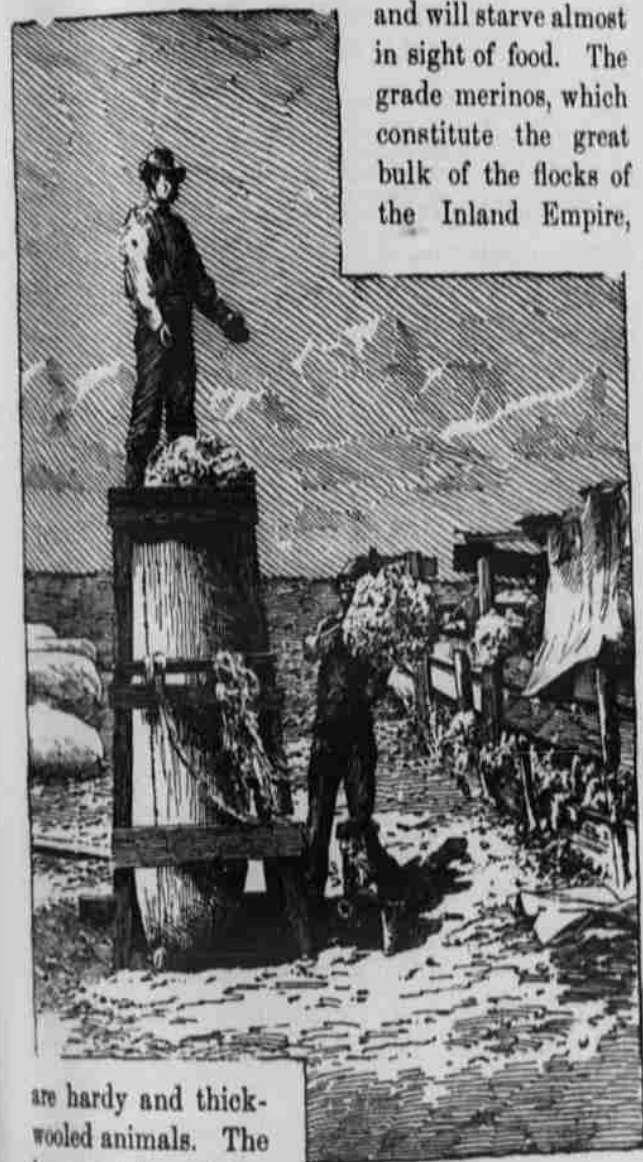


The brutes are too shy of traps to leap the fence, but if they can crawl through a hole in the enclosure they will not hesitate to kill sheep. All these matters the herder has to look after. The most vigilant flock masters, however, suffer some losses, the average being about five per cent. for the whole grazing season.

In winter time the object of the herders is to get their bands where bunch grass may be obtained if the snow is not too deep, and at the same time to be near succor if the grass is covered beyond the reach of the sheep. While in good condition sheep will dig industriously for grass, but when their vitality is low they

give up very easily and will starve almost in sight of food. The grade merinos, which constitute the great bulk of the flocks of the Inland Empire,



SACKING THE WOOL.

are hardy and thick-wooled animals. The long-wooled varieties do not thrive so well

in stormy weather because the wool parts and exposes the sheep to the elements to a degree that is sometimes disastrous. The fleeces of long-wooled sheep also hold rather too much sand to make them very desirable among wool buyers.

The range sheep industry in Washington is on the wane. This is not considered an unfavorable symptom, but rather hailed with delight by the other stockmen and the general farmer. The sheep business depends for its prosperity on the vacant grazing lands. As those lands are occupied and cultivated, the sheep

and other grazing animals are driven away and so, while the sheep interests suffer, the country really becomes richer by reason of the cultivation of the soil that formerly grew only bunch grass. Thousands of sheep are annually taken from this region to Montana, where the farmers are not yet pressing the stockmen. Still the industry in this section is an important and profitable one. Every year new men are embarking in it and few are forsaking it. While the country is rapidly becoming settled, and the area of range land is being restricted in the same degree, it is not at all probable that sheep husbandry on a large scale will ever entirely disappear from the extensive bunch grass lands of Washington and other parts of the northwest. The losses of the past very unusual winter are variously estimated at between twenty-five and forty per cent. However, this has not shorn the sheep business of its attractions, and the bands start out this year on a fair basis and with good prospects of retrieving the misfortunes of the flock owners.

#### ACROSS THE DUNES.

Across the moaning ocean sea fogs roll

To kiss once more to life the sun-parched hills;

The breakers roar aloud; the fog bells toll;

A lonely sea gull's cry the cold air fills.

Across the sandy dunes where lupins, sweet

With golden glory, storm and wind defy,

And bunch grass waves and tangles 'neath the feet,

A man plods wearily and stops to sigh,

And looks with hungry eyes beyond the haze.

The veil of mist he tries to penetrate.

What secret drear is in that famished gaze?

What yearning burns that soul insatiate?

A solitary house the landscape breaks,

And at its door stands one with sorrow worn.

In solitude she waits for death, and aches

Her heart and soul, with grief and longing torn.

What fate has made their pathways cross again?

And yet, though near, their eyes may never meet.

One step he takes. Ah, God! the cry restrain!

His face is turned away—his steps from her retreat.

She sees him not, nor knows he is so near,

Although her soul is fainting for his touch.

Oh, heartless fate that will not heed nor hear,

At times methinks you ask of us too much!

EMELIE TRACY Y. SWETT.