



Salem, Saturday, May 10.

THE GRAIN PROSPECT.—There is already some advance in wheat at San Francisco, owing in part to the lessening of freights to Liverpool, and in part to the apprehension of a short crop in California, as there has only been one rain of any consequence there since March 1st, and after the rain three weeks ago, the north wind came and destroyed its good effects in a great measure. There is scarce a possibility that there will be an average crop there, and as a consequence we may expect lower freights next year, and there is reasonable cause to anticipate better prices for Oregon surplus.

SALEM FLOURING MILLS.—R. C. Kinney & Co. have taken a contract with a Chinese firm to supply a cargo of ten thousand barrels, or one thousand tons of flour, to load a vessel for China. A very gentlemanly looking Chinaman is now here attending to the business. Things look lively around the mill, where they are grinding three hundred barrels of flour a day, and receiving and shipping cargoes, and on the river where steamboats wait their turn to load and unload. Tuesday there were five steamers there loading and unloading, besides which five car loads of wheat were received from the railroad, and one thousand bushels came in wagons from the country. It was a brisk day in the milling business.

LECTURE ON GEOLOGY.—Rev. Mr. Bowers, of the M. E. Church, lectured in the University Chapel on Wednesday evening upon geology. The audience were interested, and the attendance was large. Mr. Bowers described in an interesting manner the formation and growth of the American continent as it rose and expanded with the ages, and sketched the ages as they passed, from the barren Azoic period to the creation of man, when the world possessed teeming soil, animal and vegetable life, and changing climates. He pictured the earth as made by the Divine hand, fruitful and beautiful, and recalled to the minds of his hearers, no doubt, the description given in Milton of earth as God's last and noblest creation. These familiar lectures on interesting and important subjects are calculated to do much good.

WE DECLINE.—One day last week, when we received seven new subscribers and remittances for their year's subscription in advance, we also received a note from another subscriber, which laconically said: "Discontinue the WILLAMETTE FARMER." We would like to accommodate the gentleman, but really we cannot comply with his modest request, if only on account of the new subscribers we are constantly receiving. The best we could do was to discontinue his connection with the WILLAMETTE FARMER, and it may be possible that was what he intended.

AN ITEM FOR LANE COUNTY.—R. C. Kinney & Co., of Salem mills, are now receiving a great deal of wheat from the upper valley, and the citizens of Lane county will be interested in the report made of the wheat received from there. Mr. Beatty, the excellent miller at the Salem mills, says the Chile Club wheat now being received from Lane county is superior in quality and makes better flour than the same kind of wheat raised elsewhere, and the grains are plumper and better. This is the more important because experience at this Salem mills has shown that Lane county does not usually produce from other varieties of wheat as good milling quality as some other parts of this valley, it is therefore apparent that the Chile club is a variety which the farmers of Lane county can raise to the best advantage and which the soil there peculiarly favors.

A Word to Minnesota.

Mr. J. J. Fitch, of Linden, Minnesota, sends us a subscription to the FARMER, and desires to know about Oregon, and especially if the Indians are troublesome. As to the Indians, we can assure him that we are in no more danger from them than he is, and even should the Indians on our frontiers become hostile, we are as safe here in the Willamette Valley as if we lived in Minnesota.

Eastern Oregon has tribes settled through it, on reservations, and on the upper Columbia river there are some indications that the Indians are discontented and disposed to be dangerous. Even in case they should commence hostilities the whites can easily subdue them, but there is little danger of an outbreak if the government acts firmly and decidedly.

There is a general cry of hard times here at present, and as a consequence land is cheaper now than it will be hereafter. As to "hard times," this is really a country where a man of common industry can make his way with uncommon ease, and land is cheaper here than in any Eastern State possessing the same advantages. Oregon has really excellent advantages, and the valleys west of the Cascade mountains are well populated, with thriving towns and villages, good farms and homes, churches and schoolhouses in abundance, and even possessing advantages for a thorough classical education. No better society can be found anywhere.

We had a call lately from a very intelligent gentleman from Minnesota, who says he has wintered there for sixteen years, and has had to feed his stock two-thirds of the year. He says two-thirds of the people there would like to get away if they could. He attempted to leave early in January, and found the railroads blocked with snow and went back and staid at home two months.

Here, we have had little frost and no snow all winter; the ground might be white some few times, but the snow melted as fast almost as it fell. Instances where people wish to leave Oregon are rare, for, with exception of sometimes excessive rains in the winter, our climate is delightful and healthful, and our rains insure a certainty of abundant crops.

Already strawberries are ripening, cherries and plums are well set, and gardens look beautiful. We have had flowers in bloom all winter, and grass green and abundant, so that cattle have done well.

It is only fair to state that this has been an unusual winter. We do occasionally have cold spells of short duration, but never any long continued excessive cold weather. Snow-storms come about once in four or five years.

Eastern Oregon has a great section of unsettled country open for settlement, and offers unusual inducement for stock raising, and sheep do well there. The agricultural districts are not general, but confined to a few valleys and to the occasional creek bottoms. There is a variety of country in our State, and it offers a great field for labor. All we need is population and encouragement for home industries.

P. S.—Since the foregoing was written, we have reliable information that there is no danger to be apprehended from the Indians on the upper Columbia. Rev. J. H. Wilbur, Indian Agent at Simeco reservation, a brave and energetic gentleman, has travelled five hundred miles among the various bands reported to be in a hostile mood, and reports that there is no foundation for reports of that nature. The Indians were never more peaceable, and the settlers do not apprehend any trouble or danger.

MERINO SHEEP.—An Illinois correspondent of the *National Live-Stock Journal* says he began breeding Spanish Merinos 47 years since with 40 imported ewes, the average clip being 13 pounds of well washed wool. Last year his flock of 800 ewes and lambs gave an average of 9 1/2 lbs. of well washed wool, with less hair than the imported stock had.

Shall We Make our own Pork?

It will sound strangely to the world to hear that here in Salem we import bacon and lard from the East, but it happens to be the truth nevertheless. A few years ago we exported bacon, hams, and lard to San Francisco, and ten years ago the pack trains and teams to all the mining regions to the east went loaded with supplies of the same kind, but those times have passed away, and we have become importers instead.

Evidently the high prices of grain for the past few years induced the farmers to sell their wheat instead of making it into pork; that naturally led to a reduction of the number of stock hogs in the country, so that we are now informed that even if we desired to make our wheat into pork we have not the hogs to feed it to.

It is readily apparent that we should make pork packing and curing a regular branch of business in this State; we should see to it that the business is kept up to some extent so that we can always have abundant stock when we need it. Oregon has a good name for its pork products, when they are well cured, and it is worth something to maintain that good name, and we cannot maintain it without we keep up a regular supply. The chances are that every farmer can afford to fatten a certain number of hogs each year, and that in the worst year he will get full price for the feed and labor expended, and that at least half of the time he will make a large profit over that. It is a business that amounts to a certainty always, with the chances that there will be a handsome profit beside. The subject is a good one for farmers to discuss.

To make good pork we need to have good material, and there is economy and profit in having the best fattening breeds to work on. If our present stock of hogs is light, now is the very time to make an improvement of the breed, and it should certainly be done. Several enterprising gentlemen have imported the finest blooded animals known in the world for the purpose of improving the breeds of swine here, and their efforts should be appreciated and reasonably rewarded.

We learn that such efforts have not received much encouragement, and we feel like urging the framers to improve the opportunity and commence to raise good swine. There is money in it, and there certainly would be much pleasure in possessing animals of better grade, for a full blooded Berkshire is a handsome creature as well as one that yields a profit.

MAGAZINES.

The *Astorian* for May is received, and has fully the usual number of beautiful illustrations. This delightful magazine makes no attempt to keep up with the times, and cares nothing for news or gossip of the day. It offers light literature of a graceful kind, and its illustrations are unique and choice. Besides a number of charming pieces and beautiful landscapes, the present number offers some views of elegant structures lately erected in Chicago, to prove how magnificently the burnt district is being rebuilt. The large pages of the magazines offer opportunity for illustrations of a finer grade than can be given in any other of our American magazines.

Scribner's for May is also received. "Cuban and the Cuban Insurrection," is the title of an interesting article furnished with appropriate illustrations. Stanley, who discovered the whereabouts of Dr. Livingston in Central Africa, furnishes "Four great African travelers," which is also illustrated. Dr. Holland's story, "Arthur Bonnicastle," is continued, and there is the usual variety in the other contributions and in the editorial department. *Seibner's* has a steady increase of popularity and stands in the first rank as a magazine of a class, too, that differs from all others of the present day, so that it occupies a distinct field, and one that it ably fills.

THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE.

There has been a continual outcry for a quarter of a century back against the franking privilege. It has been a hobby with the present Postmaster General, ever since he has been in office, to declaim against it and urge its abolition, and at last Congress has abolished it, and after the first of July no free matter will be transmitted through the mails. The same Congress which voted itself sixteen hundred thousand dollars additional back pay and made the Congressmen salary seven thousand five hundred dollars a year, and which treated corruption and bribery so tenderly, was so honest and conscientious and economical that it abolished the franking privilege. This is sufficient ground for suspicion that it was the act of demagogues, and so we consider it.

The franking privilege was most undoubtedly abused, and there is not the least reason to doubt that these abuses needed correction. For instance, the law could have been amended to require prepayment of all postage to members of Congress and the Departments, and to restrict the privilege within reasonable bounds, while it could have allowed members of Congress free communication with their constituents and have allowed the circulation of all public documents, through the mails, free. As it is, the people will receive no documents, or but few; the information gathered in the Agricultural Department, Patent Office, and Smithsonian Institute, will be lost in great measure to the people, and government will not save enough by the abolition to make any appreciable difference in the postal receipts and expenses.

It is not probable that the service will be done one dollar cheaper by the transportation companies, for the contracts will not be cheapened on account of the abolition of franking. The government will save little or nothing by not having to handle the free matter, because it will lose as much time in handling stamps and affixing them to all official business, as would compensate for the handling of free mail matter.

It is true that Congressmen have made the abolition of the franking privilege an excuse for the raise in their salaries to the magnificent sum of seven thousand five hundred dollars per annum, but it remains to be seen how much of it they will expend for postage. We venture to predict that their constituents will hear less often from them now that correspondence entails expense.

These virtuous Congressmen found it necessary to do something to cover up their tracks, and with some possible idea that it might act like charity, to cover a multitude of sins, they abolished the franking privilege. We freely predict that they will have to do something to restore the features of it that were of value to the people, and we as freely predict that, while they have made the abolition of the franking privilege an excuse for the rise in the Congressional salary, they will forget to lower the salary when they restore the franking privilege.

We don't see any way the government is to gain anything by the movement, save in compelling newspapers to prepay their papers sent to subscribers, and to pay postage on exchanges. Heretofore we have been treated with liberality in respect to exchanges. This brilliant idea of making us pay postage, must have been the last device of some great mind, to secure the payment of the national debt.

A SUBJECT FOR PRAYER.—An iron-side preacher in the upper country lately became very eloquent in prayer. He thanked the Lord for health and strength, food and raiment, and for rain and sunshine; for the rain, because it watered the earth, and caused seed time and harvest, and made the rivers. He thanked God for the rivers and their sources, for they were a benefit to all men—even to the poor. He gave especial thanks to the Lord for the Willamette river, because he had put in the

heart of the people to return to it and do their business there as of old, and to abandon railroads, corporations, and monopolies, because the Lord knew they were evil and came from the devil, and He naturally hated them.

OREGON AS IT IS.—Those who have an interest in sending abroad facts concerning our State can well afford to subscribe for the WILLAMETTE FARMER, which occupies a distinct field in Oregon journalism as a representative of our material interests and not as a mere partisan newspaper. It derives its chiefest value from the contributions furnished the paper by the people of the State.—"Oregon as It Is" is also specifically described in the pamphlet, so entitled, just published by Ferry, Woodward & Co., Portland, and written by W. L. Adams, which, with the exception of some accidental inaccuracies in figures, is a plain statement of the character and resources of our State. The price is so low that any one can afford to purchase as many as he needs to make his friends at the East thoroughly aware of all important facts. The value of such dissemination of facts cannot be easily known, but it is like sowing seed to secure a harvest.

The pamphlets spoken of above can be had at the book-store of Mr. H. D. Boon, in Salem.

OLD FASHIONED WOOD PUMP.—Mr. Fisher, of the firm of Fisher & Haas, pump makers of Salem, has gone out to dispose of the pumps made by the firm. His present expedition is to the farmers over in Polk county, and he will visit other sections of this valley in future. They have made about two hundred pumps during this winter, to have them on hand when the water in wells shall be low enough to put them in. This pump is on the most improved pattern, is of Oregon material entirely, and made here in Oregon; it is the cheapest pump that can be procured and very convenient to use. It is as well suited to barn and stock wells, as for domestic purposes. The same firm are prepared to furnish wooden water pipe, with iron couplings, which will be firmly banded. Those who wish to lead water from springs to their barns or houses will find this pipe the cheapest and best to use.

This pump and pipe will be found advertised in our columns, and we take pleasure in commending them as articles of home manufacture.—The company's factory is connected with the saw mill on the levee, and is supplied with machinery for the best and cheapest manufacture.

A DISGRACE TO OREGON.—If any of our readers will go into one of the ordinary markets of Salem or Portland where vegetables are sold, they will find on sale there articles raised in California and imported to supply the Oregon trade. We can raise pie plant abundantly, but our dealers import it from California because there is no reliable supply at home; we can raise cauliflower as well as it can be raised anywhere, but we do not do it, preferring to send to California for it. We even find barrels of cucumber pickles for sale in the stores here, brought from California, and also canned fruit, that we can supply at home, is for sale in every grocery store. All this while our people are complaining of hard times and money is so scarce that we can hardly do business. There is good reason why Oregon should be scarce of money, when we send abroad for our wagons, agricultural implements and most of our wooden ware.

It is simply a discredit to our State if we cannot supply our own markets with vegetables in the proper season. There is a constant drain of money out of Oregon, to purchase things we could well raise at home if we had common sense ideas of economy. This valley could support twenty-five thousand more inhabitants on the money we send abroad for articles that we ought to raise at home.—There seems to be a good opening in this country for more market gardens.