



Salem, Friday, Feb. 2, 1877.

BOARD OF IMMIGRATION.

With his accustomed energy Mr. A. J. Dufur has set about the work of reorganizing an Immigration Bureau for Oregon. The late Board of Immigration was a great assistance to new comers, both in disseminating information concerning our State and its resources, and also in assisting the immigrant with valuable information after his arrival here. Mr. Dufur anticipates a large immigration hither in the Spring and having assured thousands who were at the Centennial that they would find great assistance, on reaching Portland, from the local Board of Immigration, he sees that the resignation of the Board will work great disappointment to new comers, and be a detriment to the interests of our State. It is much to be regretted that the Legislature did not show a proper and reasonable recognition of the valuable services rendered by the Board and make some provision for its maintenance. The best friends of the last Legislature must confess that it showed a very niggardly disposition in respect to very important interests. It is very proper that the State at large should protect the public interests, and at least partially aid the cause of immigration, which constitutes too great a burden when made to depend entirely upon the liberality of individuals. Probably Mr. Dufur understands what is necessary to be done in this respect better than any one else and we trust there will be a general support given to the work he has undertaken. A little help contributed from many persons will insure all the means needed to effectually assist the work of immigration, and we hope that such an interest will be shown as to prove that the people at large do not agree in sentiment with some well known members of the late Legislature, who argued to us that we already have too many people in Oregon, as many as can be prosperous and happy, and that our best days were in the past when every man's stock had a thousand hills to roam upon. Such a man ought to have been born before the flood,—or just after it, when he could have had a whole continent to himself.

THE OREGON WINTER.

In the last days of January the rains have again set in with an evident intention to furnish us all the water needed, and, in truth, the ground had become so dry in many places that rain was needed. Those who may read the FARMER elsewhere than in Oregon, will like to know some particulars of our seasons, we will recapitulate the weather items since Fall. There had been a few showery spells in September, but no heavy rains until the middle of October, when sufficient rain fell to put the ground in good order for the plow and to raise the Willamette to a fair boating stage. Rains prevailed, more or less, though the month of November, though not to great excess. December was almost clear of rain-fall, though the weather was foggy and frosty until about the twentieth; then a little rain. January has been as delightful a month as could be desired; most of the time with frost, though the mercury has not been below 22° at any time, and only once or twice that low. We have had no ice on the water to give skating, except a few days. There has been no snow, and the ground has never remained frozen, except in the shade. The roads have been good and plows have run nearly every day during the Winter, except when hindered by the rain. The plowed ground has not been frozen to hinder work and when frozen hardest the plows could always work well in the afternoons. It is pronounced the most delightful winter ever known, even in this region where winters are so unusually mild, and from the reports of frosts and drouths in California, will compare favorably with the winter season there. As a result of this favorable season our farmers have their work pushed forward so that their spring plowing is well advanced while spring is still one month off. The outlook seems favorable for a remarkable yield over a greatly increased acreage, and while the people here complain somewhat of hard times at present, they look forward to the coming year with sanguine hopes of a very prosperous season, both as to yield of grain and price to be received for their surplus. We unhesitatingly believe that in

all respects the State of Oregon possesses advantages surpassed by no section of the earth, and equalled by very few, if indeed by any other countries.

The Presidential Question.

The electoral compromise bill, that was published in the FARMER last week has already passed both houses of Congress and received the approval of President Grant, and general satisfaction prevails among the people of the United States that a tribunal has been created that must command the respect of the country and give confidence that the questions at issue have been decided fairly and impartially as is possible. Whatever the result may be, the public mind will accept it as honestly and fairly reached, and whoever is inaugurated President, there will be but little disappointment and no excitement, except among defeated place-hunters. The people desire a fair settlement of the Presidential question, more than they want either one candidate or the other to succeed.

OBSERVATIONS—No. 3.

BY NEWT. HIBBS.

Wild oats are the source of no little annoyance to the farmers of the Willamette. This pest has spread fearfully in the last ten years. In 1867 there were but few outside of the river bottoms. Now there are but few fields of old land that are not thickly set. These oats, however, are not as bad as some noxious weeds in other States. They make excellent pasture, and "wild oats hay" is preferred by many to the best timothy. They do not grow on land that is not cultivated, so they are no help to pasture land which is not plowed. To raise hay from them it is necessary to plow the land after each crop. So far as is generally known, all attempts to exterminate them have failed. If any field once thoroughly set has ever been clear of them, it has not been reported. Such information would be thankfully received. Every year the yield of grain is greatly diminished by wild oats. Wheat is smothered so as to produce but light crops, and at the same time the land is impoverished as much as though the whole of the heavy crop was wheat.—The question naturally presents itself: What are we to do? We can't kill them. Summer-fallow has no effect.—They will remain in the ground any number of years, and will not grow unless turned up by the plow. Then only the few which are just near enough to the surface to receive the proper warmth, moisture, and light, will grow. All of the balance of the heavy crops which have shattered out in several years, remain, mixed, thro' the ground, where they have worked themselves into every crevice, many inches below the surface. To destroy them would take an indefinite length of time. We must learn to raise grain on "wild oats land." This is done most successfully by thoroughly pulverizing the land, sowing late in the spring. But we can't sow all of our grain late. Grain sowed on freshly-worked, clean land, any time in the year, when it will grow, and not be checked by unfavorable weather, is never injured materially by wild oats. Like other spontaneous growth, they grow but lightly in well-set fields of wheat or oats. Sorrel is another pest with which we have to contend. It, like wild oats, was sown here in an early day, and has spread all over the country. It is found on the summit of both the Cascades and the Coast Range mountains, far from roads or trails, supposed to have been carried by birds or wild animals. It is supposed by some that sorrel cannot be killed. They say can hang it on the fence all summer, and will continue to grow. This is a mistake, however. It can be killed by plowing. A large field here was cleared of it by summer-fallowing. It was first plowed late in spring after the sorrel was in bloom. After this it was worked in the usual way. Others report success from the same plan. When summer-fallow is pulverized finely, it perhaps retains too much moisture, and keeps the roots alive. Spring or late winter grain suffers most from sorrel. When sorrel is thick enough to form a sod, it is impossible to raise a good crop. Sorrel land should be heavily harrowed. The cultivator is good.—The large roots drag on the shovels and are worked to the top of the ground, when they will die if the weather is very dry. French pink is spreading in some parts of the State. This weed was planted in flower-gardens for its beauty. It has proved to be a nuisance, and has almost taken some good farms. It

may not be hard to destroy, but some of our farmers are being puzzled with it. Would like to know the best way to manage, if any of the readers of the FARMER have experience, for the benefit of friends. McMinnville, Oregon.

Strawberry Culture.

ED. FARMER: One of your correspondents asks how to cultivate strawberries. They should be set out in the fall as soon as their is rain sufficient to moisten the ground, to be certain of a good crop the following summer. The rows should be three feet apart; the plants eighteen inches apart in the row. As soon as the ground is in condition to work, let that be in February, March, or April, take your hoe and give them a good cleaning out; hoe up all the weeds, but if you are so lucky as to have no weeds, stir the ground between the rows; hunt out every weed and stir the ground about the plants. Keep all the weeds hoed up, and the ground loose, so that the dews of heaven can penetrate, and the rays of heat will permeate. They will soon be so established that they will shade the ground to such an extent that they will not suffer from drouth. All runners should be cut off. 2. Should the tops be cut off in the fall, and the ground spaded around them? No; by so doing you injure your plants so much that you would get no berries the first season. The tops of the strawberries are sufficient covering for any ordinary winter. I doubt whether it is necessary to cover strawberry plants in any winter, if you have done your duty in the cultivation. My experience is that, if a man has barren strawberry plants, it is his own fault. Nature's work is perfect, and it is left to us to arrange these plants to make them fruit, and that plentifully. Now, Mr. Editor, I think I can tell how barren plants may be avoided. You must have two kinds, and if you have four or five, all the better. Have each kind by itself. Now commence to set your plants at one corner; set two or three of a kind until you set your last plant, and you never will regret the labor bestowed on your strawberries. I have about two thousand plants set, and not a barren plant. Last summer I gathered about one quart of the largest fruit that we could find to send to Iowa for exhibition. We found one berry that measured four and a half inches in circumference; it did not take many to make a quart. Every farmer should have a rod or two of ground for strawberries; by so doing, he will save himself and the women folks from the burning rays of the sun, for what family does not thus expose themselves in gathering strawberries. The kinds I have are Jucunda, Nicanor, Charles Downing, and Wilson's Albany. I think the Jucunda and Nicanor the best. I will say, though not in the right place, that after the plants are done fruiting take a grubbing-hoe and dig up the space between the rows.—Kill all the weeds you can in the fall. Jan. 20, 1877. H. B. M.

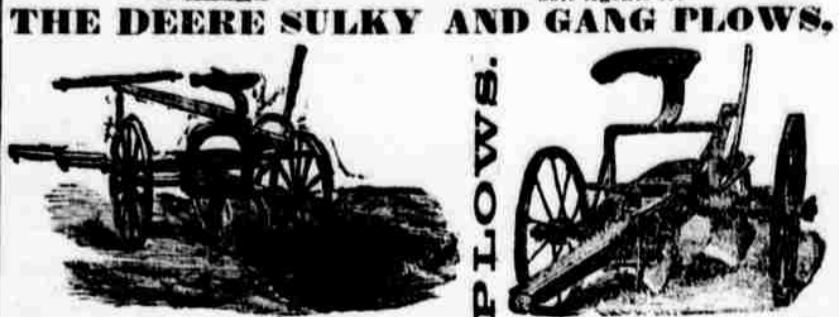
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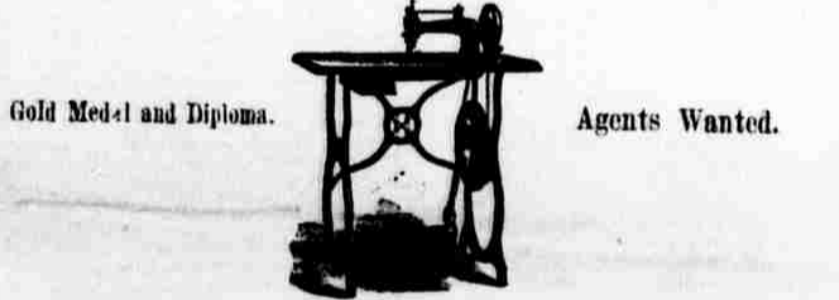
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