

you can side track your meat train, and no special harm is done. But a blizzard means an enormous outlay in the case of a live stock express, as any one can see. Another important point: When live stock reaches a market, be the price good, bad or indifferent, the stockman must sell. His steers would eat their heads off in a short time in a city yard. But the dressed beef can be packed in a refrigerator warehouse and held until the market rises. Last year the Northern Pacific shipped 1,392 cars of stock from the region in question, which, at an average of 20 head to the car, would give a total of 27,840 beeves. This supply will increase yearly, of course, and the establishments need not run all the time."

This applies as well to any other town on the railroad, which can be made the shipping point for an extensive stock region.

In regard to sheep raising in Northern Montana, an experienced owner recently made the following statement:

"The winter was the best ever known for sheep, and the loss will not exceed two per cent. The weak sheep were, during the severer weather, picked out and fed, and they generally came through in excellent shape. The cattle did not fair so well, though they generally came through in good shape. It is wonderful how much they stand sometimes with absolutely no care during the entire year and left to shift for themselves. The sheep, you know, have more attention, and are herded. Our own business is largely the making of investments in sheep for eastern parties. We procure the stock and place it on a ranch under herdsmen, who, if found capable, are generally eventually given a herd on shares. We have found experienced farmers from the eastern states, and Englishmen and Scotchmen the most reliable. A good many Englishmen are coming into the country to embark in this business.

"Large sheep men, like the Edgers and Wallaces, who have four or five thousand wethers, are preparing to ship them to the Chicago market soon. There is an exceedingly good demand, and prices are high to what they have been. Better stock is being brought in, and the industry is in an exceedingly prosperous condition. There has been a safe and steady profit. We have an instance of a case where an investment of \$1,000 realized \$4,700 in four years. Of course, that is better than the average, but it shows the drift of affairs. We regard sheep raising generally safer and more satisfactory than handling cattle. A man knows where he stands, and can sell out and realize when he wants to. With cattle scattered over the territory, he's a lucky man if he can get out in three years. Our situation gives us advantages over almost any other grazing country, even if we did not possess the advantages of climate and pasturage. We get better rates, thanks to river competition. The outlook was never more flattering than at present, and the stockmen are feeling well after the lucky winter. We do not, as a rule, feed our sheep in the winter, as the range is free from snow, but the winter of 1880-81 was an exception, and the heavy loss of sheep, averaging 20 per cent. throughout the territory, warned growers that they must be prepared. Hence they have put up an ample supply of hay since then, but have not fed a pound. By careful

stacking this hay can be kept four or five years, so that the expense of guarding against severe winters is not heavy. Last year the loss of sheep was not over two per cent. in the territory, which is almost as well as the eastern growers, who house and feed them. Montana mutton has a fine reputation, and we have a good market for it. Men of good horse sense, active and diligent, can get rich in the sheep business in Montana."

The same gentleman estimates the number of sheep in the territory at 600,000, probably 250,000 of them being in Meagher and Choteau counties, and of these a majority are high bred merinoes. The yield of wool last year was 3,000,000 pounds, but as it is only ten years since the first sheep were driven into Montana, he predicts that it will be 50,000,000 pounds per annum in ten years from now.



Boulder having been chosen as the county seat of Jefferson county, a two-story stone court house will soon be erected.

Judith valley, long known as one of the best stock regions in Montana, is now receiving quite an immigration of settlers. Utica is the name of the little town that holds the trade of the valley.

The new railroad town of Townsend, between Helena and Boseman is growing rapidly. Around it is one of the best farming valleys in Montana. Many business buildings and residences are being erected.

Much building is being done in Dillon and several substantial brick structures are in process of erection. Dillon is the center of trade for a large section of southwestern Montana, and as a permanent business point should be built up in a substantial manner.

Missoula has donated to the railroad company 500 lots within the limits of the city, the consideration being the promise of the company to build freight and passenger depots within the city and not outside, as was at first proposed. This action materially increases the value of real estate in Missoula.

Gardiner is the name of the terminus of the branch road running from Livingston to the National Park of the Yellowstone. A large number of farmers are taking up land in the upper Yellowstone valley, who will depend upon Gardiner for their supplies. Its advantages as a terminus and a supply point for the Clarke's Fork mines will also tend to make a prosperous town spring up here.

That portion of the Crow reservation ceded to the government more than a year ago, has been surveyed, and was recently declared open for settlement. It contains 5,000,000 acres of land, some of it excellent for agricultural purposes, and includes the celebrated Clarke's Fork mines, whose richness is well known, but which could not be worked until the Indian title to the land was extinguished.

The hotel now being erected near the mammoth hot springs of Gardiner river by the National Park Improvement Co., will be 400 feet long, supplemented at each end by a wing 200 feet in length. It will be built of wood, be three and one-half stories high, and contain 200 rooms. A piazza promenade will extend around the whole building. The main portion of the structure will be ready to accommodate guests this summer.

The principal improvements being made in Fort Benton this year are, a brick court house to cost \$40,000, an additional school building of brick costing \$30,000, a hospital \$10,000, a three-story brick hotel costing \$15,000. Many other business houses and residences are also being erected. Benton is built almost exclusively of brick and is one of the most substantial towns in the northwest. Real estate sales are large at good prices, many investments being made by non-residents.

Cultivation of the soil in Montana seems to have produced a change in the climate similar to what has been observed in other dry regions. More rain falls and better crops are the result. Land that formerly has been despised because of its dryness is now becoming valuable under the converting power of rain. Prolific wheat fields are being cultivated and astonishing crops raised on land that a few years ago was considered a desert. Land brought under cultivation by means of irrigating ditches, now produces well without their aid.

The "Meeting of the Waters," where the Jefferson, Gallatin and Madison unite to form the mighty Missouri, is one of the most natural commercial centers in the territory. In 1862 a city was founded there by the early miners, but was deserted because no mines were discovered in the vicinity. Later on the valley lands were here and there settled upon, Gallatin City sprang up in the valley and became the county seat, but after losing this honor to Bozeman, languished and declined. The Northern Pacific has just laid out a new town site almost at the point of junction, which has been christened "Gallatin." A vast area of pasture and agricultural land is in the immediate vicinity, and this with the coal and silver recently discovered in the adjacent mountains, will build up a city of considerable importance.

The Blackfoot reservation, occupied by a few hundred Blackfeet, Bloods, Piegans and Assinaboines, stretches from the Dakota line on the east to the Rocky mountains on the west, lying north of the Missouri and Marias rivers, and embraces a tract larger than the New England states. Within its limits are some of the finest agricultural lands and the best stock ranges of the territory. The opening of this immense region of country from Fort Buford to the Rocky Mountains, would bring in a vast tide of immigration, and villages and cities would spring up along the Missouri. The Milk river flows through this tract from west to east for a distance of about 300 miles, with a wide and fertile valley nearly the whole distance. The Bear's Paw and Little Rocky mountains, known to be rich in the precious metals, are securely locked up in this reservation, and will remain so until the Indian title is extinguished.

The Henry Villard Hydraulic Mining Co. has been incorporated in Montana, to work the mines of Emigrant gulch. These mines are situated in that portion of the Crow reservation recently thrown open to occupation.