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OFFICIAL PAPER OF CHOUTEAU COUNTY

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 1909.

THE DUTY ON HIDES.

With democratic members of congress making strenuous efforts to secure the adoption of tariff rates that will give incidental protection to the products of their constituencies, it is somewhat disappointing to find Montana democratic newspapers denouncing a proposed duty on hides, which would benefit an important industry of their own state. They appear to be blindly following the lead of eastern newspaper organs of the tanners and manufacturers of leather goods, who desire free raw material but demand import duties upon foreign goods that compete with their own products.

The general line of argument adopted by these Montana free trade advocates appears in this quotation from a recent article in the Great Falls Tribune:

Montana is one of the cattle producing states, and even were it a fact that a tax on hides which materially increases the cost of shoes to the whole population of the United States would add a few cents to the profits of the cattle raiser, we would be opposed to such a tax in violation of the principle of the greatest good to the greatest number. The cattle raiser could far better get along with a slightly lower price for their cattle than the poor people of the country can afford to pay an artificially increased price for their shoes to increase profits to the cattle men. But as a matter of fact the cattle raiser gets no benefit at all from this tax on hides. The beef trust is the sole beneficiary of the increased price of hides. It owns and controls the leather trust. It is a fact well known to the cattle man of northern Montana that when he sold his cattle on the Chicago market at the lowest price known in recent years, the price of hides was being boosted to new record prices, and the leather trust was increasing the price to manufacturers of shoes almost daily.

In making the statement that the price of hides was boosted to a new record price at the time when northern Montana cattle were selling at the lowest figure in recent years, the Tribune destroys the force of its own argument. The lowest price received by northern Montana cattle men in recent years was during the period of 1894 to 1897, the monthly average price for western range steers during that time being \$3.50 to \$3.75. If the price of hides was materially increased during those years, the higher cost was not due to the tariff as they were on the free list of the Wilson bill.

Some important information upon the hide business—with which the general public is not familiar—was given by members of congress who discussed the proposed duty upon that product. Hides were placed upon the free list by the house of representatives, but in the senate it was proposed to retain the present duty of 15 per cent. ad valorem. It is against the retention of the present duty that the agitation organized by the tanners and leather goods manufacturers is directed.

It appears from reliable data gathered by public authorities that about 20,000,000 cattle and calves are slaughtered annually in the United States, about one-fourth of that number being credited to the packing firms that constitute the "beef trust." The control of one-fourth of the product evidently does not give the alleged combine a monopoly of the hide market.

In recent years the average price of American green hides has fluctuated between 8 1/2 and 14 cents per pound, and at the present time ranges from 10 to 13 cents according to quality. The foreign hide market has also had its ups and downs, and frequently has averaged higher than the American market.

The average value of imported hides during 1907 was 15 1/2 cents per pound, the duty of 15 per cent ad valorem averaging about 2 1/2 cents per pound. As it takes from 1 1/2 to 2 pounds of dry hides to furnish the sole leather of an average pair of shoes, the tariff upon hides figures in the cost of these shoes to the extent of 4 1/2 cents or less per pair.

That being the conclusion indicated by data relating to the subject, is the Great Falls Tribune prepared to demonstrate that the removal of the duty upon hides will cheapen shoes to the extent of 4 1/2 cents per pair? Two and one-fourth cents per shoe may possibly be an economy in the cost of living desired by some people, but the anticipated saving on raw material would probably be appropriated as additional profit by the tanners and manufacturers.

Fine Book and Job Printing a specialty at the RIVER PRESS office.

ANTIQUITY OF IRRIGATION.

In making official announcement of the seventeenth session of the Irrigation Congress in Spokane on August 9, a press bulletin calls attention to the fact that farming by artificial application of water to the land was practiced by the Arabians, Egyptians, Assyrians and Chinese long before the advent of Solomon, and it has since formed a part of the agriculture of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean sea. The ancient art had its origin in America in prehistoric times, by the Pueblo Indians, who inhabited portions of what is now New Mexico and Arizona, and their descendants were still cultivating the lands when the Spanish colonists came from the south, several centuries ago.

History recalls that the valley of Mareb in Arabia, was supplied with water drawn from a reservoir made by a dam 120 feet in height and two miles in length. The wall was constructed of hewn stones and it restrained the swift current of an important stream for more than 2,000 years. Mention is also made of the canal of the Pharaohs, connecting the Red sea with Pelusium. Flood waters of the river were used to irrigate the valley of the Nile centuries before, and the plains of Babylon were literally criss-crossed with canals, some of them hundreds of miles in length. The Romans also operated vast systems, while the Chinese supplied moisture to their rice lands by artificial means before the Christian era.

Mormons settling on the shores of the Great Salt Lake in Utah, were the first of the English-speaking people to make a systematic application of the principles of irrigation in the west. They turned the water of the Wasatch mountain streams upon their holdings, the present site of Salt Lake City, mastering the art after years of effort. Priests of the city missions also made use of water on the lands in southern California, where today may be seen the ruins of pretentious works built by the Indians. Placer gold miners in California utilized the water from their ditches for irrigation purposes.

The results obtained in Utah and California induced settlers in other states and territories to try the plan and small tracts of land were put under the ditches in Idaho, Washington and Oregon. The Indians in the Clearwater country in Idaho, were the first in this part of the country to use artificially supplied moisture in the cultivation of crops. Rev. Henry H. Spaulding, who came from the northwest with Dr. Marcus Whitman, mentioned this fact in his early letters to relatives in New England.

A census today would show fully 250,000 farms in the United States under ditches, watering more than 15,000,000 acres of lands. Colorado leads in the number of acres irrigated. California has the largest number of irrigators, while Washington has the greatest percentage in the number of irrigators. The science is also practiced in Canada, England, France, Italy, Japan, Argentine, South America, Algeria, Australia, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Bohemia, India, Spain and Scotland. It is estimated that more than 75,000,000 acres are under irrigation throughout the world.

Something From Nothing.

During Governor Rollins' administration a representative of the legislature of New Hampshire from one of the rural districts in the northern section of the state was presented to the governor for the first time. Being somewhat unfamiliar with statehouse etiquette, he addressed his excellency as "most high."

The governor informed the gentleman from the rural district that there is but one "Most High." "He who had made everything from nothing." "Well, governor," replied the country legislator, "I'll give you credit for making a justice of the peace out of a man in my town that is about as near to nothing as ever walked on two legs."—Kansas City Star.

Saloon Men Fear Robbers.

BUTTE, July 7.—A reign of terror resulted in Centerville, a Butte suburb, tonight, when a masked bandit trio proceeded from one saloon to another and in the course of less than an hour and a half had held up three resorts and emptied their tills.

The first saloon to be robbed was that of Jim Lowney on the Anaconda road, where the robbers entered with a flourish of guns and fired several shots at the ceiling. The men then went to the Railroad saloon, where several men were lined up against the wall while the till was tapped. McCarthy's saloon on North Main street was the third, the bandits at this place beginning to shoot again. Six men were held up here.

The total sum secured from the tills of the three saloons was approximately \$27. Inmates of the saloons are minus some of their watches and other valuables. Tonight every saloonman in Centerville is carrying a six-shooter in his outside pocket. Every stranger is carefully scanned for any suspicious move.

Suit For Half Million.

HELENA, July 7.—Wm. Fitzhugh today filed a suit in the federal court against J. D. Losekamp of Billings, seeking to recover \$277,150 because of the repudiation of an oil contract. In addition he asks \$250,000 punitive damages.

The complaint asserts that Losekamp, representing himself to be the president of the Montana & Wyoming Oil company, entered into a contract whereby Fitzhugh was to raise funds for the construction of a refinery, which was done only to have the contract repudiated by the concern.

BILLINGS, July 7.—In an interview this evening John D. Losekamp, the merchant of this city named as defendant in the action, states that the suit was brought by a man who had put no money into the corporation. He was a promoter, pure and simple, who had endeavored to gain the field for his operations. Falling through a denial of the board of directors, he seeks to make Mr. Losekamp bear the burden of his disappointment.

Entries Contested By Government.

GLASGOW, July 9.—The long-drawn-out series of land contests that has been pending before the local land office here, involving desert lands in the vicinity of Bowdoin lake in this county, has at last been concluded. The taking of testimony in these cases has been going on for something like two months, and it is estimated that Miss Morrison, the stenographer, will have about 4,000 pages of typewritten testimony to write up.

Messrs. Brady and Bateman of Great Falls, are the people principally interested in these entries, and they have attended the hearings a good share of the time. Hurd & Lewis of this place have been the attorneys of record, and Special Agent Skinner has conducted the taking of evidence on the part of the government, assisted by Special Agent Good.

Lower Rates On Coal.

HELENA, July 10.—The state board of railroad commissioners today issued an order making material reductions in freight rates on coal shipments from eastern and central Montana producing centers to all points on the Northern Pacific lines. These reductions vary from 10 cents a ton at Helena and Butte, where they were lower because of Wyoming competition, to 70 cents and 75 cents to Glendive and other points, both in eastern and western Montana. So far-reaching and sweeping is the order that it is regarded as the most important action of the body from the time of its inception, including as it does the chief commercial coal producing centers of the state.

Galen Warns Race Track Men.

BUTTE, July 10.—Attorney General Galen, who is in Butte today, placed a damper upon the proposed second race meeting for Silver Bow county. He said at the race track this afternoon that such a meeting is clearly impossible and that the law is sufficiently plain, and that if a serious attempt is made to evade the statute he will see that every guilty man is prosecuted.

The opinion of Attorney General Galen follows an application made to the commissioners of this county by Abe Cohen and Harry Rose for a license to construct another racing course and another association and in this manner evade the statute which prohibits more than 30 days racing in any one enclosure in counties of the first class.

Big Demand For Montana Land.

MILES CITY, July 10.—Four hundred and eighty-seven filings were recorded at the land office here during June. More than 400 of these were for homestead entries.

Assuming that these entries were for 160 acres each—some being really for more—71,520 acres were filed on during the month. About 400 entries were made the month before, or about 64,000 acres. At this rate the 6,000,000 acres of public land open in the Miles City land district about the beginning of the year will not be long in going.

Weston's Long Walk.

SACRAMENTO, July 11.—With 108 miles of his 3,975-mile walk from New York to San Francisco still before him, Edward Peyson Weston, the 70-year-old transcontinental pedestrian, rested today at Roseville, 18 miles north of this city. That he is beginning to feel the strain is evident from the fact that he did not push on to within 10 miles of Sacramento last night, as he had planned. He declared that he is feeling fine, but admitted when found resting in the shade of a tree yesterday afternoon that he was somewhat "tuckered out."

Terms of District Court, 1909.

CHOUTEAU COUNTY.
 Tuesday, August 24.
 Tuesday, November 23.
 VALLEY COUNTY.
 Tuesday, September 21.
 Tuesday, November 16.
 TETON COUNTY
 Monday, August 2.
 Monday, November 1.

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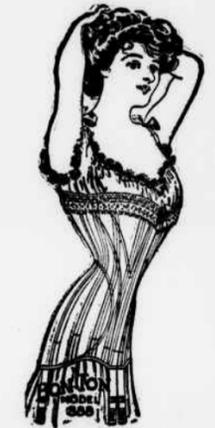
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Quartz location for recording.....	50
Quartz location for posting.....	50
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