THE WEEKLY TRIBUNE.

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1891.

IRRIGABLE LANDS.

It did not require the bulletin of superintendent of the census, Porter, to substantiate the fact that it not only pays to conduct water upon the arid lands of the west, but that farming by irrigation is the surest way of growing mixed crops. Those who have mastered the art of irrigation unite in this conclusion. With plenty of water at command the cultivator of irrigable lands holds a great advantage over the eastern farmer. He fears neither drouths nor floods. He has clear skies and a warm sun overhead throughout the growing and harvesting season and his crops are gathered in much better condition than are those which are compelled to run the gauntlet of weather extremes.

Among the principal advantages of farming by irrigation is the ability to furnish crops water just when they need it, and of withholding it during harvesting. Those who have worked early and late to put in crops, and have then seen them wither and burn up under a parching sun for the want of moisture, or having by good fortune matured them and then witnessed their partial destruction by a succession of rainy days during the harvest can appreciate and properly value the advantage of farming by irrigation. Mr. Porter publishes no rows in his bulletin to the farmers of western arid lands but the data he gives may do much to enlighten the eyes of eastern agriculturists, who have spent their lives in combating the elements for bad crops with which to relieve the annual pressure upon their mortgaged homesteads, to the opportunities held out to them in the west.

There are millions of acres of the finest agricultural lands in the world. The virgin soil, undisturbed by plow or hoe, produces luxuriant growths of most nutritious grasses which feed and fatten countless herds of cattle, horses and sheep. These lands are ready for the plow. No clearing of forests, no grubbing of mesquite or other timber under growth nor moving of stones, is required. They form one grand, almost level plateau broken only by rivers and their tributaries and coulees, or ravines of greater or less surface depression. All that is needed to make these lands yield an annual wealth of cereals and vegetables is the presence of water for irrigation purposes. This is being brought upon many of them by individual and corporate enterprises. Still when these shall be completed there will yet remain many million acres here in northern Montana uncovered by canals or ditches. Many of them possess all the prime requisites for successful farming. The soil is rich, easily cultivated and lies within a reasonable distance from the sources of an abundant water supply. They await the presence of homeseekers of men who are willing to work to secure a good home at a nominal cost. To such northern Montana holds out inducements possessed by no other portion of the west a most prolific soil and the best market in the United States for agricultural products.

MR. CLARKSON'S INTERVIEW.

Clarkson, the great republican headsman, and president elect of the republican league has had himself interviewed by the reporter of a Boston paper in which he ventilated his views upon several topics of interest to the average searcher for political speculations. He thinks the failure of young men to participate in politics is the cause of the weakness of the republican party in New England. In this respect he believes the democrats of that section have outgeneraled their republican opponents, inasmuch as they have for leaders young men, many of them being the sons of the founders of the republican party. Mr. Clarkson sees carelessness or indifference upon the part of republicans in this fact, while the less prejudiced and less interested observer simply sees the inevitable effect of a patent cause in the young men of the country allying themselves to the democratic party. The influences which surrounded their fathers and induced many of them to seek their political home in the republican party, have ceased to exist or have lost their attractions. But to return to Mr. Clarkson.

The gentleman thinks the labor question will figure in the next presidential election and declares that it ought to, as wealth should be more evenly distributed. If Mr. Clarkson should happen to be a member of the next national republican convention and should be appointed one of the committee on platform and resolutions it is a ten to one wager that he would never attempt to incorporate the sentiment about the more even distribution of the country into the platform of his party. And if he did it would never be crystalized into an intelligible expression. Mr. Clarkson, speaking for the league, simply threw out a bait to the Farmers' Alliance when he put those words before the reporter.

Mr. Clarkson professes to stand squarely with democrats upon the silver question, but he is not sustained by his party when he says: "The west will not consent to any candidate or platform that will not represent the double standard idea." The gentleman seems to lose sight of the fact that neither Sanders nor Power, both of whom are supposed to reflect the opinion of their party in this state upon the silver question, favors the free coinage of the metal. Mr. Clarkson is reckoning without his host. As the chief officer of a powerful political organization he will bear watching.

LABOR DAY.

Next Friday has a story to tell to which the civilized world will listen with interest. It is Labor Day. Processions will be formed and parades made through streets to the strains of martial music. Speeches will be heard from ten thousand platforms, and other demonstrations of significance will be witnessed. While many of these will be conducted in a spirit of the utmost good nature there are localities where trouble is feared. In Pennsylvania and some other mining regions where disaffection has reached a dangerous point there are grounds to apprehend a collision between laborers and the civil or military authorities. The questions of a less number of hours for a day's work and an advance of pay all along the line will be discussed in all their bearings by men who feel they have long standing grievances to settle, and that the time is ripe for the settlement. This may be done without friction, but the chronic pessimist will look for displays of heated temper and will be disappointed if he fail to see them.

In Montana where the question of labor and wages has been discussed and settled upon a broad guage basis there can exist no cause for labor complications in the shape of strikes or demands for an advance of pay. At present there is only one phase of the matter upon which disagreement exists. That is at Butte where the early closing movement is agitated by clerks and other employees of mercantile establishments. There is, however, no talk of strikes, and the matter will doubtless be satisfactorily settled without either employers or employes proceeding to extreme measures. It is in the over crowded districts in the East and in some European countries where Labor Day may witness heated demonstrations and exhibitions of lawlessness. May both be averted is the fervent wish of every true friend of labor.

GREAT FALLS.

Nature was in one of her most generous moods when she fashioned Great Falls and its surroundings. She bestowed, with a lavish hand, all the prime essentials which unite in forming the ground work for large and prosperous cities. In no particular has she withheld her choicest gifts, all being given with unstinted measure. In a word Great Falls was cast in a heroic mold and stands today without a peer in the west. If there be a doubting Thomas who would dispute the truthfulness of this statement let him cast his eyes over the leading towns and cities in this and adjoining states and institute a comparison between each and this most favored spot. Where can one be found which possesses in such a marked degree the natural resources of Great Falls? Let us see.

Helena was built upon the placer mines of Last Chance Gulch. Their wealth has long since been exhausted and that city today simply stands as a monument to the pluck, the public spirit, the enterprise and the indomitable will of its old-time citizens, who, if the exigencies of their situation demanded it, could and would found and maintain a metropolis in the heart of a desert. Give Helena the immense water power of Great Falls; endow it with the practically inexhaustible silver and coal mines immediately tributary to this city; surround it with the vast area of agricultural and grazing lands which extend in every direction from this center of natural wealth; bless it with the abundance of pure water which flows by our doors and place it upon the gently sloping grounds which a partial Providence hollowed out among snow-capped mountains for the resting place of this phenominal city, and Helena would extend her limits far beyond their present generous proportions and become the most populous, the most prosperous, and the most beautiful center of industries in the entire west. But Helena, though boasting of 15,000 inhabitants, has not these advantages and the enviable distinction which may be reaped from their possession is within the grasp of Great Falls, and Great Falls, if it be wise, will not rest until it overshadow its haughty sister on the banks of Last Chance and accomplish its manifest destiny as the metropolis of the state.

Butte was an indifferent placer mining camp less than a score of years ago, a few scattered cabins marking its location. It had no future until the Rainbow lode was struck and the value of its ore determined. Now it is a bustling, throbbing city, full of life and activity, with a monthly pay roll of three quarters of a million dollars from one industry alone. It has neither agricultural, grazing, nor manufacturing resources. It has hardly water enough to drink. It is compelled to go abroad to establish its large reduction and smelting works, and ships all its fuel from long distances. Yet, with all these disadvantages, it supports a population of nearly 30,000 souls, and thousands of others are looking toward it as the Mecca of their hopes. Still, with all its wealth and population and prestige, Butte falls far short of Great Falls in those resources which make large and permanent cities. It cannot, nor never will, be anything but a mining camp, but it will be a good one when the present generation of children shall pass with tottering footsteps to the grave.

Anaconda, with its 6,000 men, women and children, owes its existence to the presence of just such reduction and smelting works, as Great Falls will have within less than two years, therefore no comparison by which the future of this city may be gauged can be instituted between the places. Bozeman is a beautiful little country village supported by a prolific garden patch in Gallatin valley, which could be lost in the vast empire of agricultural lands tributary to Great Falls. As far as its natural resources and future possibilities are concerned Bozeman sinks out of sight beside this city.

The same may be said of Missoula. The latter is a town of some considerable promise, beautifully located and surrounded by a small area of excellent farming lands, but Missoula will never be in the race with Great Falls as a manufacturing, mining, agricultural, grazing, commercial and railroad center. Neither will Helena nor Butte, nor Anaconda nor Bozeman, nor any other city or town in Montana. Nature never intended they should be. They are all acceptably serving the purposes of their creation, but it is no disparagement to either to say that it does not combine the natural advantages possessed by Great Falls. Let us consider this proposition.

Great Falls has a water power which, if utilized, could move the machinery of the world. No other place in Montana possesses this potent factor of prosperity. Great Falls is the center of inexhaustible coal measures which for quality is unsurpassed, and whose output is limited only by the demand. But one or two other places in the state can boast of this resource. Great Falls has, at its very doors, the largest number of promising mines in Montana. They are not prospects, but mines of an assured output and value, not surpassed in numbers or richness by those of envied Butte. Two railroads will pierce the heart of these great mineral gems during the present season. Great Falls is a natural railroad center, being easily approached from every direction. Four railroads enter the city, and two more will make it their objective point before the winter solstice. Great Falls is surrounded by the largest and finest body of agricultural and grazing lands in the west and is the supply point for hundreds of stockmen and farmers whose numbers are constantly increasing. In addition to this its salubrity of climate, its healthfulness, its beautiful location upon the banks of the broad Missouri; its pure water supply; its multiplicity of schools and churches; its social advantages and its public spirited, enterprising citizens, make it one of the most, if not the most desirable business and residence cities in the state, and beyond doubt affording the finest opportunities for remunerative real estate investments in the west. With a future unclouded by a reasonable possibility of reverses Great Falls must inspire its residents with confidence and intending investors with the brightest hopes. It stands head and shoulders above its sister cities in the state in all those factors which go to make a populous and a prosperous community.

SECRETARY NOBLES' DECISION.

The decision of the secretary of the interior in regard to the time in which land contests must be filed is thus summarized by the Minneapolis Tribune. The decision is an important one inasmuch as it clearly defines the meaning of the lately enacted law upon the matter and sets at rest points upon which Land Commissioner Carter sought light:

First. In all cases arising hereafter contests must be filed within two years after the receiver's receipt has been given on final entry, or they will not be recognized and a patent will issue as if no contest had been instituted.

Second. The law has a retroactive effect also to this extent: suppose the receiver's receipt bears date May 1, 1889, and no contest is filed before the 1st of May, 1891; in such case the two years count and no contest will therefore be recognized although part of the limited period is thus made effective before the passage of the late law. It is required, however, that the expiration of the two years shall occur after the date of the act, which is March 3. Thus, if a receiver's receipt is dated March 1, 1889, and a contest is begun March 2, 1891, the secretary holds that it must be entertained as "pending contests," and made an exception by the terms of the law.

It is with deep sorrow that the TRIBUNE announces the death of Mr. Scott Wetzel, one of the most favorably known and highly respected old-timers of northern Montana. Mr. Wetzel was a man of a kind, sympathetic nature, genial and companionable, and numbered his friends by the hundreds throughout the state. In his death the community has lost a public spirited, enterprising citizen, his neighbors a warm friend and well-wisher and his family a devoted husband and father. Peace to his ashes.

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