

POWER-FUL POINTERS.

The Commodore Has Something to Say About the Opening of the Reservation,

And the Booming Effect it Will Have on Fort Benton.

During the recent sojourn of Mr. T. C. Power in the city, a RIVER PRESS reporter interviewed him briefly in reference to the Big Reserve—the probability of a portion of it being opened up to settlement by the present congress, and the effects of such action upon Fort Benton. The notes then made have not been utilized until this time, as the information sought was for use, primarily, in the Holiday "reservation edition" of the RIVER PRESS.

It might be well to state in the premises that there are few men in the north-west possessed of greater business foresight than T. C. Power, as is best shown by his unflinching success in extending his business in northern and eastern Montana. Fort Benton, the commercial center and future metropolis of the territory, is the headquarters and depot of supplies of the firm of T. C. Power & Bro., with branch establishments in various outlying sections, and in every case strong points have been selected, as is fully shown by their rapid development and business growth. Reedsfort, Lavinia, Belknap, Clagett, Dupuyer and Junction City are a few of these points which are rapidly developing into important trade centers. In establishing branches, and hence calculating upon the business importance of these points, Mr. Power has seldom made an error. His judgment will do to banish.

In answer to the inquiry of the reporter as to the prospect of the opening of the reservation, Mr. Power said:

"There is no doubt in my mind but that favorable action in regard to this matter will be taken during the present session of congress. There are no grounds of opposition whatever, while every consideration of justice, both to the Indians and the people of Montana, demands a reduction of this reservation, and a big reduction, too."

"What effect will its opening have on Fort Benton?"

"When that is done look out for the big Fort Benton boom. It will set this town on fire, so to speak, and with other influences at work make it the town of the territory, as I have always maintained."

"What do you know of the character of the country to be opened to settlement?"

"I have been over portions of it, but not enough to indulge in a description or to discourse intelligently on the advantages and resources of the country. Gen. Ruger said to me not long ago that it is the finest portion of Montana, not even excepting the magnificent Judith Basin. There are some favored spots in the latter region, but in the Milk river country can be found single valleys that contain more agricultural lands and can support a greater population than the whole of the Basin. This is the difference. Besides being a fine stock country, the reservation, when opened up, will develop into a great farming section, and in time will be the home of thousands of prosperous ranchers."

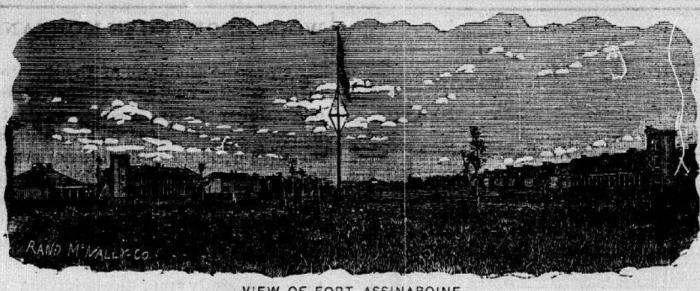
"Do you know anything of the mineral resources of that region?"

"Nothing, except from hearsay. I have no doubt there will be some good mineral found in the mountains, but apart from this consideration, the agricultural and pastoral resources of the country will render it in time the most populous and prosperous portion of the territory. Of this there can be no doubt."

Mr. Power was quite enthusiastic on the subject and is looking forward to the favorable action of congress with a great deal of interest. So, in fact, is the entire population of northern Montana.

Montana Wool.

In the last issue of the Bulletin of the National Wool Manufacturers' Association, a quarterly magazine devoted to the interests and published by the wool manufacturers of the country, Mr. Gibson's excellent address before the Montana Wool Grower's association, delivered last summer, is published in full. It is spoken of very highly by the editor, and calls the attention of manufacturers to the recommendations made and the fine future for Montana wool. This is an excellent word from the right quarter and cannot help doing much for our wool by drawing in such a pronounced manner the attention of manufacturers to it. Mr. Hayes, the secretary of the National Wool Manufacturers' association and editor of the quarterly, has published a pamphlet devoted entirely to Montana as a wool producing section, and has always spoken highly of the good qualities of our wool.



VIEW OF FORT ASSINABOINE.

FORT ASSINABOINE.

We are almost ashamed to present to our readers the above poor cut of one of the finest military posts in the United States, but as it is the only view at hand we will have to make a virtue of necessity even if it does not do justice to the beautiful post. Every one who has had the pleasure of visiting the fort praise the magnificent location and fine view that the many elegant buildings make. The main structures are built quite compactly around the four sides of a rectangular parade ground, which is about half a mile long and a quarter wide. As you look at the cut the right hand side is filled in with officers' quarters. These, for the most part, are built double, for two occupants, and are elegant two-story buildings, with mansard roofs. Neat fences have been erected around each building, and a substantial sidewalk runs the whole length of the row. It only needs the street lamps to complete the illusion, and then the stranger would think he was strolling in one of the fashionable suburban residence portions of Chicago or Cleveland, instead of being (as an eastern writer would put it) far beyond the outskirts of civilization, and in the heart of a hostile Indian country. On the left hand side of the view you can see in the foreground the stone guard house, where the naughty boys are kept in "durance vile" for a longer or shorter term, according to the magnitude of their respective offences. Stretching away in the dim perspective you will notice the two-storied soldiers' quarters, with spacious verandas in front running the full length of the buildings. Each company's quarters have a dining room and kitchen on the lower floor, the upper story being used as sleeping apartments. A stroll through these rooms with one of the officers would surprise an uninitiated civilian. The perfect discipline that you see displayed among all the men is in striking contrast to the tumult and uproar which would be seen when the same amount of business was transacted in private life. The cleanliness everywhere displayed, from the cooking range to the cots in the dormitories, would put to shame many so-called first class hotels. The upper floor of the verandas are used every week for short range target practice; this, taken in connection with the magnificent field target practice, has developed many fine marksmen in the post, as is shown by the large number of officers and soldiers wearing on their coat collar the square buttons with concentric circles.

A fine gymnasium stands at one corner of the parade ground and is filled with trapezes, ladders, pulling machines, Indian clubs, dumb bells, a bowling alley and all the other appliances usually found in a first class institution of this kind. The large room can be easily cleared of these aids of muscular developments and then used as a lecture hall or ball room. A fine stage was erected at one end of the room, so that local as well as traveling theatrical talent have here a chance to show off before admiring audiences. The upper floor of this building is used by the post band to practice in. The Assinaboine band is noted in Montana for its fine musicians and the first class music they produce. Standing at the further end of the parade ground is the large commodious structure for the reception of the sick ones. If there is anything that would alleviate the misfortune of being an invalid we think the having a fine place like that to be nursed in would do it. The building has two large wards on the lower floor and an isolation ward up stairs, making in all, accommodations for about fifty patients. Capt. H. G. Burton, post surgeon, is assisted by Drs. Cline and Adams in attending to the health of the post.

The elegant Gothic chapel has been pronounced by good judges to be the finest building for that purpose in Montana. The lower floor of the building contains two school rooms—attendance at the day school for the children of enlisted men is compulsory. A night school is kept open during the winter months for the enlisted men, which shows the large attendance of from fifty to sixty men, who wisely think "they are never too old to learn." Classes are here formed in all the common English branches, besides courses of lectures being given by the post chaplain in history, constitution of the United States and the natural sciences. The post chaplain, Rev. S. G. Dodd, has charge of the

spiritual and educational welfare of the post. Divine services are held every Sunday morning, which are said to be well attended. The general reading room of the post, under the charge of Adjutant Bates, seems to be well supplied with newspaper and magazine literature, and to be well patronized by the men. There are also several company reading and library associations which must do much good in disseminating useful knowledge.

The buildings of the post are insured against the fire fiend by a good system of waterworks. A Blakis steam pump lifts the water out of Beaver creek into an elevated reservoir, having a capacity of 51,800 gallons. The water is carried all through the post in iron pipes and in case of fire the water could be thrown either by the force of the engine or the pressure of the water in the reservoir clear over any of the buildings. The large brick buildings used in the commissary and quartermaster's department, also the stables and teamsters' quarters lie behind the soldiers' quarters and so can not be seen in the accompanying view. R. L. Culloh's fine residence and the large stone building of Broadwater, McCulloch & Co.'s are not shown, but Assinaboine would be a dull old place without the store, restaurant, saloon and club room, which are all under one large roof.

One thing that gives the post such a citified look is the material with which the buildings are constructed—being all brick, with the single exception of the stone guard house, which, from its use, is built with a view to solidity. As logs and Montana shingles are the building material for most of our frontier structures, by a largemajority, it is rather surprising after a long ride of seventy miles through a lone country with nothing but three stage stations the whole distance to run upon such a cluster of imposing brick structures. It took 7,000,000 brick, which were made of clay near the post, to put up the buildings. Good wood for fuel is found in the Bear's Paw mountains, which lie to the south of the post. Very fair timber, for lumber, is also procured there and sawed up at the post mill. The immense coal fields of the Milk river country, not far from the post, will doubtless revolutionize the fuel question, or should do so at least, as the quantity of accessible timber in the mountains is limited, while from all accounts the coal supply is practically inexhaustible. Future settlements in that country will need all the timber for fencing and building, and it should be left for that purpose.

The country in that vicinity is one vast stretch of slightly undulating table land cut only by depressions for the streams running from the mountains to the Missouri and Milk river, with their cut and deep coulees as you approach the larger streams. These plains were once the pasture land of the buffalo, whose bleached cranium is still a familiar sight all over the "Great American Desert," as the maps of our school geographies used to have this country labeled. A few years hence and droves of cattle and flocks of sheep will fatten, the year around, on the nutritious bunch grass growing everywhere in luxuriance.

Fort Assinaboine will probably for a long time be one of the permanent posts of our country as its position near the British line makes it a necessity. Roving bands of Indians find it quite easy to lay claim to a choice band of horses and decamp with them across the international boundary line. They know that there they are safe from pursuit unless the authorities of the other government wishes to take the matter up and punish them.

Col. Coppinger, who has been appointed to the command of this important ten company post, to take Col. Ilges' place, probably will not arrive from the east before spring, and in the meantime Major Klein is in command.

If the military would scare some of the horse thieves off the reservation as well as the honest folks that are their to hunt up a home they would have the thanks of all the surrounding country, who suffer from their lawless raids. Parties in from the reservation tell us it is not safe to trust a good horse out of your sight, as the lovers of good horse-flesh are on the watch for valuable animals all over the reservation. Cyprian Mat, who lives at the Warm Springs at the foot of the Little Rockies, lost all of his horses lately and has not been able to recover them as yet.

REDUCING THE RESERVATION.

Gen. Howard's Mission in Northern Montana and What it Will Probably Result In.

Mr. Stetler, of the firm of Stetler & Lilly, has just returned from Northern Montana. He says a good deal of interest is felt at Benton and vicinity in reference to the proposed cutting down of the Piegan reserve. He says this reserve contains a vast amount of splendid country for both farming and stock growing, and in the event of a portion of it being opened for settlement, there is sure to be a great stampede in that direction. This, of course, would result in much good to Benton, which is bound to remain the supply point for all that portion of the territory.

Gen. Howard, United States Indian inspector, visited the Piegan reserve two or three weeks ago, and it is understood in Benton that he will recommend opening a large scope of Indian land for settlement. As is well known, almost all of northeastern Montana is at present reserved for the Indians (principally the Piegans and Gros Ventres). Gen. Howard will recommend that the Indian territory be cut down by restoring to the public domain a tract of country roughly estimated to be 200 miles wide (east and west) and about 120 miles north and south, containing about 15,000,000 acres. This would be almost an empire in itself, and possessing as it does all the requisites (agricultural, mineral and otherwise) for developing into a prosperous country, its being open for settlement would not only be good for Benton, but for the whole territory. The proposed cut-off lies east of the Piegan agency, north of the Marias and Missouri rivers, and extends to the eastern line of the territory.

The Piegans are not entirely satisfied with the arrangement and the price, but the pressure is so great that they will have to make themselves content with what they can get, so General Howard says.

It is generally believed up north that Maj Young, the Piegan agent, will soon resign.—Independent.

Reservation Raiders "Bounced."

Word was brought in last week by Mr. Groesbeck, of the Teton, that two parties were escorted off from the reservation and across the Marias, Sunday, by a military escort from Fort Assinaboine. They were informed that a repetition of the offense in invading the sacred domains of the Blackfeet would lead to a confiscation of the trespassers' personal effects. They were captured in the vicinity of Bear's Paw, and though they protested that they were on their way to the Canadian Pacific, it availed them nothing, as the military thought they were too far from the right road for that to be the case. There were six men in one party and seven in the other, fully equipped with pack horses, grub, and everything necessary to make a good, long stay, wherever their destination may have been. A gentleman in the city who claims to know says the invaders were sent out by influential and wealthy parties to locate ranches, and when captured were headed for Birch creek, which flows from the south side of the Bear's Paw into the Missouri near Clagett.

The Prospective Stampede to the Reservation.

The indications are that there will be a stampede of mine hunters to the Sweet Grass hills and Bear's Paw mountains, lying north of the Missouri river, next spring. The statements published in the Benton papers seem to determine beyond a doubt that veins bearing both gold and silver exist in that country, but whether in paying quantities, of course, remains to be tested. The Bear's Paw mountains are doubtless a portion of the Snowey and Judith ranges of Meagher county, cut off by the Missouri river and in all probability they abound with equal mineral richness. At this writing, this country of the proposed new El Dorado lies within the limits of an Indian reservation, and on that account must rest unmolested. But should the reservation be curtailed, as is proposed during the present session of congress, (and we have reason to hope it may) the Bear's Paw will be thronged with mine hunters next year. That fine agricultural districts lie within the country which it is proposed to cut off from the reservation and open to settlement by the whites is a well conceded fact, and should the scheme be accomplished, room may be found for a thousand or more farms, and double as many herds and flocks. There is no necessity of booming the country, however. Emigrants will go in and take up the land rapidly as soon as the reservation is opened to settlement. The tillable land should all be taken up by actual settlers under the homestead and pre-emption laws. The Husbandman does not countenance monopolies of any character, and especially is it opposed to land mo-

opolies. The taking of large tracts by associations and companies is not good for the country. There are thousands of homeless people in America, who could live and prosper if located upon our vacant lands, and we maintain that every possible advantage should be opened to them for the taking of homes under the existing laws. There is no necessity whatever of companies forming to invade and gobble up the lands. Many stock raisers will seek fresher pastures and locations in the new land, and it is all right enough for those contemplating a change, or to engage in the business, to look it over with a view to good locations, but by all means let the herds and flocks be owned by actual residents and tax-payers of the territory, and not foreign corporations. The Husbandman looks forward to the settlement of the reservations at the north with much interest, for it seems to be the only movement that can save Yellowstone, Custer and Meagher counties from being overcrowded with flocks and herds.—Husbandman.

Neihart Notes.

From Duncan McDonald, who is just in from the prospective mining metropolis of the Little Belt mountains, we glean the following facts:

There are two quartz experts and assayers from Helena wintering in Neihart. They say that the ore which has been shipped east from the Montana Belle will assay over 800 ounces of silver to the ton. This will surely leave a good margin for the boys who have been rustling so hard to get it out and hauled to White Sulphur Springs over the mountain road. The boys have kept the mountain road over to sheep creek open so far by hauling ore that way, and they propose to keep it up all winter. We wish them success in their enterprise of shipping ore, as that will fully demonstrate that it can be worked at a big profit by a mill in the gulch.

White and Sykes, two practical miners, have taken the contract to sink 75 feet on the St. Julien for the ore taken out. They had the misfortune to have the shaft house and all their tools burned up about December 1st, but are now all fixed again and expect to realize handsomely from the rich ore for their labor.

Miller and McNeale are running a feed stable in the gulch.

The Massachusetts has now a 70-foot shaft and shows four feet of rich galena and carbonate ore. A load of the quartz is now being taken to the railroad for shipment east. M. L. Lohmire, who was reported badly injured in this mine, by an accidental rap on the head from a sledge hammer in the hands of a fellow workman, has fully recovered from the effects of the blow.

John Leud and McDonald expect to go down 100 feet on their fine prospect—the Deadwood.

The store is running at full blast, with Capt. McIntosh at the wheel. The misfortunes which have overtaken the parent business house at Barker has had no effect on the gallant captain, who still deals out baking and giant powder to the boys in about equal proportions, though for far different purposes. Both, though, are warranted—one to raise rocks and the other to raise bread.

Tuck Lambert and Frank Lewis are working like beavers on the IXL, which shows still more of that rich gold and silver rock as they go down on the lead.

The extension to the Flora, on Snow creek, will soon have a shaft sunk on it, as Buchanan & Fitzpatrick have got their shaft house built and will turn themselves loose on this valuable prospect about January 1st.

Notwithstanding the backsets the camp has received, our informant, who is a practical miner, seems well pleased with the outlook at Neihart and prophesies a busy camp there in the near future. This camp has always been credited with rich ore, and plenty of it. This being the case, it is only a question of time when Montana district will come to the front, as those two things are all that is necessary to make smelters and quartz mills at Neihart paying institutions.

A Rich Find.

MINNEAPOLIS, December 23.—A special from Billings says that Jack Meyer has re-discovered the lead lost in the Big Horn mountains, in Montana, which is immensely rich. It is located near the headwaters of the Big Horn river. This mine, which three old-timers discovered early in the territorial times, two of whom were murdered by the Indians and the survivor became insane, could never be traced, and since then the discovery had passed from territorial tradition. The lode is reported to run over into the river at one point, where the surface indications show a width of 520 feet and a height of sixty feet. Meyer claims to have trailed the lode twenty-five miles, and in some places found it 600 feet wide. It is free milling quartz, and every pan shows good prospects. Meyer, his father and uncle have gone to their claim to develop it.