

MONTANA CATTLE AND SHEEP.

THE present condition of the cattle and sheep industry in Montana is gleaned from the *Helena Live Stock and Mining Journal*:

On January 1, 1884, there were in Montana (estimated) 600,000 head of cattle, valued at about \$21,000,000. During the year 1884 there were brought into the Territory about 100,000 head, which, with the natural increase, about 25 per cent., has brought the number up to 850,000, worth \$30,000,000. Of the cattle shipped into the Territory a large proportion came from Ohio, Illinois, Iowa and other Eastern cattle raising States. The animals are all of good grade, and great attention has been given to the selection of thoroughbred bulls. The total number of cattle is apportioned among the different counties as follows, the value being estimated on the present selling price, \$35 per head:

Counties.	No. Head.	Value.
Beverhead.....	39,307	\$1,375,745
Choteau.....	119,890	4,196,100
Custer.....	189,769	6,642,460
Dawson.....	51,992	1,819,720
Deer Lodge.....	82,800	2,898,000
Galatin.....	59,125	2,069,875
Jefferson.....	36,554	1,280,390
Lewis and Clarke.....	47,855	1,674,925
Madison.....	24,060	842,100
Meagher.....	198,171	6,940,985
Missoula.....	19,132	670,430
Silver Bow.....	4,214	147,490
Yellowstone.....	55,084	1,857,940
Total.....	855,953	\$30,340,850

Over 90 per cent. is owned by fewer than ten companies, the members of which are nearly all home capitalists, and many of them are men who have made all their money in raising cattle in Montana. This industry has been very profitable in the past, and those who owned any considerable bands at the time the railroad reached the Territory became suddenly rich by reason of their herds doubling in value. There are several cases in which men who were poor ten years ago now rank as "cattle kings."

Prior to 1873 there were practically no sheep in the Territory. There are now over 600,000, valued at about \$2,000,000. With the increase of this industry there has come a corresponding improvement in the character of the sheep raised. Montana wool now ranks next to the highest raised in the United States. The winter, as a general rule, being remarkable for absence of severe snow storms, neither shelter nor winter feeding is often required, and it needs no argument to prove that the high and dry ranges of the Northwest form the natural home of the sheep, it being next to impossible to originate disease where, as in Montana, they have the benefit of a sun bath almost every day in the year. There is no moisture to saturate the hoof and produce foot rot, or wet the fleece and invite scab and other skin diseases. Browsing on ranges that are never muddy, the sheep never get their fleeces dirty or matted, and though the animals are rarely washed previous to being sheared, the wool is as clear as that which is washed in many of the States. Profits on wool growing are estimated by many as greater than on cattle raising, and even the more conservative breeders figure a profit of from 25 to 35 per cent. per annum upon all capital invested, and all agree

that the wool clip will pay every item of expense, leaving the increase a clear gain. The loss from all causes is estimated at from 2 to 3 per cent. The annual increase of flocks is placed at 48 per cent., and the increase of 1,000 ewes, two years old and upward, from 80 to 150 per cent., probably averaging 90 per cent. Sheep sell readily at from \$3 to \$3.50 per head. One herder can take care of 2,000 head. Sheep raising is emphatically the poor man's industry in Montana, for, having a free range, timber at hand for construction of sheds and corrals, and, in fact, no capital needed for running expenses after the first season, he is master of the situation if he can command any sum from \$500 upward, for the purchase of a small flock.

VANCOUVER ISLAND LANDS.

IN regard to the chances for settlers to find good locations on Vancouver Island, W. M. Halpenny, Government Guide for British Columbia, says substantially as follows: Alberni is situated at the head of an arm of the sea running in from the west coast of Vancouver Island. This arm is forty or forty-five miles long, and is called "Barclay Sound." The largest ships could sail to the head of this sound. The beautiful valley of Alberni, at the head of the sound, is from ten to fifteen miles long, and on an average of five miles wide. It is almost all timber land, but some of it will be quite easy to clear and bring under cultivation, as it is chiefly alder bottom. There are now twenty-eight settlers in the district, all of whom have a large tract of alder wood in their 160 acres. The soil is black and heavy. There was some prairie land, which the first ten or twelve settlers took up. But there is much timber land still to be taken up, one acre of which is worth three of the prairie land. The Sumas River is a beautiful stream, rising in the mountains and flowing south into the head of Barclay Sound. Steam schooners could ascend this river for two and a half miles, beyond which it is navigable for canoes and boats for ten miles further. Along this river there is a good deal of land to be had. The Government has just completed a trunk road up the valley, and is now seeking the best mail route from Victoria, via Alberni. It will not run oftener than twice a month, or perhaps only once a month at first; but as the valley settles up the service will be increased. To go to Alberni, by way of Nanaimo and the Big Qualicum River, it is 144 miles; 80 miles to Nanaimo, 42 from Nanaimo to Qualicum, then on foot 22 miles on a good trail over the mountain. There is room for ninety or a hundred more settlers at Alberni, and there are several flat sections of land suitable for farming along the east coast of Vancouver Island from Nanaimo to Big Qualicum, where several farmers have settled during the past summer. Between Comox and the mouth of the Campbell River, a distance of eighty-five miles, and on Denman and Hornby islands, there is good land to be had, and also in Cowichan River Valley. Mr. Halpenny is always prepared to give information and aid to intending settlers, and all such are advised to call upon him as soon as they reach Victoria.