

West Shore

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Saturday, March 20, 1900.

FROM sources where the preliminary throes of immigration are first felt, generally in the form of letters of inquiry, such as are constantly being received by all newspapers, land offices and boards of immigration, it is evident that the northwest will receive this year the greatest immigration in its history. It is an unfortunate fact that all of this new life constantly pouring in is not of a desirable kind. There prevails in the east an erroneous impression that it is only necessary to go "out west" to "get a job" at high wages, or, in some way unknown to them, but which they expect to discover when they arrive, to accumulate a fortune in a few years. Acting upon this idea, many come here without any idea of what they are going to do, and without any means for supporting themselves until they find employment, having, possibly, gone to the extent of borrowing the money to pay their passage. They find, upon arrival, that opportunities for miscellaneous employment are not many, and that unless they can resort to manual labor for a living, their lines are not cast in pleasant places. Even this field of plain muscle is often overcrowded. San Francisco just now finds herself overrun with this class, and how to keep them from starving is a question of public moment. Climate is very desirable, but it is not food and drink. Cheap emigrant fares have had the effect of inducing many people to come west whose presence is of no earthly good to any community. A man should have some definite plan in his mind or else have some means for at least temporary support before he rushes off to a new country. Even a mechanic should have a few dollars at his command. Occasionally, a man of brains, by "rustling," manages to do well without any capital, and so do the same class of men in the east. There is ample room and an inviting field for the man of cap-

ital and ability, and for the industrious farmer. We need to have our vacant land settled upon and brought under cultivation; to have our older farms divided up into smaller holdings and sold to those having the means, the will and the ability to win from the soil the bountiful rewards of intelligence and industry; to have the hand of capital laid on our infant industries until they thrive and expand, furnishing employment to thousands. Let every man study his qualifications for success, and if, having done this, he feel confident he is taking the right step, he will find here a hearty welcome and an open field for the display of his talents and the investment of his means.

News from San Francisco is to the effect that the invasion of Alaska for salmon fishing now going on is in excess of all calculation. Despite the entire failure made by many canneries there last season the impression prevails that fortunes lie in the finny tribes of Alaskan streams, and a great deal of money is being invested. Fully 2,500 sailors and fishermen, and as many more Chinese cannery hands, are being sent north. The Alaskan salmon streams are small, except the great Yukon, which is not yet being fished, and such a wholesale raid upon them must necessarily soon deplete them and render the supply of fish too small for profitable work. However, this season's operations ought to determine the status of Alaska's salmon industry. At present no market calculations can be based upon it, and the possibilities of an enormous product serve to keep the market low, while the supply is not sufficiently certain to warrant canners contracting at figures based upon that fact.

The project of constructing a tunnel through the Sierra Nevada mountains to avoid the snow blockades on the Central Pacific, is declared by officers of that road to be perfectly practicable. Others say that the blockade can be prevented with the new plows if they are properly managed. The tunnel is estimated to cost between ten and fifteen million dollars, which is an enormous sum to be expended on a road now almost hopelessly in debt to the government. Congress will probably not endorse the scheme.

Drug stores in South Dakota have entered into a compact not to keep liquors. If they succeed in defeating the prohibitory law, or modifying it, which is their declared intention, it will go far to prove that many people support prohibitory legislation because they know they can secure what they want at the drug stores. It will be interesting to watch the result of such absolute prohibition as will follow this action of the druggists.