen and sustain him.

This mine tragedy forms one of the favorite narratives of the old miners of that region, and after relating it to inquiring visitors, they never fail to warn them not to whistle if they intend going down in a mine.

A FORTY-EIGHT DAYS' FAST. A French Prisoner Who Beat Dr. Tanner—The Phenomenon of Starvation.

Ann Moore, the famous fasting woman of Tisbury, pretended to have lived for eight years entirely without food, says the London Standard. A watch committee was appointed which detected the fraud in a very ingenious manner. The bed and bedding, with the woman in it, were placed on a delicate weighing machine, which resulted in the inevitable exposure. At the expiration of the ninth day of this strict watching, being warned that she was sinking, she acknowledged her imposture, and admitted—which is an important fact—that, so long as the watch upon her was but imperfect, her daughter had contrived when washing her face, to feed her every morning by using towels made very wet with gravy, milk, and other nourishing fluids, and had also while kissing her contrived to convey small portions of solid food from mouth to mouth.

Guillaume Granet, a prisoner at Toulouse, resorted to starvation to avoid punishment. For the first seven days the symptoms were not very remarkable. After this period he was compelled to drink water to keep himself from dying, and after he had drunk a quantity of water he was again obliged to abstain from food for eight days. There is no doubt as to his truth, and it shows that up to the present, at any rate, Dr. Tanner has at the most only done what others have done before him.

Viterbi, a Corsican, condemned to death for the assassination of Fredani, resolved to starve himself to death. He died on the twenty-first day. He, too, occasionally moistened his mouth with water. The medical details of his case, which are very horrible, will be found in Paris' "Medical Jurisprudence."

Of accidental starvation the most remarkable example is, perhaps, that reported by Dr. Sloane, of Ayr. "A man, some sixty-five years of age, of a spare habit of body, and uncommonly vigorous for his time of life, was accidentally incarcerated in a coal-mine for twenty-three days, during the first few of which he had access to water strongly impregnated with iron. He then became unable to move, and had unfortunately fallen some distance from the water. In this instance, Dr. Sloane thinks that an impure atmosphere, by lowering the vital powers, might tend to slightly prolong life under circumstances of privation. The unhappy man died on the third day after his removal."

A GRIST MILL WANTED. We have on more than one occasion called attention to the urgent need of a flouring mill at Benton. To show how much this enterprise is needed the farmers of the Teton valley have each agreed to sow at least one hundred acres of wheat next spring if adequate milling facilities are provided. The Teton farms will produce five hundred acres, or 12,500 bushels, of wheat, at the lowest estimate. Sun River, the Missouri, Shonkin and Highwood valleys will produce at least 1,500 acres of grain per annum, making a total of over 80,000 bushels of wheat to be ground into flour. This will not supply the whole demand for flour at Benton, but would give ample and profitable employment to a mill during the entire season. It should not be forgotten, however, that the figures furnished allow only for the amount that farmers in the vicinity of Benton are willing to guarantee if the mill is established next year. The real capacity of the farming lands of Chouteau County are practically unlimited, and the mill once established the entire county will soon be covered with wheat and grain producing farms giving employment to mills of the largest capacity and furnishing all the flour this market can consume. The convenience to farmers of having a properly managed mill in town can not be over-estimated. It should be a merchant's mill owned by a single individual, or a company of responsible business men having the capital to purchase all the grain brought into market. The certainty of realizing cash for their produce without waiting for the grain to be turned into flour, would induce many to engage in agricultural pursuits who now consider them unprofitable. It is not difficult to perceive that the mill would become a paying enterprise from the start, but allowing that only the smallest profit could be realized, the money it would retain would, in the county, the encouragement it would give to settlers to engage in agricultural pursuits and the large addition of trade it would bring to Benton would certainly justify the enterprise and in the end fully repay not only the owners but every business firm in town.

Wetzel & Co. have bought John Nuber's mill. Price 25 cents. Several farms have recently been taken up and fenced in on the Marias. Charles Walker has fenced in a large farm on the Teton, near the Marias. Jack Harris' grain crop on Highwood averaged eighty-three bushels to the acre. P. W. Buckland, of Highwood, has sold his entire crop of vegetables to Major Weston. Fully matured corn is said to have been cut in the Yellowstone Valley, this season. Several loads of watermelons and muskmelons arrived in town from Row, Dinsey and Axlin's farms. Hammond & Hogan, on the Teton, have threshed their grain and are now handling it into town. Some government teams passed through town on Wednesday with vegetables from Spaulding troops stationed at Cowles.

It is worth \$4.00 per ton in this market, but the receipts from this source alone will pay all expenses of farming, harvesting and threshing. O. H. Dexter's threshing did good work on Croff & Woolsey's farm this week. The threshing is only a horse-power, but Woolsey says it devours a power of grain. The total average annual production of wheat, in the world, is 1,792,260 bushels. Of this the United States produced 422,000,000 bushels, which is almost one-third the production of all Europe.

Notwithstanding the bountiful harvests throughout the West, two thousand families in Norton County, Kansas, are reported on the brink of starvation. All their crops were destroyed by drought. Croff & Woolsey's crop of grain amounted to 3,000 bushels. They had sixty-three acres under cultivation and although the season was one of the driest known to the residents of this Territory, the grain was matured without irrigation.

A Chicago telegram of the 1st inst. says: "An agricultural fair on wheels, consisting of a finely decorated car containing products from along the line of the Northern Pacific railroad, arrived this afternoon, and excited much interest."

Nearly all the crops on Highwood, Shonkin and other points on the south side of the river that were destroyed by recent hailstorms are having a second growth, and owners expect a full second crop. The grain is already heading out and if the weather remains favorable two weeks longer the hopes of the farmers will be fully realized.

During the past season many farmers regret not having prepared themselves for a dry season by digging irrigating ditches. For five years previous no part of Montana required irrigating facilities, the rain having been quite sufficient for the crops. If Montana farmers are to blame, so are those of nearly every section of the Union, for the drought has been more or less severe all over the country.

The columns of the Record are always open for any information or correspondence to agriculturists. We earnestly request correspondence from farmers: whenever you have a suggestion to offer, or information which will be of interest to others, send it to the Record as you would write to a friend. In writing to renew your subscription, or for any other purpose, send us a few lines on a separate page. What is of interest to one farmer is likely to be of interest to all.

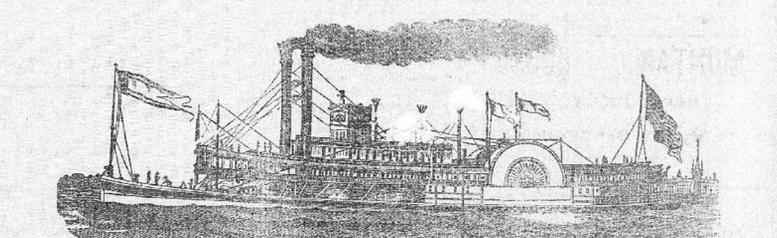
In reply to our article in last issue a farmer of a neighboring county writes us as follows: "Your assertion that the bench lands of Montana are superior to the bottom lands for agricultural purpose is not altogether correct. That many of the bottom lands are cold and contain more or less alkali is true, and such lands are of course inferior to the benches, but nearly all the valleys of Montana contain considerable bottom land of the same nature and quality as the benches except that are not so dry and of course are more easily irrigated in dry seasons. For hay, wheat or grain, the uplands are considered superior, but I could show you bottoms in the Yellowstone Valley that are unexcelled anywhere for growing cereals, and for producing the coarsest vegetables even the "cold" bottoms are superior to the benches."

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A lady at White Sulphur Springs is compared to the mother of the "Gracchi," because when asked by a reporter for a description of her dress, she said, "I don't wear a very handsome costume, but I have the nicest husband, and two of the sweetest children in the room."

Advertisement for Greenwood, Bohm & Co. featuring a man in a suit and text: "GO TO GREENWOOD, BOHM & CO. HELENA. For Men's and Boy's CLOTHING, Gents' Furnish'g Goods, SEATS, TRUNKS, Etc. One Price Only."

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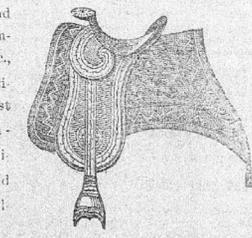
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