

OUR TRIBUTARY COAL FIELDS.

What Mr. Geo. H. Eldridge Has to Say About Them.

Mr. Geo. H. Eldridge who has been stopping at the Grand Union the past few days, has just completed a map of the greatest importance to Benton, as upon his report will depend in a large measure not only whether we are soon to have a branch of the Northern Pacific railroad, but the course it will follow from the Judith Basin to this place.

Mr. Eldridge is one of Prof. Pumpelly's principal assistants in the great work of making an accurate survey and report upon the whole country tributary to the Northern Pacific from Lake Superior to the Pacific ocean, and some months ago he was detailed to look up the resources of the country through which the supposed Benton branch will pass—a task he has but recently completed.

His instructions were to proceed from the Basin between the Belt and Highwood mountains, and particularly to make an examination of the coal deposits on Belt creek, Sand Coulee, Deep creek and through that extensive coal field, and it is to this work he has applied himself most diligently. Mr. Eldridge has a full corps of assistants, and he not only examines the veins that are opened or developed, but sets his men at work prospecting, and thus secures the fullest share of information on the subject. While he is naturally reticent in speaking of the merits of any particular coal mine, he refers very favorably to the district, and pronounces the coal of good quality and in quantity abundant. It is a lignite coal, but of a superior grade, and far ahead of the lignites of Dakota and eastern Montana.

Mr. Eldridge made a careful examination of the Deep creek mine, and speaks very favorably of it. He says there is a vein of four feet and six inches of good coal, as clean as he has seen in Montana, and that it can be worked with ordinary facility.

The mines in Sand Coulee, Castner's and elsewhere in the district were carefully examined, and a full report of his observations and researches will be forwarded at once to headquarters, a report which we are prompted to believe will not be unfavorable to the best interests of Benton.

Mr. Eldridge stated that while he had not traversed the route surveyed from the Basin to Benton (by way of Arrow creek), he was led to believe from the geology of the country and information received that it is barren of resources, while the proposed route between the Belt and Highwood mountains and through the coal fields offers many inducements to a railroad, among which are good agricultural lands adjacent, good coals, stone, and silver mines, timber, etc., in the mountains near at hand.

As the final determination of the route will depend for the most part on his report, it is pretty certain that Benton's best interests will be subserved by the adoption of the latter proposed line.

Mr. Eldridge is a most pleasant gentleman, an excellent conversationalist, and it is pretty evident that his knowledge of coal and coal mining is as extensive as needs be. He is very much pleased with Benton, and thinks the foundation has been laid for a large commercial city. And so think we all of us.

MONTANA MATTERS.

Wood retails in Butte at from \$6 to \$8 per cord.

Ninety tons of Northern Pacific bridge iron has arrived at Deer Lodge.

The Lexington shipped over \$80,000 worth of bullion last month. That is a mine.

Apples are selling for \$5 a barrel at Billings and other points on the N. P. railroad.

There is good sleighing at Bozeman, and the ground has not been white at Benton yet.

The Republicans of Beaverhead county elected almost their entire ticket, something new under the sun in that bailiwick.

The Bozeman tunnel has penetrated the mountain 120 feet on one side, and twenty on the other. The work is now progressing favorably.

The department commander at Saint Paul has ordered that the Big Hole battle ground monument shall remain at Silver Bow until spring.

The Northern Pacific track is being laid now at the rate of two and a half miles a day, and it is expected that Bozeman will be reached before January.

The Independent figures out Maginnis' majority in the territory to be 1,795, but the estimates are not official. We think it will be considerably less than this number.

The sale of the Drum Lamson, if true as reported, is a big thing for Marysville, the village near the mine, which is likely to experience a considerable boom in consequence.

A company of the Seventh cavalry, Captain Gregg commanding, is stationed at Boulder, the new town at the point where the Northern Pacific crosses the Boulder river.

While going home from his office one night recently, Chas. Andrieux, a prominent citizen of Butte, was attacked by a foot-pad, who knocked him down with a slung-shot. Mr. A. rallied, however, and securing possession of a club, made it decidedly interesting for his cowardly assailant. The latter retreated in bad shape.

A man named Alexander Dubois, 26 years old, was instantly killed on Thursday last, in the Park near Butte, by being thrown from the top of a wood wagon. The rough-lock broke on a steep, icy hill, and when near the bottom the wagon tilted, pitching young Dubois on the frozen ground on his head. His neck was broken by the fall.

IMPROVING THE MISSOURI.

The work that has been Done on the Upper River this Season.

Every year the upper Missouri river is becoming better for navigation. If the government will only continue to make increased appropriations, says the Bismarck Tribune, in a few years it will be possible to navigate the Missouri river to the great Falls during the entire season. The corps of engineers under Assistant Engineer H. E. Stevens, has done excellent work this year. The steamer Emily, Captain J. C. Barr, master, left Bismarck on the 5th of May last, and returned to the levee at Bismarck Tuesday, where she will winter. The actual working time put in by the party of fifty was about 140 days. In August last a party of thirty were added to the number, who put in about forty days on dredge boats. The first work done this season was the quarrying of rock where it could be found, loading in barges and towing it to any of the wing dams constructed last year that had in any way been injured by the spring break-up. Seventy barge loads, or about 5,000 tons of rock was thus disposed of. Two brush dams were built this season, one at the foot of Grand Island—300 feet long, and one at Two Calf Island about 80 feet long. The largest dam built this year was the one at Two Calf Island, it being 1,000 feet in length. There made in the dam about 2,500 fascines, or woven mattresses, similar to the Eads plan, 500 tons of rock and about 3,000 tons of gravel. Much of the material was brought a considerable distance, it being loaded on barges and towed to the dam by the steamer Emily. This work was under the immediate charge of Assistant Engineer Stevens. Another party under W. H. Wood with derrick boats was engaged during the season taking rock out of the river from Holmes' rapids to the foot of Gallatin rapids. They moved from the channel of the river about 650 yards of rock, making a clear channel for steamboats 100 feet wide to a depth of three feet in low water.

The Gallatin rapids were the worst on the river this side of Clagett, and is the place which turned the Rosebud. She could not even get over the rapids light. Steamboats can now figure on getting to Clagett at any time during navigation season, and when one or two bad places are fixed, boats will have no trouble drawing three feet. The river has been four inches lower this season than was ever known before, thus giving the engineers an opportunity of seeing what is most needed to improve the river.

The derrick boats will winter at Gallatin rapids, the six barges at Ryan's rapids, and the Emily at Bismarck.

Advice to Pilgrims.

A correspondent of the Fort Macleod Gazette, who made the trip from Canada to that place, via Benton, last summer, gives the following advice to pilgrims on the road:

"When you start on your prairie trip, don't think for a moment that every night you will have a house to cover you, and that because it is the middle of summer and probably a fine, rather uncomfortable warm day, you will therefore need no warm clothes or covering. Take plenty of good, warm clothing, a good stock of blankets, and a tent will probably come in very handy, though as a general rule it is more of a nuisance than it is worth. If you are travelling with an old prairie man, try and be as useful as you can without continually getting in his way; help him to water his horses and picket them for the night don't drive the picket pin in the middle of a sand-bar, but find good feed for the horses; if you have to walk a mile to find it, it will well repay you before the journey is over; ruse around and help get wood and start a fire; although apparently unnoticed, you will be appreciated, and at the end of the trip, our old western man will whisper confidentially to a friend, 'you bet your life, stranger, he's a rustler,' which is the highest compliment he can pay you. If

a certain class of would-be high-toned gentry who come to this country, with fine large ideas of, 'If I like it I'll buy it,' and a lean, lank pocket book, could only see themselves as others see them, and know how little they are appreciated, they would soon come down to their proper level, and learn to rustle for themselves. To those whom this cap fits, take it kindly as it is intended."

The Winnipeg Robbery.

WINNIPEG, Nov. 4.—On Sunday night or Monday morning an extensive robbery was committed in the American Express office here. The company is very reticent about information in regard to the affair and it is hard to get at the bottom of the matter. On Saturday night or Sunday morning a package said to contain \$10,656 was received here addressed to the Imperial bank of this city, and with the other packages was delivered and removed to the office on Main street; but on Monday morning, when it was time to deliver parcels, this particular one could not be found, and it was then discovered that the robbery had taken place. It is now current in city that the safe was not locked on Saturday night last. Only closed and the combination partly turned, but not locked. How this happens is not yet explained. There is said to have been another package of \$10,000 in the safe, but it was tied up differently. This was not taken. N. Nixon received the package of money addressed to the Imperial bank from the messenger at the train on Saturday night. When this money was placed in the safe, it is surmised that he noticed that the safe was not properly locked. He also was at the station on Sunday morning and again received the express parcels. There is no positive proof against Nixon as far as known. The case is being worked up by two of Pinkertons detectives in Chicago.

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