

# THE RANCH

The Ranch Company, Publishers.

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## Ranch Small Talk

The Ranch still has a few packages of government seeds left, which we are willing to send free to everybody who asks for them while the supply lasts.

A large number of subscribers have taken advantage of the combination of The Ranch and the Seattle Star for \$1.60. We want to hear from more of our readers.

If you go to St. Louis this summer be sure to thoroughly investigate the Washington exhibits at the fair, and thereby learn more about the wonderful resources of your own state.

On May 20th the Cheney Free Press got out a nice special edition, profusely illustrated with portraits of men and women who are making their town a foremost one. Buildings and other scenes in and about Cheney also received a great deal of attention in illustrations. This is a good way to advertise the town.

In the last issue of The Ranch mention was made of the fact that the secretary of the American Angora Goat Breeders' Association, John W. Fulton, Helena, Mont., has compiled a catalogue of free government literature on the subject of goat raising. Those who desire a copy of the catalogue should write to Mr. Fulton.

In the vicinity of Pendleton, Ore., the farmers have set about to make the big unsightly advertising signs get out, not so much because they are an eyesore, but because they cause frequent runaways. The farmers intend to have the advertisers take down the big boards, but if they refuse the farmers will do it themselves. This is the right spirit to show. The bill board is getting to be such a monstrosity and those putting up the sign have so little regard of the rights of property owners and pedestrians that it is high time some one started in to call a halt.

It is the general opinion of those who have made investigations that strawberry culture in the state of Washington, especially in those sections particularly adapted to the industry, is not being carried out on a scale commensurate with the possibilities for making money at it. In the Yakima and Sunnyside districts, also in the Kennewick section, there are strawberry gardens that bid fair to yield the owners small fortunes, but there is also room for a great deal more in this line of work. H. W. Turner is one of the men engaged in the work at Sunnyside. He has perhaps an acre or more of berries of the best varieties which are loaded with blossoms and berries just beginning to ripen. It is

an inspiring sight to visit his patches and view the large, healthy plants and note the bright prospects for an immense crop. Strawberries are in good demand in all of the large markets and our state should supply the demand wholly instead of permitting other states to send in a large part of the berries.

The resources of western Washington are set forth in a neat little pamphlet recently issued by the emigration department of the Northern Pacific railway. The pamphlet is finely illustrated with actual scenes in the section to which it is devoted, and a copy may be had by writing to C. W. Mott, general emigration agent of the Northern Pacific at St. Paul.

The state irrigation commission is assuming larger proportions and becoming a more and more important commission. The governor has just made Dr. N. G. Blalock, of Walla Walla, and William B. Bridgman, of Sunnyside, members of the commission. These are good appointments, as the gentlemen live in irrigated districts and are conversant with the needs of the industry.

The Ranch has been favored with a copy of "Restful Recreation Resorts," issued by the passenger department of the O. R. & N. Co. This little book will interest everyone who desires to know anything about the numerous summer resorts of the Columbia river district, for it tells all about them and is profusely illustrated with fine views along the river and out to the ocean. Intending visitors to the coast and others who wish to know what we have in the way of summer resorts should write to the general passenger agent of the O. R. & N. Co., at Portland, Ore., for a copy. It is well worth a perusal, not only that it tells about the many interesting places reached by this particular road's trains and steamers, but also that it gives an idea of what can be found in Oregon and Washington in the way of summer resorts. With our fine summer climate, cool, healthful and delightful, this part of the country will each year become more and more a favorite spot for the tourist to spend a few months away from home. Our attractions in this line need to be advertised more to bring in a larger number. The railroads traversing our section are doing much in this line, and their efforts would be greatly augmented if all hotel proprietors and citizens in general would constitute themselves each a committee of one to encourage the influx of tourists.

## The Unequality of Assessments.

There is plenty of room for reform in the system of taxation practised in this state. Private individuals in Washington, as in many another community, are assessed the full taxable valuation of their property and more, too, but when it comes to a big corporation, such as a railroad, the assessor falls down and grovels in the dust to do the corporation's bidding. When he emerges from the interview with the man supposed to give the facts and figures for the concern he can show a taxation assessed on but one-tenth or one-eighth of the valuation on which he ought to base his assessment. One instance will suffice to show how great a disparity there exists between the assessments against the property of private individuals and that of corporations. In Whitman the two railroads traversing the county own property of a combined valuation of \$18,557,500, but the assessor very kindly knocked off a large slice and timidly asked the railroads to pay taxes on an assessment of \$1,544,160, being a little less than 8½ per cent. of the market valuation of the railroad property. This is a big concession to the railroads, but private individuals are not supposed to have the "pull" to get such a favorable rate. At least, in Whitman county they do not, for they are forced to pay taxes on a basis that is sixty per cent of the market value of

their property. The county needs the money and in order to not grind the poor corporations too hard under the heel the private individuals are asked to dig up to make good the deficiency that would occur did they have to pay taxes on a valuation of only eight and a half per cent of the market value. This is exemplifying the beauty of equalizing taxes.

## Cougars Annoying the Ranchers.

In many sections of the northwest there are frequently reported serious raids on livestock by cougars or mountain lions. How to get rid of them and make the livestock immune from attacks is a problem that has not been solved. The animals multiply annually and a few killed each year do not make any appreciable diminution in their numbers. One of the subscribers of this publication has written for suggestions as to how the pest might be got rid of. The Ranch would like to hear from those of its readers who have had more or less experience with the problem.

## Dirty Cars Scatter Diseases.

Among the regulations meant to prevent the carrying of scab by sheep and infectious diseases by cattle from one point to another when being shipped the government has one requiring that the animals be dipped at transfer points. This regulation often comes to naught for the simple reason that the government authorities do not deal properly with the railroad companies in the matter of cleaning the cars used for stock shipments. Go into the stockyards of any large city and take a look into the cars after the cattle or sheep have been unloaded. You will find, if you look closely, that there is from six to eight inches of filth on the floor of the cars, which has been there for weeks and months. The railroad companies seldom take the trouble to clean the cars, and the few clean cars you may occasionally see have been made so by the individual shipper before loading his stock into them. This is not a theory but a fact. The writer has shipped stock himself and has made observations in the stockyards of three or four of the largest centers for stock shipments in the middle west. Seldom did we find a really clean car. Of course it is not supposed the cars arrive at the yards clean, for that cannot be expected, but it should be the aim of the railroads controlling the cars to have them cleaned and disinfected at once after each shipment, instead of turning them over to the next shipper in the most filthy condition imaginable.

What use is there of the government having regulations for the dipping of sheep at the transfer points when they have to be immediately re-loaded into dirty, scab-infested cars for another journey of several hundred miles, perhaps? Can it be expected that the animals are benefitted by the dipping? Any one but the government inspector can see that the dipping is of no value to any one, except to the one or two parties who pocket the money for the work. The government has the authority to make the railroad companies clean their cars, but this authority is not being exercised to any appreciable extent and will not be until there are government inspectors who will enforce the regulations to the letter.

## Agriculture at the Exposition.

In the past fifty years there have been numerous fairs and expositions of an international character, but in none of them have the interests of the great foundation industry, agriculture, been adequately recognized until now. The Louisiana Purchase exposition is distinguished by the most complete and gigantic demonstration of the importance and magnitude of agriculture that the world has ever seen. Of the numerous structures at the fair the agricultural building is the largest, and with the horticultural building and a few structures erected for these two departments there is taken up no less

than seventy acres of ground. There are more exhibits in the agricultural building than in any other section of the exposition and it is conceded to be the most striking feature of the show. Never has there been attempted a bigger exposition of agricultural and horticultural interests than has been done at St. Louis. For twenty years or more the country has been going through an educational period relating to the highest standard of agriculture and the climax seems to have been reached at the St. Louis fair.

In view of the conspicuous role that is accredited to agriculture at the fair every American farmer has reason to feel a pride in his line of calling. He feels the dignity and supremacy of his vocation and it should be his aim to go to St. Louis and take in this magnificent display from the farms and orchards. No farmer can stand in the presence of the great agricultural and horticultural buildings at the big fair and feel small in the world's eye. He will find there a bewildering array of rural exhibits and in it all he will see reflected the supreme importance of the industries represented. He will be filled with new inspirations and ideas and be impressed more than ever with the faith that his is the most independent life that man can live; his mental outlook will be broadened and he will return home with the firm resolve to improve his farm and make it yield a larger and more numerous variety of products. It is not often that one can find the agricultural and horticultural interests given such magnificent recognition as have the managers of the St. Louis exposition, and all who can afford it should take the time to go there and make a close, critical, personal inspection in order to gain that broadening of the mind and a greater knowledge of agricultural possibilities.

## Washington Horticultural at St. Louis.

If one were to judge by the newspaper reports from all sections of the state during the past six months, more or less, the horticulturists of Washington have been the most active body of men in the state in getting up a creditable exhibit for the Louisiana Purchase exposition at St. Louis. The leaders of the movement were untiring in their zeal for something of which every citizen of the state could be proud. Their efforts seem to have been not in vain. The Ranch received a fine letter the other day from Mr. Robert S. Doubleday, of Doubleday & Company, St. Louis dealers in stocks and bonds. Mr. Doubleday is greatly interested in the progress and development of this state and through The Ranch and other publications he has kept close watch of events. Mr. Doubleday's letter is so good that we take the liberty of publishing his statements in full:

"I cannot refrain from sending you a word of congratulation upon the excellent exhibition which Washington is making in the horticultural building of the Louisiana Purchase exposition. The exhibit is not completely arranged yet, but is farther advanced than most of the others. I understand, too, that there will be many superior specimens added from time to time, but as it stands, Washington's exhibits in those lines for which the state justly claims supremacy, are the wonder of all those visitors who do not know the state as well as, for instance, I do. No other exhibits approach it in apples, plums, cherries and all those fruits and vegetables which are making the Puget Sound country and the Yakima country famous. The gentleman in charge, Mr. W. L. Wright, of North Yakima, seems to be peculiarly well qualified for the work, not alone because of his knowledge of the horticulture but because he affords a personal example of what settlers in Washington can do. In one respect the exhibit is as yet incomplete and disappointing—the fruit raisers west of the range are not as well represented by exhibits as they should be. This can be remedied."