

THE RIVER PRESS.

RATES OF ADVERTISING:

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Rates for Transient Advertisements given at office.

FORT BENTON IN 1884.

We think that a good many citizens of our town, even among the business men, don't realize the impetus that the river metropolis will receive before another year rolls around. We have all heard of the initiatory steps which have been taken towards opening up the immense landed estate now nominally belonging to the various Blackfeet tribes and stretching north of us as far as the British line, and eastward to the Dakota line. Stop a moment and guess on how much of the business of this virgin section would be compelled to come to our thriving town and how large a proportion of the ranchers, stockmen and prospectors just invading this new Eldorado would have to outfit here and buy their supplies from our merchants. We do not think it is any exaggeration to estimate that the ordinary business of Fort Benton would be doubled by this acquisition to the country tributary to this town. Like the country already opened to settlement this vast northern Indian reservation will not be dependent for its resources upon one class of resources or one industry alone. That the cattle business will there be an immense success is already demonstrated by the few herds of cattle that have been allowed to graze on some of its millions of untouched acres of bunch grass; that sheep raising and wool producing will be as great a money making scheme as in the southern part of Choteau county is well demonstrated by the similarity of climate, snowfall, elevation and range as well as the success of the band of sheep on Eagle creek, near the Bear's Paw mountains. That good grain and hay growing ranches can be found scattered all over this vast domain is the testimony of all well posted travelers, and is also shown by the fine crops raised at Blackfoot Agency, Fort Assinaboine, Belknap and other places where any pains have been taken to till the rich soil. That the rock-ribbed clusters of mountains, with which the reservation surface is studded, are streaked and seamed with argentiferous and auriferous leads is the confident prediction of all who have given any attention to its metalliferous deposits.

In view of all these facts it is well for us, lying right the gate way to this now deserted domain, to consider what benefits we, as a business community, are to derive from the host of stockmen, ranchers and prospectors that are sure to invade this great land the coming summer.

To the north the towns scattered along the Canadian Pacific are too far away even if they had the requisite capital to command this forthcoming trade. The new "boom" towns of the Northern Pacific lie too far to the south to "catch on" to the business. That great water way, the Missouri river, still rolls on the even tenor of its way to Bismarck, past wood yards and half-breed trading posts. Clagett and Carroll are the only points in the 800 miles, to the mouth of the Yellowstone which have any thought of business, and even they are not in a position to take advantage of any sudden business boom, like that with which we are promised another summer. Of course, it will only be a question of time, then, that those intermediate river points will make thriving business centres for the surrounding country. Fort Benton is so situated naturally and has the business men and capital requisite to profit by the coming summer's influx of settlers. The prosperity of 1884 will be welcomed by all and we may thankfully repeat after the old revolutionary orator, "Let it come."

INVASION OF THE RESERVATION.

The recent prompt action of the military authorities at Fort Assinaboine in removing squatters and prospectors from the Indian reservation will set a good many prospective stampedeers guessing. According to the United States' laws these ranch and mine hunters are all trespassers and can be fined in the courts and fined for this infringement on the Indians' country. "Oklahoma" Payne has given the government much trouble lately by his repeated invasions of the Indian territory. Teller, in his last report, speaks of this continued encroachment and advises that imprisonment be added to the fine, with which the invaders are now punished. This is not the only part of the west that is complaining

of the hardship of rich but useless tracts of country. The settlements along the Yellowstone want the land of the Crows, between the river and Wyoming. The settlers in eastern Dakota are clamoring for the opening of the immense Sioux reservation which cuts them off from any direct communication with the Black Hills. This clamor from various sections of the western territories will doubtless have its proper effect on congress—or should have it at least. As congress is in session now it will not, in all probabilities, be more than a couple of months before we will all have a perfect right to roam at will over the land of the Blackfeet; now, we are criminals, in the eyes of the law for so doing. In view of all these facts it might be well for fortune hunters and land grabbers to go a little slow just at present. By so doing they will save themselves much unnecessary trouble and the military authorities many a cold trip over the bleak prairies. It is probable that the coming two months will be cold and stormy—judging from the mildness of the past two months. During the prevalence of a Montana blizzard a seat by the side of a red-hot stove at home is more comfortable and safer than scouting around in an uninhabited section like the reservation. When spring opens up a trip to that beautiful country will be a pleasure, when it will now be accompanied with many pains and frost bites. Every one understands that it is the duty of the military to keep settlers off of the Indian country, and no doubt they will use their authority in this case.

All this is upon the supposition that congress will hear our cry and give relief to thousands who are wanting homes in this new land. We have taken that for granted without argument; but if our worst fears are realized and the Indians are still left next spring the nominal owners of what they have no more use for than the dog had for the manger full of hay, in that old fable, then it will be time for us to do some vigorous "kicking". The general government refused to listen, for a long time, to the clamor of miners who wished to unearth the hidden treasures of the Black Hills, and even went so far as to escort several large parties of prospectors out of the coveted region. All this was like trying to stop a hurricane by blowing in the face of the wind. While the soldiers were marching one poor unlucky fellow out over one trail a thousand were coming in by another path. The military authorities soon took in the situation and gave up this unequal struggle for a bad job. It was several years after the undisputed possession of the Black Hills by the whites before the Indian title was finally and legally extinguished.

Similar history of the Blackfeet country will have to be written if congress does not do us justice this session. Prospectors, stockmen and ranchers have had their hearts set on that country for a long time and we mistake their temper if they take no for an answer much longer.

SHEEP SHEARS.

The common saying in the west, "I am not out here for my health," contains a thousand times more truth than poetry. It seems, in plain, unadulterated English, that 999 out of every thousand who come to Montana from the east come with the avowed purpose of making a "home stake," as the miner tersely puts it. This sentimental racket about young men coming west to strengthen weak lungs, view the majestic mountains and other fine scenery we all know is a mere figment of the imagination conceived by some newsmonger when he had run short of other topics. What we are after is money, and any person who can put us on to making some, in a square, legitimate business is a public benefactor and his appearance will be hailed with delight. It may be set down as a general rule that men come west, not because they have money to invest, but because they feel that they have got a whole lot of money to get. What is needed then is advice to men of small means, and the pilgrim who steps from the gang plank of a steamboat with only four bits in his pocket but with a million dollars worth of muscle, pluck and endurance.

Every new country has special adaptations to particular lines of business, and the man who goes at them with a vim is bound to succeed, and in time, be "well fixed." Pre-eminent among these lucky ventures stands the wool business, in our estimation.

In the stock country tributary to Fort Benton we can cite numerous instances of energetic young men who have risen from common sheep herders three years ago to owners of fine sheep ranches and own from two to five thousand sheep. The different steps in their worldly prosperity are easily told. As sheep herders they learned the business, and saved up a few hundred dollars with which to improve a ranch—that can be had for the taking in this part of Montana. Some sheep man then gave them a band on shares—the person who

takes care of the flock to have half the increase and half of the wool for his labor and expenses. As the share of the wool crop will pay all expenses of shearing and grub it leaves half of the natural increase as clear gain. As the ewe band will increase from 75 to 100 per cent. in ordinary seasons it can easily be seen in three years the sheep herder would have a nice band of his own. For an instance of this we will cite the case of the Hay brothers, of upper Arrow creek. Three years ago last summer they were herding sheep for Henry McDonald; now they have over 5,000 sheep of their own with good ranches, buildings, machinery, and stock of all kinds. This is only a fair sample of what men of industry can do for themselves at the sheep business in this country, with muscle and good management as their only available assets to start with. Mr. Lacy, of the well known firm of Peck & Lacy, on Belt creek, informed us last summer that no fewer than five young men were now the prosperous owners of bands of sheep who commenced the business as herders for that firm.

There are now, according to the best judges, about three quarters of a million of sheep in the territory, and the business may be said to be yet but in its infancy, as it is only in the last four years that any attention has been given to it. Paris Gibson, the pioneer "boomer" of the wool industry in northern Montana, estimates that there will be 10,000,000 sheep in the territory before 1890. As the fleeces in the last five years have averaged \$1.50 each, that would put the value of Montana's wool crop at \$15,000,000 a year, in the near future. Fort Benton has proved to be the best wool market in the territory, the average price paid for wool here in the last five years being 25½ cents. The river steamboats take down freight at low rates, so as to secure a load both ways. This is an advantage as a wool market which our city will always possess over the railroad towns. The opening of the Blackfeet country another summer to settlement will give wool growing an immense impetus in this section of country, as the country north of the river is known to be especially adapted to the business. It is no exaggeration to say that in one season it would double the number of sheep in the country tributary to Fort Benton. Large flocks of sheep are being driven in every year from California, Oregon and Washington territory, as the superiority of our ranges and climate for the business has been demonstrated by experience. The owners of these new herds would naturally seek a fresh pasture, and in consequence the Indian reservation would get a large proportion of the "pilgrim" sheep.

The editor of the Pierre Recorder advocates the theory of two wives for Dakotians, one to be with her husband, the other to visit friends in the east.

The new series of two cent stamps cost the government nine and one fifth cents per thousand. They are manufactured by the American Bank Note company, of New York.

The Memphis (Tenn.) Avalanche says that a census of southern editors shows two captains, seventeen majors, seven generals, and 1,826 colonels. There are no privates and no officers below the rank of captain.

BISMARCK, the "boom" town and capital of Dakota, can only support one daily paper. "The Dakota Daily Capital," after four months experience and a loss of \$2,000, has gracefully succumbed to the inevitable, and closed up shop. Fort Benton can now be called the banner newspaper town of the upper Missouri, as it is the only river town from Sioux City to the source of the mighty stream that has two dailies.

ALASKA will now probably get some form of local government in place of the lawlessness which has prevailed there for the last sixteen years, or ever since our purchase from Russia. President Arthur strongly recommended some action about the matter in his message, and already some half a dozen bills have been introduced in congress with this end in view.

The government is making a sensible move toward establishing Indian training schools in the west. They should not forget Montana, as they seem to have done so far in their appointment of school facilities. The following from the Pioneer Press tells what they are to do farther east: "One of the first industrial schools for Indians that the government proposes to build will be at Devil's Lake. The plans are for a three-story, T-shaped building, 174 feet in one length and 120 in the other, with a width on each part of 58 feet. This makes a large building, and if it is devoted to industrial teaching as effectually as the Hampton and Carlisle schools it will be a strong argument in favor of the educational remedy for the Indian question. Schools of this kind right among the tribes can do much more for them than those at a distance."

**GEORGE STEELL,**  
Sun River and Ulidia, M. T.  
DEALER IN  
**GROCERIES AND DRY GOODS,**  
**CLOTHING**  
Hats and Caps, Boots and Shoes,  
HARDWARE, GENERAL SUPPLIES,  
**THE LATEST IMPROVED FARM MACHINERY,**  
—AND—  
**Agricultural Implements**  
OF ALL KINDS.  
**Hand Plows, Sulky Plows, Cultivators,**  
**Harrows, Mowers and Reapers,**  
**Sulky Rakes, Etc.**  
ALSO A FULL LINE OF  
**FISH BROS. & CO.'S FAMOUS VEHICLES.**  
**DRUGS, MEDICINES, ETC.**  
This Department has recently been added, and is under the charge of an experienced druggist.  
**PURE DRUGS AND MEDICINES CONSTANTLY ON HAND.**  
PRESCRIPTIONS ACCURATELY PREPARED.

**BAKER & DeLORIMIER,**  
MAIN STREET, FORT BENTON, M. T.,  
Wholesale and Retail Dealers in  
**DRY GOODS**  
NOTIONS,  
Hosiery, Corsets, Gloves,  
FANCY TOILET ARTICLES,  
LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S  
**SUITS AND SHOES**  
**MILLINERY,**  
ETC., ETC., ETC.  
**CARPETS,**  
**CURTAINS**  
SHADES,  
**WALNUT and EBONY POLES**  
Adjustable Cornices, Stair Rods,  
AND EVERY DESCRIPTION OF  
**House Furnishing Goods**  
Agents for all kinds of Sewing Machines.

**ROBERTS & BEST,**  
**NEW HARNESS SHOP**  
Sun River Crossing.  
Harness and Saddle Repairing done on Short Notice.  
Give us a fair trial and you will never deal anywhere else.

**DAY'S HOUSE,**  
On Big Springs Creek,  
REEDSFORT, MEAGER COUNTY, M. T.,  
Has recently been fitted up in the very best of style for the accommodation of the traveling public.  
**GOOD STABLING FOR HORSES**  
In connection with this house.  
**FRANK DAY, Prop'r.**

**J. D. WEATHERWAX,**  
DEALER IN  
**GENERAL MERCHANDISE**  
UTICA, MONTANA.  
Hotel and Stables in connection.  
**BEST STOPPING PLACE**  
In the Judith Basin.

**PETERSON & PRICE,**  
DEALERS IN  
**General Merchandise**  
LITTLE PITTSBURGH, M. T.  
We desire to announce to the people of this section that we have purchased the stand formerly occupied by JOHN K. CASTNER, and have laid in a large stock of Groceries, Dry Goods, Liquors, Tobaccos, Etc., Etc.,  
And are fully prepared to meet the demands of the trade in this vicinity. Your patronage is respectfully solicited.  
**PETERSON & PRICE.**