

# THE Ranch

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### THIS SHOULD BECOME A LAW.

One of the most important bills which has been introduced in the legislature is that of Senator Troy. If this bill becomes a law a dozen or more commissions relating to agriculture matters will all be consolidated under one department, to be known as the "Commission of Agriculture." Governor Lister, in his inaugural address, recommended this and senator Troy, being a practical farmer himself, was an ideal man to draft such a measure. We believe it would work an immense benefit to the farming interests of the state, providing, of course, the commission was composed of men who are practical farmers, and broad gauge enough to reflect honor on so important a part of the state's development.

Another important bill is by Representative Lumm. This is to create a department of Farm Development. It is proposed that the farm development be placed under a bureau of farm experts. Under this proposed plan each county would have the services of an expert to be paid by the county, and selected by the County Commissioners with the approval of the head of the bureau. It is understood that if such a law is passed the government will take an active interest in it and pay half the expenses. Several of the counties of Oregon are already working this plan with great success.

The agitation for better credit for farmers has reached President Taft, and he recommends to congress a National Farm Loan Bureau. This is to be managed by the government, and long time loans made to actual tillers of the soil at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. interest. It is proposed to loan up to 60 per cent. of the value of the land. A commissioner is to be in charge to draw \$6000.00 year salary and an assistant at \$4000.00. A bill representing President Taft's view was introduced by Representative Bathrick. This bill has many good features but so far as the average borrower is concerned has one fatal defect. This is that no man can borrow on his farm unless one half of it at least, is under cultivation. This should be eliminated. To a man starting a farm in a timber county, especially in the Pacific Northwest he could get no benefit of this law for the reason that if he could not borrow until half of his land was in cultivation he could not borrow at all as nine-tenths of the of the farmers need the money for clearing. They do not need money after the clearing is done because the

land is sufficiently productive and valuable so that help is not needed. What they really need is assistance to get the land in cultivation. After that it will take care of itself.

The success of the parcels post system is most surprising. A report of the Postmaster General shows that during the month of January, the first month it was put in practice, 19,365,433 parcels were handled by the department in the fifty large cities of the United States. The Postmaster General has reported it such a success that he recommends the rates be reduced, and also the size of the packages increased. We do not think that the time has yet arrived when this should be done. The service should be made reasonably self-supporting and the size of packages should not be changed until the people have learned to use the service. In time these changes could be brought about with profit. The Postmaster General's report also shows that there are more than 12,000 postal savings banks in operation, having on deposit more than 3,000,000.

The necessity for liming the soil of Western Washington has been growing apparent for many years. The heavy rains of this section for centuries past has leached out the lime and left a great quantity of the land somewhat sour and most lands of Western Washington respond quickly to the sweetening effect of the lime. It has been unfortunate that not a great deal of limestone has been found in the Pacific Northwest. Nearly all that has been found are some mines on the islands of Puget Sound, and now a new method is being tried out for a cheap supply of lime. This is by saving the old clam beds of the Puget Sound Basin. There are many places where there are acres of clam shells, made up mostly of lime, and it is now proposed to scoop these out and after grinding them apply them to the land. If it can be done cheap enough it has great possibilities.

We are in receipt of the report of H. W. Sparks, supervisor of demonstration farms under the State College. The report should be in the hands of farmers generally as there is a lot of information in it which would be valuable to them. The principal demonstrations during the past year by Mr. Sparks, were on the grounds of the King County Fair at The Meadows, near Seattle; at Chehalis; near Vancouver, and at Arlington. Mr. Sparks is especially pleased with the corn produced at The Meadows.

He produced there corn which was not only remarkably fine for silage purpose, but matured for the best of seed. He exhibited this corn at other fairs so that at least one hundred thousand people saw it, and he also offered \$5.00 an ear for corn that would beat it, raised in Western Washington. No money was ever required. A few years ago Washington was considered hopeless as a corn state, but now Eastern Washington is raising some of the best corn grown and if Western Washington can produce a good silage corn a large part of the dairymen's troubles will be solved.

No question is so prominent before the state legislature as the one of logged-off lands. There are half a dozen different bills proposed and none of them of much practical benefit. Nearly all call for large bond issues and for impractical purposes. The Bausman plan calls for a bond issue of \$20,000,000 to be used by the state in the purchase of logged off lands, clearing same, and afterwards to be sold to settlers. The Hanson plan provides for a similar bond issue to be taken care of by individual counties. Money would be advanced for the improvement of lands and the same would be a lien against the property until paid. The Robe plan provides for a credit system similar to that used in European countries. The Metcalf plan provides for an appropriation of \$20,000 for the purpose of equipment to obtain the best method of clearing, also for cleaning logged-off lands. These lands are to be sold to settlers and applies only to lands owned by the state. The Condon plan provides for a bond issue of \$20,000,000 for reclaiming the Quincy Irrigation project. A perusal of the bills covering these different plans satisfies us that the Hanson plan is the most practical. It would be under the control of the counties and it proposes to assist people to clear their lands. No man with limited means can go on our logged-off lands and make his living on account of the high cost of clearing. He needs the help at the start rather than after his lands are under cultivation. It is becoming more evident to people who are giving it any thought that these lands will be taken up and cultivated as rapidly as there is need for them.

Washington comes to the front again in the dairy line. Lily of Willowmoor, a cow belonging to the J. W. Clise herd, of Redmond, near Seattle, was last week awarded the Ayrshire world's championship for production of butter fat in 12 months, being 22,160 pounds of milk, or 1110 pounds of butter. Gerranton Dora, another cow of the Ayrshire herd, produced 21,064 pounds of milk, or 1006 pounds of butter. These two records topped the world's record for Ayrshire cows, and these two cows were two out of three Ayrshire cows which produced more than one ton of milk during last year.

According to the ancient ground hog story we are to have an early spring. The weather man informed us the 2nd of February would be clear, and his majesty would, no doubt, see his shadow. However, it proved otherwise. The day was cloudy throughout, and according to ancient superstition, spring should open up early.

### AYRSHIRE BREEDERS MEET.

The annual meeting of the Ayrshire Breeders' Association of America was held in New York, January 9th. There were about 100 members present, and they report the association to be prospering and its members enthusiastic over the great breed of dairy cows they represent. Seventy-nine members were added during the meeting. It was shown that during the year three Ayrshire cows had made over 20,000 pounds of milk each. Remarkable as it may seem two of these records were made in the state of Washington on the farm of Mr. Clise at Redmond. The other cow making this wonderful record was from the state of Vermont.

The department of agriculture in its last report on farm animals gives some figures which are surprising, and some which are not flattering. In spite of the fact that the automobile and the auto truck have become almost universal, the number of horses increased last year 58,000. In direct contrast to this, milk cows decreased 202,000, and other dairy cattle increased 123,000. Sheep decreased 883,000,000 and swine 4,230,000. A glance at these figures does not encourage hope that there will be a decrease in the cost of milk, butter or meats, but rather it shows that we may expect a substantial increase in the price of these universal articles of diet. While population is increasing rapidly the food supply is decreasing. These figures are not encouraging.

Representative Zednick, of King county, has introduced a measure which should pass. This is to make an educational board and give it control of all the educational institutions of the state instead of now having a board for each individual institution. This would be a saving and if an able board could be obtained results would be very much more satisfactory than at the present time. The constant rivalry between the different institutions of the state is becoming a menace to all of them. A serious mistake was made when the agricultural college at Pullman had its name changed to State College. It looked as though the students and directors were ashamed of the name. If they are they should never be there.

One of the most unwise laws which the state legislature has seen fit to pass was the alien land bill which was approved by the House by a vote of seventy to twenty-five. If this law should pass it would require a change in the constitution and voters will have a chance to express themselves at the first general election. It is safe to say they will knock it higher than Gilroy's kite. Any foreigner of good moral character can become a citizen of the United States and own real estate in the state of Washington if he desires. No other should be allowed to own real estate here and the constitution should not be changed.

"I wish to complain," said the bride, haughtily, "about that flour you sold me. It was tough."

"Tough, ma'am?" asked the grocer.

"Yes, tough. I made a pie with it, and my husband could hardly cut it."

—Everybody's.