

THE RANCH

With which is consolidated
The Washington Farmer,
The Pacific Coast Dairymen,
The Farmer and Dairymen,
The Farmer and Turfman

MILLER FREEMAN

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With this number there is commenced in The Ranch a new department under the editorship of F. Walden, on conditions on Western avenue, this city. Mr. Walden's horticultural notes have proven very popular and it is hoped the new department will receive the same greeting. It will be Mr. Walden's effort to lay before the producers each issue such information as will enable them to make intelligent and profitable shipments to our commission merchants.

In the Wenatchee valley there is jubilation over the prosperous condition of the ranchers. With its \$175,000 high line canal completed and ready for use the prospects for the future are good. The products of the valley are so diversified that such a thing as failure in its entirety any one year would be impossible. Of course there are other sections that feel as do the people of the Wenatchee valley but the untiring energy of the people in this particular valley in keeping their section always before the public and in working together for the good of the whole region has brought that part of the state into more prominent notice.

Conditions today between the producing and the consuming ends of the cattle business are rather inconsistent. It is said beef on the hoof is a drug on the market, but the consumer would not think so, judging by the prices he has to pay for his meat. The cattle raisers are rushing their stock to the market, regardless of the condition of the animals or the prices to be obtained. Such large quantities of hay and other forage have been shipped to the Philippines and Alaska that these commodities are high in price and it is found unprofitable to retain the cattle, especially when there are large numbers and forage scarce. This is responsible for the low prices on beef received by the raisers. The present quotation in cows is 2 1-2 and on steers 3 cents a pound. Last year the price was 4 and 4 1-2 cents.

The only persons who are benefited by this condition are the butchers, who are charging the same retail prices for beef that prevailed last spring when beef was high. It will be remembered by many how the local beef trust kept advancing the price one-half a cent a pound, until the pub-

lic became alarmed and raised a row. There has been no reduction since then and none is likely to occur, unless the press and public demand it. The butchers are reaping two profits, while the price of cattle is down to rock bottom. It is said the retail prices could be cut one-third and still the butchers would make a nice profit.

The outlook for stock raising last spring was very good and many ranchers invested quite heavily in cattle at high figures, believing the prices would at least stay up, if not advance much more. Now they are caught with expensive forage and a bad market and many are letting go at any figure in order to avoid too great a loss in the future. Those who can pull through the season with what they have in the way of forage should try to do so. They may recoup their losses later on, when there is a scarcity of beef cattle and prices stiffen.

The National Livestock Association holds its next annual convention at Portland—and of course Portland and the Pacific states are proud of the distinction. The date for this convention is January 11 to 15, inclusive, and the meeting promises to be well attended. Elaborate preparations are being made by the local committees for the entertainment of the delegates, and the press committee is hard at work preparing literature for the advertisement of the city and state. Not only will Portland and Oregon be benefited by the visit of so many Eastern men to that city, but the entire Northwest will feel the effects of the convention in various ways, one of them lying in the large amount of advertising we will receive when the delegates have returned home and begin telling of the wonders they saw out West. Some of the crude notions of the West held by Easterners will also be shattered.

The story given below of farming conditions at Chesaw is but a repetition of what we hear from all sections of the state these days. The season closed some weeks ago and since then the farmers have been figuring up their business and find the results highly gratifying. The Chesaw News, in one of its recent issues, made the following remarks: "This year has been one of surprises to nearly all of our ranchers. All report prodigious crops of wheat, oats, barley and all kinds of vegetables. The wild bunch grass has been so plentiful and so nutritious that all kinds of stock are fat enough for market. Enough rough feed has been put up by the ranchers to carry their stock through the winter and care for any that may be brought in by those looking for homesteads. One very gratifying fact has been demonstrated the present year, and that is the rich soil lying around Chesaw within a radius of a dozen miles needs no irrigation to insure big crops."

In another part of this issue is printed a report by Commissioner McDonald, covering the condition of the dairy industry in so far as it relates to the creamery business. The figures given show a most gratifying growth, both in the number of creameries now in operation and in the number of pounds of butter manufactured during the year ending December 1st. In his remarks Mr. McDonald emphasizes the fact that in the western part of the state there are far more creameries than in the eastern part. This is due to the difference in conditions. A scrutiny of the table appended to the article would lead one to believe there are

some counties in the western part that should have more creameries than they have now. For instance, Whatcom county has but nine creameries, while Skagit county has nineteen and Snohomish county has forty-two. In the first named county conditions for the industry are extremely favorable and the county is sufficiently removed from the field tributary to Seattle to be unaffected by the drain created by the creameries in this city.

On January 15th The Ranch will issue a large special number, in which will be published a complete report of the meeting of the State Dairymen's association at North Yakima, held as this paper goes to press with the current issue. This special number will prove an especially valuable one to advertisers, in view of the fact that there will be many thousands of extra copies printed. The Hazelwood Company, of Seattle, Spokane and Portland, has contracted with the publishers to take two pages of space and in addition have ordered 12,000 copies, which will be mailed in the publication office to lists of creamerymen and dairymen throughout the Northwest, the lists to be furnished by the company. There is some extra space for sale, but much of it has already been taken and those who wish to get in should write at once for reservations. The rate will be three dollars per single column inch.

The arbitrary rulings of the State Horticultural Commissioner relative to the importation of nursery stock is resulting in preventing Eastern dealers from doing any business in this state. Some of them have quit trying, as is shown by the two following letters, samples of the protests we are continually receiving:

Editor The Ranch: We find we are utterly unable to sell nursery stock in your state, owing to the costly system of inspection employed—a tax on our shipments that makes them unprofitable
STARK BROS.

Louisiana, Mo., Dec. 10, 1903.

Editor The Ranch: Your favor of October 19th is duly received. We did not answer for the reason that we are not operating in Washington. Your state laws are such that it seems absolutely impossible to do anything there.
BROWN BROS. CO.

Rochester, N. Y., Dec. 15, 1903.

FRUIT CANNING FOR LEWISTON.

Lewiston, Idaho, bids fair to have a fruit canner before long. John Walsh, a Seattle man, is making an effort to secure the aid of the commercial bodies in that city, and at the last meeting of the governing board of the commercial club a committee was appointed to look into the proposition. Mr. Walsh was present and explained his proposition, which was adopted by the board. Mr. Walsh owns a large canning plant and offers to turn it in for \$7,500 in stock and to accept but one vote in the company. He is to be elected manager at \$75 per month until the company pays a dividend of 10 per cent. on the capital and his salary is then to be raised to \$150 per month. The committee expects at once to canvass for subscriptions to the capital stock of the company.

HOPS NEARLY ALL SOLD.

Out of a total of 85,000 bales of hops, there remains unsold in Oregon only about 5,000 bales. There has been an exceptionally strong demand lately, which has cleaned up all the stock, except that in the hands of a few well-to-do farmers. Prices have advanced four to six cents in two weeks.

Twenty-five cents was paid last week for a car load of Yakimas and twenty-six cents has been offered for Oregons. The strongest inquiry is for medium and lower grades which, by advancing, have also pushed up the price of shippers. Dealers and speculators in Oregon hold from 8,000 to 10,000 bales.