

IDAHO'S AGRICULTURAL LAND.

Idaho is a table land broken up by interminable ranges of mountains. The Snake valley is the only large agricultural plain, but an infinite number of minor valleys lie scattered through the mountain regions. The soil of these valleys has been formed in the course of ages by the disintegration of mountain rocks, and is as rich as any soil in the world. But the Snake valley, like most plateaus, is practically a rainless region. Six million acres of its surface consist of a soil as rich as that of the valley of the Nile, but the surrounding mountains drain the vapor-bearing clouds, and its magnificent fertility is reduced to impotence by lack of dew and rain. The pioneer settlers have, by irrigation, made thousands of acres of this valley as fruitful as any in the world, and the yield in corn, wheat, peaches, grapes and sweet potatoes is little less than phenomenal. Of course it will take state and national aid to utilize to the full the vast resources of this valley, for flumes will have to be constructed and vast reservoirs formed on the mountains, whence the charm is to be derived that will turn this apparently desert valley into one of the most beautiful and prolific garden spots in the world. And what is true of the Snake river valley is true of the countless dales and valleys that lie between the multitudinous hills and mountains of Idaho. Wherever water and the plough can act upon the land there the soil of Idaho will blossom into glorious harvest. Fully 14,000,000 acres are capable of being utilized for the finest agriculture. Twenty million more can be utilized for stock, for sheep and cattle will find pasturage on mountain slopes dangerous for even mountaineers to tread. There are some 10,000,000 acres of fine timber, and the remainder is beyond the reach of usefulness to man. In truth, the resources of Idaho are fully equal to those of Indiana and Iowa. Its climate is a bracing, vigorous, health-giving one, such as that which has produced the proverbial manhood of the Swiss or Highland Scotch. December at Boise is as mild as the summer climate of Normandy, and in July is less severe along the whole Snake river valley than in New York or Massachusetts. In fact, the Rocky mountains shelter the plains of Idaho against the wild storms, blizzards and cyclones that fling destruction over the states of the Missouri valley. The Cascades and their various spurs rob, it is true, the winds that blow over from the Pacific of their vapor, but their warmth is still felt, and they are known to the folks of these valleys as Chinooks, or zephyrs of the western wave.—*Spokane Falls Review*.

If the veil hiding the future from us could be lifted for a moment, what a scene of industry would appear before our eyes. Nurserymen all agree, both those who have visited for themselves and those who have been corresponded with, that the hills in the vicinity of Centralia are, without exception, the most favorable spots in the world for raising all kinds of fruits, but more especially prunes. Good, stout, yearling trees planted on these hills will yield fruit in three years, and pay well in four. Tracts are being cleared all around us for orchard purposes, and there is no doubt at all that prunes can be raised in competition with the Italian article, leaving a large margin of profit to the grower. At the farmers' fair at Portland last year nothing was exhibited that would compare with Washington's prunes. Mr. Toles is clearing five acres which he will set out in prune trees, and Mr. Butterworth will also set out two acres. Mr. Charles Kealey now has an orchard of nearly 400 trees, principally prunes. Mr. Orst has 100 prune trees, Mr. Lewis 200, and several others, including Mr. Hanson, who, by the way, was the first settler in this section to plant fruit trees in this vicinity. Prunes will play no mean important part in the

development of Lewis county. We have no bugs nor blight to contend with, as they do in some places, and, curiously enough, the over-bearing of the trees is all the growers dread. Anywhere else but in Washington the strong winds which occasionally sweep the orchards, thin out the blossoms or young fruit until no more remain in the branches than can comfortably be supported by the trees. Here the growers are compelled to shake and reshake the trees, or pick off half the young fruit, or the trees would be borne to the ground. Mr. Butterworth last summer picked a short twig from a plum tree, less than a foot long, which he had been supporting with poles, that had on it fourteen plums, each as large as a hen's egg.—*Centralia News*.

About the first of April a private exploring expedition will leave San Francisco for Alaska. Among those interested in the project are Captain Walter H. Ferguson, Captain John Ross, Captain L. W. Johnson, H. M. Serymser, John Shean and others. A company with a capital stock of \$250,000 was formed a few weeks since. A few days ago the parties interested purchased the steamer *Ferndale*, a twin crew steamer, with a speed of nine knots an hour. She has accommodations for twenty-four cabin passengers and will carry a crew of experienced fishers and a number of mining experts. The expedition is a private affair, organized to explore the unknown portions of Alaska and the islands adjacent, to prospect for mines and minerals, to trade with the natives, to hunt, fish, examine salmon creeks and take possession of cannery sites. The company proposes also to locate and perfect titles to coal beds and gold mines. The party intends to salt down 2,000 barrels of salmon during the fishing season, thereby defraying the expenses of the expedition. The *Ferndale* leaving the exploring party on board will leave San Francisco April 10, and will not return until October next. The route mapped out by the explorers will take them first to Kodiak island, thence to St. Paul island, through Shelikoff straits to the Shumagin islands, Pirate cove, Unga harbor, Uminak pass, Amak island and Mofort's cove. Returning from Behring sea, the expedition will visit the mouth of the Yukon and thence pass down the coast. The journey will be one of about 6,000 miles.

The experiment of tea growing in Yakima county is to be given a trial on the Moxee plantation next year. Mr. Ker was led to this by his brother-in-law, Lieutenant Bell, of the British navy, who, after visiting Yakima and posting himself on the climate, and getting an analysis of the soil, maintained that the necessary conditions were here. He said the same conditions existed in Yakima that made tea culture a success in Japan, and urged that a test be made in this industry. Lieutenant Bell is somewhat of a scientist, and on his judgment Mr. Ker has decided to send for tea cuttings and make the experiment.—*Yakima Herald*.

Articles of incorporation of the Polk county Improvement Company have been filed by John F. Groves, C. C. Coad, D. P. Stauffer, J. C. Lewis, D. B. Riley and M. M. Ellis, all of Dallas, Oregon, the object being to build a motor line from Falls City via Dallas to Salem, with headquarters at Dallas. The amount of the capital stock is \$250,000 and of each share \$100. The officers are as follows: President, M. M. Ellis; secretary, D. P. Stauffer; treasurer, C. C. Coad.

Persons desirous of raising good chickens can procure eggs of all the leading strains of J. M. Garrison, who has a large establishment at Forest Grove, Oregon. He makes a specialty of supplying the demand for pure blood fowls, and it is economy to get the best to be had.