

glish draft and other horses have been imported, and have been used in the improvement of the stock of the country.

The principal crop is hops. The first production was by Jacob Meeker, on his Puyallup farm, in 1866, and for fifteen years the growth was confined almost wholly to that valley, increasing, though, from year to year, until it attained great proportions. There are now thirteen hundred acres in hops in King county, thirteen hundred in Pierce, and about thirteen hundred in all other parts of the territory. The production per acre is sixteen hundred pounds, against six hundred pounds in New York, and seven hundred pounds in England and Germany. Failure of crops and pests are common there, but unknown here. The price varies greatly, having ranged from five cents to a dollar and seven cents per pound during the last twenty years. The average price of that period has been twenty-five cents. The average price of the next twenty years will probably not exceed twenty cents. Even at the latter figure the profits are immense. The entire cost, laid down in the Seattle depots, does not exceed eight cents a pound, and with an average profit of twelve cents growers can not help becoming rich.

That farming pays on Puget sound is very plain. In fact, there are few regions where fortunes have been made, as easily and rapidly as by the farmers about here. Fourteen years ago, and again ten years ago, that enterprising and most worthy citizen, Mr. E. Meeker, was bankrupt. To-day he is worth one hundred thousand dollars, and all made on the farm, in hops, dairying, fruit, stock, and increased land values. J. P. Stewart, another most excellent citizen, prominent as a fruit and hop grower, is probably worth as much as Mr. Meeker. T. M. Alwood, of White river, who grows a thousand tons of hay yearly, and stall feeds cattle for the market in winter, is another hundred-thousand-dollar farmer. The Bagley, Squire, Smith and Smithers farms, at Ranton, are worth forty thousand dollars each. The Snoqualmie hop ranch could not be bought for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. It includes three hundred and fifty acres in hops, said to be the largest hop field in the world, and four hundred and fifty acres besides, with hotel, country store, farm buildings, etc. B. N. L. Davis, of Skagit, after making a fortune in hops, is now making another in fancy

stock and dairying. His farm property, all made in seven years, could not be bought for sixty thousand dollars. The Davis brothers, of Dungeness, and the Bishops, of Chimicum, dairymen and stock raisers, are all rich. The oats growers are each worth from ten to forty thousand dollars. But few old farms are sold. They are generally worth so much that not one newcomer in a thousand has money enough to buy them. As there is yet left an immense acreage of government land to be had for the taking, and just as good as the best yet taken, the immigrant will find encouragement, rather than discouragement, in the statement made in the preceding sentence.

Farming generally, is of mixed character, the specialties being indulged in by the few. The great majority keep a little of everything in their line—horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry—and raise hay, oats, garden truck and fruits. What they have for sale they deliver themselves. Some sections seem to be better adapted to producing one thing than are others. Houghton, on the east shore of Lake Washington, in King county, for instance, has shown peculiar adaptation to fruit. Earlier and finer strawberries are grown there than at any other place, and in consequence, the annual production has reached forty thousand gallons, the Houghton growers thereby securing a practical monopoly of the Seattle market. Other fruits do as well at that place as strawberries, and are coming into the market in increased quantities each succeeding year.

The growth of the principal sound towns, and the ever increasing value of the lands in their vicinity, is stimulating a species of small farming. In the suburbs and vicinity of Seattle are two hundred families who gain a livelihood, or a greater part of it, in this way. They keep from two to a half dozen cows, a hundred fowls, and in addition have small, but carefully cultivated, gardens and orchards. In this way, on a few town lots or acres, they live comfortably, accumulate more and more, and in the course of a few years find themselves possessed of a competency. There is room for an endless number of these small farmers. With fertile soil, favorable climate, home market and high prices, with ever-increasing land values, the Puget sound farmers have been greatly blessed, and their speedy accumulation of wealth is not surprising.