

HOW TO GET SLICE OF LAND

Watch the Indian Reservations as They Open, Is One Way—Some Information as to Flathead Tract in Montana.

Still another good way to get a piece of good land is to take advantage of the liberal terms offered by the government to settlers on tracts reclaimed under the national reclamation act. Mr. Haskins in his next article will furnish a vast deal of additional information for those who are land hungry.

By FREDERICK J. HASKIN.

(Copyright 1909 by Frederick J. Haskin.) Washington, April 17.—The president will issue a proclamation before long announcing the opening of the Flathead Indian reservation. Montana will be opened to entry and settlement probably in the next few days. The opening of the Flathead reservation will be done under special act of congress. A commission appointed by the president is now engaged in inspecting, classifying and appraising all of the lands to be disposed of. There will be five classes of land available for distribution, including agricultural, timber, mineral and grazing. These lands may be obtained under the provisions of the homestead, mineral and townsite laws of the United States. Most of the land is agricultural and can be obtained in tracts of 160 acres each by the payment of an almost nominal price. As there are over 50,000,000 people in this country who would like to get something for nothing, a big demand for the Flathead lands is expected. The method of distribution is to be prescribed by the president. It will be in the nature of a lottery. The Flathead reservation is not a private lottery, but periodically he operates one himself, as will be the case at the Flathead opening. This is not a lottery in its obnoxious sense, however. The government is paid nothing for the privilege of chance in the game. The only expense involved for participants will be the cost of transportation to the office of registration, and a notice of the function of the lottery will be to take affidavits that the applicants for homesteads really wish to live on the farms they hope to obtain from the government.

New Things in Registration.

It is hoped by officials of the general land office that it will be found practicable to provide for the registration of applications for the Flathead lands in the leading cities of the country. That would be the ideal way to throw open valuable Indian lands to the whole people. Then the Jewish immigrant at New York would have an equal chance with the cowboy of the western prairie to get a farm practically for nothing. The expense to the government and other difficulties involved in this plan would be great and it may not be adopted for that reason. If it is not, the plan followed at the opening for the Rosebud Indian reservation, South Dakota, last year, may be adopted. In such case applicants for lands will have to register at various towns where there are land offices in the vicinity of the Flathead reservation.

Rosebud's Overregistration.

Even under such circumstances a great crowd of eager homesteaders is expected. Men and women will pay railroad fare for hundreds of miles with the hope of getting a "hook" in the Flathead opening. At the Rosebud opening about 115,000 applications were filed and only 6000 names were drawn. The last thousand of names were entitled to benefit from the drawing only as possible substitutes for some of the 6000 and odd persons whose names were drawn first. In case they failed to comply with the law and consequently forfeited their lands. Fulfillment of the law includes actual residence on the land, the making of improvements, the partial payments periodically.

Ten Thousand Homes in the Flathead.

The Flathead reservation should furnish homes for 10,000 American homesteaders and it is likely that from 10 to 20 times that number will file applications. The crucial point of the whole affair will occur when the drawing takes place. At the Rosebud opening that important function was performed by two little girls and two little boys. One of the girls was little Dena Rose. "The real Rose of the Rosebud" as she was called, daughter of Mayor Rose of Dallas, S. D., a town situated on the outskirts of the reservation. As these children danced around in the pile of homestead applications, kicking them up with their tiny feet, the emotions of the crowd of applicants present grew alternately hot and cold. The strain was great, as the drawing lasted for several days. The names of the winners were announced by megaphone and on typewritten lists.

Town Lots as First Choice.

Those whose names are drawn first have a right to first choice of the land thrown open and the first choice usually falls upon lands in the vicinity of the townsites laid out by the government. At these town sites small building lots are sold to persons who prefer town life to farming. The applicants for Indian lands include young bachelors and girls, married men, eastern cities and western farmers, and many persons who, having made a failure of life, are anxious to begin all over again in a new country. The losers are a defeated lot at first, but they gener-

ally take their medicine like men and go back to their homes determined to accept the next chance of making good that is offered by a benevolent government.

Millions Yet to Be Opened.

Besides the Flathead reservation, congress has authorized during the past year or two the opening of a number of other Indian reservations. The amount of preliminary work in connection with which is now being carried on in the interior department. The total area of these reservations that are to be opened is over 7,500,000 acres, excluding the Kiowa, Comanche and Apache reservations, Oklahoma, the areas of which are not known. During the current year, the interior department estimates that besides the Flathead reservation, there will be thrown open to settlement at least four or five Indian reservations containing 672,000 acres. Other openings will occur in 1910. It is expected that the system of drawing from the applications received will be followed. It is never again will there occur a big land rush such as happened a number of years ago when the territory of the open country was occupied by a horde of hungry land seekers. In that case and in the case of certain other reservations in the past, huge crowds gathered along the borders of the tract to be opened and at a certain hour on a certain day, and at a given signal started in a race for the best lands. The results of the old system were not satisfactory to any but the speculators who got the most valuable lands. There were free-for-all fights over the question of priority of claims and needless litigation and other complications.

Indian Allotment System.

The opening of an Indian reservation to settlement does not mean, as may be popularly supposed, that the Indians are deprived of their lands. On the contrary, the first step of the department, when congress authorizes the opening of a reservation, is to see that each Indian is given all the land he can use, including a homestead of 160 acres or a smaller tract of land suitable for and probably some grazing and timber lands in addition. The Indian is allowed to choose his own land. As the amount allotted to him is as much as a white settler can obtain from the government, he is not discriminated against despite the ideas of the sentimentalist.

The Total Approximate Area of All Indian Reservations in the United States is About 4,000,000 Acres.

The number of Indians in this country, excepting Alaska and including persons whose blood is mixed with that of the white race, is 200,000, or about the same number estimated to have been found here by Columbus. If all these Indians dwelt on reservations, each would have 150 acres of land. As a matter of fact, probably not more than 50 per cent of the Indians live on reservations, and one third of the total number, members of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes, reside in the present states. That is the largest Indian population in one state. Kansas has the smallest population of Indians, dwelling on reservations, about 1000. The Choctaw Indians in Oklahoma are said to be the richest people on the face of the earth, considering their average wealth. Other Indians are land owners in many states of the Union. The lands in what was formerly Indian territory were allotted to individual Indians, and consequently ceased to be reservations some time ago.

Reservations in 22 States.

There are Indian reservations in 22 states and territories, stretching all the way from New York and North Carolina to the Pacific coast, and from Michigan and Wisconsin to Arizona and New Mexico. Some of the reservations have never been surveyed and their resources can only be imagined. Arizona contains the largest area of Indian reservations, aggregating over 1,000,000 acres, and Montana and South Dakota each have 7,000,000 acres. As compared with these great areas, either of which is equal to the areas of several New England states combined, Kansas contains only 525 acres of Indian reservations, Iowa, 2965 acres, Michigan over 3000 acres, North Carolina 63,000 acres, and New York 87,000 acres.

There are 33 Indian Reservations in California, 28 of them being inhabited by Mission Indians.

The Indians are adapting the government's plan of working for a living, and last year alone they got the government to sell \$5,000,000 worth of their land, so that they could enter other occupations than that of farming. The difficulty of dealing with the red men is increased by the variety of their languages, customs and other characteristics. Recently a request was received at the interior department for a translation of the Indian language. In reply the department stated that there are over 300 recognized different Indian languages and dialects. The policy of opening Indian reservations to settlement is calculated to develop the great west. It is the policy that has been pursued successfully for several generations. Everything from the Atlantic to the Pacific, except the original colonies and Texas, was one time or another public land. Out of it 25 states have grown. Although the public land being entered at the rate of 20,000,000 acres a year, it is still unappropriated and unreserved about 800,000,000 acres in all. Assuming all to be agricultural land, 5,000,000 people may yet obtain homesteads.

Much Vacant Land Left Yet.

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FIRE TRAPS MUST GO, SAYS SAN FRANCISCO

(United Press Leased Wire.) San Francisco, April 17.—Search is being made in the ruins of the St. George tenement house for the bodies of John Burrell and Jerome O'Hara, the only two inmates of the place who have not been accounted for since the fire early yesterday. Six bodies have been recovered from the ruins and it is believed the total death list will be but eight. Three of the bodies taken from the debris have not been identified. The others are those of C. C. Cartwright of Salem, Or., who died after being taken to the hospital; W. H. Johnson, an Arizona miner, and Thomas O'Brien, a local expressman. As a result of the disaster a crusade has been started against buildings of dangerous construction which were erected hastily after the great fire three years ago. The press is united in its protest against this class of buildings and as a result it is probable a number of death traps now existing here will be torn down in the near future.

SAYS \$10 IS TOO LITTLE FOR LUMBER

(United Press Leased Wire.) Vancouver, B. C., April 17.—Lumber prices, which have been stiffening owing to an increasing demand from the Canadian northwest, will be advanced shortly as a result of a conference of the members of the British Columbia lumber and shingle manufacturers association held here yesterday. A member of the association stated today that it would be only a short time before a move in that direction would be made. At present there is no rigid base price, said the lumberman, "but it is generally accepted that \$10 for rough lumber is the rule. This is altogether too low to permit of a profit, and an advance must come."

FIRST OF JAP EXHIBIT ARRIVES FOR A-Y-P.

(United Press Leased Wire.) Seattle, April 17.—The first installment of the big display to be made by Japan at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific exposition was landed in Seattle today from the steamer Tose. It consisted in a large shipment of knockdown furniture and booths for housing the exhibit, the second brought over 10 men to handle the exhibit arrangements prior to the opening of the exposition. The workmen this morning began the erection of booths and display arrangements. They are provided with a large quantity of bamboo and other native products for furnishing a tropical atmosphere about the Japanese building.

NO WHITENASH IS MAYOR'S CRY

Insists on Blame Being Fixed for Accident to Water Mains.

Mayor Lane declared at a meeting of the water board yesterday that he is dissatisfied with the manner in which the water department officials have handled the situation recently brought about by a broken water main under the Willamette river. He said that if information given him is correct, the city should not have been without hot water for a minute; that the city could have been kept up by the simple turning of a gate bar which might have been done in less than two hours. Dr. Rafferty and G. W. Allen of the water board, were inclined to be lenient with the employees. They say that the trouble is over and the matter should be allowed to rest. R. B. Lanson and Mayor Lane, however, insist that all facts shall be ascertained and the blame fixed for the accident. During the discussion of the break in the submerged main and the subsequent mishaps or mismanagement which gave people living on the west side hot water for drinking purposes, Mayor Lane disputed Superintendent Dodge's assertion that the reservoirs on the west side of the river were at all times supplied with water enough to provide adequate fire protection. The Journal published the statement that these reservoirs had fallen so low that the high surface lines were threatened at one time with being cut off from the source of supply. Mayor Lane told Mr. Dodge that he had personally visited the reservoirs and found them to be more than half empty.

MUSICIAN TAKES A SNEAK'S REVENGE

(United Press Leased Wire.) Berkeley, Cal., April 17.—Grave fears are entertained that Mrs. May Wilkins, prominent in the younger set of this city, may lose her sight as the result of the act of a miscreant who has not yet been apprehended by the police. Mrs. Wilkins is the proprietor of a fashionable dancing academy in this city, and last night while a dance was in progress in the hall, which adjoins her apartments, she was rowling near an open window. Climbing to the window by means of a fence, an unknown assailant hurled a large can of pepper into her face. Some weeks ago Mrs. Wilkins discharged one of the musicians in her employ. He made threats of retaliation, and he may be compelled to prove to the police his whereabouts at the time of the pepper throwing.

Save your money and buy a home at Gregory Heights. See ad on page 3.

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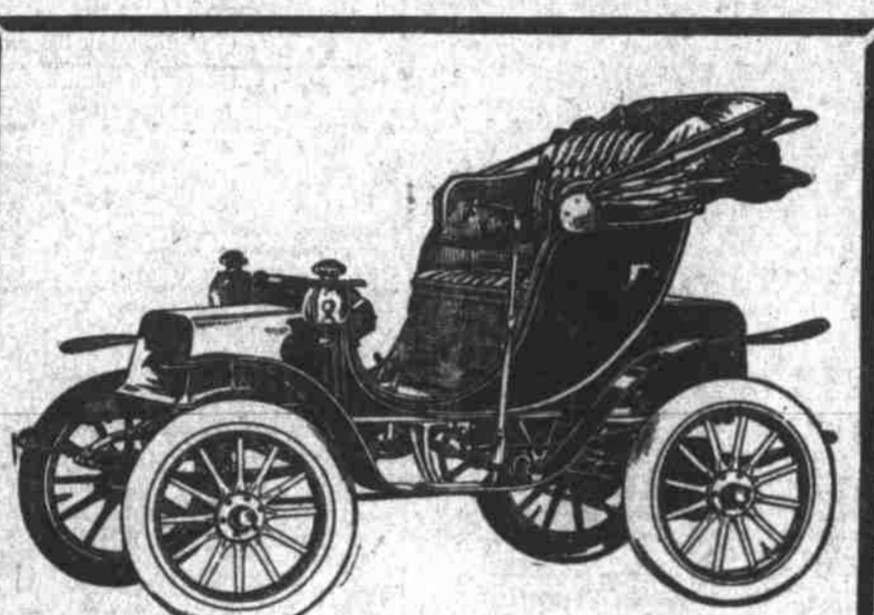
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