

WANTED.

The scarcity of building material is a serious inconvenience felt throughout the whole Northwest. With thousands of square miles of timber we are without lumber, and this, too, when saw-mills are working day and night. The reason for this is, the great mills on Puget sound, some of which cut 200,000 feet per day, ship their product to San Francisco and foreign markets, generally on large contracts, and the home supply has to come from smaller mills. To ship lumber [into the interior would involve an expense such as to almost preclude its use. Every county and district has its saw-mills, and the local supply and demand has chiefly regulated the price and quantity cut; but the wonderful activity in building during the past and present seasons has rendered these mills incapable of supplying the market. New ones are going up on every hand, and still there is a dearth of lumber. Especially is this inconvenience felt east of the Cascades, where lumber does not grow on every man's quarter section. This evil, however, will be remedied; but there is a still greater one, and that is the scarcity of brick. From every city and town in the new and growing regions there is a universal demand for brick. At Seattle, Steilacoom, Tacoma, Olympia, Vancouver, Pendleton, Walla Walla, Dayton, Colfax, Sprague, Cheney, Spokane Falls, and all along the lines of railroad through Idaho and Montana, there will be business blocks and residences erected this season almost without number. If brick could be had at a reasonable price or in sufficient quantity, the majority of business blocks, at least, would be constructed of that material. The builders prefer it, and will only use wood by force of necessity, and yet not one of those places has enough to supply its wants, and some have none whatever. It is not for lack of material, nor, even, for want of brick yards. It is because the facilities at present are entirely inadequate to supply this unprecedented demand. A man who understands the manufacture of brick cannot fail to make money almost anywhere, and a laborer who can mould even a semblance to one need not be idle for want of work at good wages. If some Eastern manufacturers do not see here an inviting field, we call them blind, indeed. The demand for brick will not end with this season nor the next. It will be permanent and continuous. Not only are men with capital needed, but laborers, men who can mould and burn. There are room and work for both.

We need labor in this great region. We need it as badly as the boy did the wood-chuck. We are short of lumber because there are not enough men who can go into the woods and get out logs for the mills. There are men enough who will build mills if the logging could be done. Houses are desired by the thousand, and carpenters cannot be had to build them. Brick blocks are wanted by business men, but there are not brick-makers enough to supply the material. Enough masons cannot be found to lay the bricks now being made, and if all the brick needed could be obtained there are not half enough masons to lay them in mortar. Carpenters, bridge-builders and masons are in great demand by the railroad companies as well as unskilled labor. Men are sadly needed on the Canadian Pacific, as is evidenced by the following item in a paper published in British Columbia:

"Mr. A. J. McLellan left this morning for Portland, where he will collect all the mechanics and laborers that can possibly be got together. In many cases Mr. Onderdonk will pay the expenses of the men's wives and families to the Province for the sake of getting desirable labor on the railroad."

No carpenter, mason, blacksmith, machinist, lumbermen, brickmaker, plasterer, tailor, shoemaker, farm hand, or general laborer, need fear for want of employment. A list of wages paid in Portland will be found elsewhere in our columns.

We of the Pacific Coast have been wont to pride ourselves upon our mild and equable climate. We have congratulated each other at home and boasted of it abroad, possibly to an undue degree. Our newspapers have harped upon the theme, it has been proclaimed from the platform, and the halls of Congress have echoed to its repetitions. We have ascribed it to the genial influences of the Japan current flowing steadily along the coast, and have been so persistent that the whole world has bowed down to worship the twin deity of "glorious climate" and Japan current. But, alas, we are now undone. Our Japan current has been feloniously abstracted. A learned Eastern professor has demonstrated that it is lost in the Arctic ocean, so thoroughly lost that it has not yet found its way out and never will, and in this heartless outrage he has the support of sundry and divers other learned but unscrupulous men. It naturally follows that the perennial green of this beautiful northwestern coast must fade, and a bleak, bleak and desolate waste be all that is left to remind us of what we once had. But let us not despair. Perhaps the professor may discover that he is mistaken, and restore the current he has so ruthlessly filched; or, better still, it may itself escape from the intricate mazes of Arctic icebergs and hasten to our relief. Our fear is not unmingled with hope.

We constantly hear of Oregon wool, Oregon wheat, and Oregon cattle, when in fact the terms apply to the products of Oregon, Washington and portions of Idaho and Montana. At least half of the "Oregon wheat" of last season came from Washington Territory and Idaho, and the present year will see that section supply two-thirds of the shipment. A more comprehensive term should be used, such as "Columbia Basin wheat," or "Pacific Northwest wheat," or something to express the facts. The same is true of wool and cattle. Oregon is a grand state and produces enough to make its name famous abroad, without absorbing credit for the production of its neighbors. The name was bestowed when it expressed the facts as they were, but times have changed and the name should change with them.

Mr. M. A. Blowers of Monticello, Minnesota, writes us under date of March 10th: "The past winter has been a very cold one. The snow is still about two feet deep on an average, and the streams are still bound in icy fetters." What a contrast! It is now the twentieth of March, and we are enjoying our eighth consecutive week of warm, sunny weather, during which there have been but two days of rain. The streets are as dusty as in summer and the watering carts are busy wetting them down. Base ball and the outdoor sports are flourishing, while the sowing of spring wheat is nearly all completed. The cold

wave in January reached us for a few days, but the thermometer was content with 7° above zero, instead of going to 30° or 40° below, as it did in the East at this latitude.

THE LABOR MARKET.

The condition of the labor market in Portland is an index to its status throughout the whole Northwest. A scarcity of labor here indicates a still greater scarcity at other points. Labor naturally seeks the largest places as offering the most opportunities for employment. For these reasons the scores of towns and cities springing up are unable to secure the labor necessary to construct the buildings they desire to erect. Mechanics are in great demand at high wages. On the contrary the professions are over-crowded and all the avenues of genteel employment are fully occupied. The labor market in this city, in detail, is in the following condition:

Stonemasons are getting \$5 per day, having recently been raised from \$4 because of demand for labor.

Brickmasons now receive \$6, and before the first of May will be getting \$7.

Plumbers get from \$4.50 to \$5, and are very scarce. Good ones are in demand.

Carpenters receive \$3.50 for ordinary work and those employed upon fine work get \$4. Good carpenters and joiners can have steady employment at \$4.

Plasterers are very scarce at \$5 a day, and the few outside cement hands that can be had are getting \$6.

Lathers have been getting \$2 per M, and are now receiving \$2.50.

Painters receive \$3.50 to \$4, and good ones are scarce.

Tinners and iron cornicemakers get \$3.50 to \$4.50, and good ones are in demand.

Iron moulders, \$2.50 to \$4.

Machinists, \$2.75 to \$3.50.

Cabinetmakers, \$2.50 to \$5. Plenty of work for good men. Extra good men can get steady work at \$5.

Wagon and carriagemakers and general blacksmiths get \$2.50 to \$4. First-class men are in great demand. Horseshoers get \$2.50 to \$3.

Harnessmakers, \$2.50 to \$3.50. Good workmen can get steady employment.

Stone and marble cutters, \$3.50 to \$4. A few good men wanted.

Common laborers are wanted at \$2.50 in the city, and at other points and on the railroad work can be had at \$2 to \$2.50 per day.

Speaking of the Bridge river diggings in British Columbia, the *Colonist* says: "Whether these mines will ultimately prove to be worthy of white miners or not, it is certain that Indians have, collectively and individually, taken out large amounts of gold. Nuggets of considerable value and number have from time to time been purchased from them, many of which were obtained by crevicing. It might prove of great advantage to the upper country if this section of it were thoroughly and systematically prospected. Gold is not confined to the particular locality now being imperfectly worked by natives, but is found distributed over a large extent of ground, and persevering search may develop surface and deep diggings that will be of immense benefit to the province. It is not at all unlikely that rich quartz may also be discovered in those mountain ranges.