

A Salomite Abroad.—No. 4.

In describing farming the narrow canyon bottoms in Eastern Oregon, I would not wish to convey the idea that such are the only situations in which farms are made, or that the bottom lands on the streams are invariably very narrow. That is the rule in regard to what I saw, but the valley of Rock Creek, East of the John Day river, is, to some extent, an exception. For a little distance from the latter river Rock Creek canyon is narrow, and the soil near it sterile, but about a mile up it widens some, and the hills come down low, and the rich alluvial belt is converted into a string of farms, which, as homesteads for large stock-raising interests, are very valuable. Some of these locations have changed hands at what is deemed fair rates, for good wheat lands in the Willamette valley. I examined a place of 200 acres, on this stream, that is offered for sale by the owner, Esdras Pinclose, (alias French Charley). There is from seventy to eighty acres under grain crops. Frame house and barns constructed and partly paid for. The property covers enough of the meadow of the creek bottom to give good homesteads to three or four families. The land is held at \$5,000, or, with crops, farming implements, and 450 head of cattle, \$15,000. On this farm there is an accumulation of straw rather rudely stacked, covering about one acre. The oldest stack, the owner informed me, was put up in 1867. A few handfuls pulled from the side showed it to be bright and sweet. From this and other stacks I examined I conclude there is no occasion to build costly barns in this portion of Eastern Oregon in order to save hay or straw for winter feed.

From this portion of Rock Creek I went Southward to the head of Butte Creek, where the head branches of that stream are fed by the springs of the Northwest spur of the Blue Mountains. The distance across the plateau to Fossil post office amongst the foot-hills, is about forty miles; North to the Columbia river, eighteen miles. The soil on all this upland is of the same light sandy loam as that lying between the Deschutes and John Day. The summer climate, I judge from the vegetation, to be even drier—so that my opinion of the value of these lands for grain farming is less favorable.

As the plain rises to the foot-hills of the Blue Mountains, however, it changes gradually for the better. The bunch grass thickens, a variety of other plants begin to attract the eye growing more numerous as you ascend, until, when you reach the top of the lowest range of hills, you have every indication of a soil well adapted to stock-raising and general farming. Water is more abundant, timber for fuel, fencing and building, easy of access. Very much of this country, extending Eastward across the head branches of Thirty Mile, Rock, and Willow creeks, can never be cultivated, so this is enough to insure that the country as a whole will always be pre-eminently a stock country. But the arable land is of sufficient quantity to admit much closer neighborhood than the dry plains to the Northward, and the grain raised on these foot-hill farms will find considerable local market amongst those dwellers on the plains who pursue stock-farming exclusively. Stock-raising too can be pursued, combined with dairying, with more comfort and perhaps more profit, for though more snow falls on the hills than on the plains, the settlers here say the snow never crusts on the former, so that whichever way the wind blows, the hill side against which it strikes becomes clear of snow so soon that stock can almost always get to the ground. When the warm and kindly Chinook will kiss the hill-tops and the grass will be green and growing, while the plains below are yet covered with crusted snow; and again this same unstable Chinook will favor the plain with his first visitations. But the settler amongst the hills has building and fencing materials; he can erect shelter, put up feed, and build calf lots; his stock will have a home to go to in winter, where feed and shelter, cheaply procured, will give them an attractive welcome. This will be more costly and more difficult on the plains. Many who are now in the cattle business are beginning to be discouraged in view of the fact that, do all they can, should such a winter as that of 1862 come upon them, to collect their cattle from the almost boundless range and get them to food and shelter would be a hopeless task. To the man who craves the excitement of risk and chance in his business, this condition of things may be satisfactory, but most men prefer a greater security. This I think explains the fact that the most of the cattle-drivers I met beyond the Deschutes river were willing to sell out.

I frequently met parties of three, four, or five young men, out on branding expeditions, each usually with a spare horse and one to pack the camp equipment. They examine the cattle as they ride over the country, and collect all they can find upon which they have the right to put the owner's brand. They ordinarily drive to the nearest corral, where the branding and marking is done, without regard to whether it is the establishment of one of the men they are branding for or not. Sometimes they find a few excellent inconvenient distances from any corral. In that case the calves or yearlings are lassoed, marked, and branded on the open plain. Of course cattle so treated have no home and a man on horseback is only soon to be feared and escaped from if possible. The effect of this system on the men who follow it cannot conduce to the highest form of civilization. As a nursery for cavalry soldiers, it would be hard to beat, for they daily go over ground that would make a trained fox hunter or a sleepy chaser wince. The work calls for the full exercise of eye and limb. The effect is natural—these young men are quick of eye and limb of limb. They like to be addressed as gentlemen, and when spoken to by me were always civil and obliging. But still I don't think their superabundance of gentleness would spoil them for making good soldiers. The incessant riding required, the contacts between them and the animals

they subject to their uses, the scattered condition of their property, and the opportunities thus given for those who have lax views on the subject of means and means, will almost certainly give rise to a class of rough, reckless men, if nothing worse. I think, therefore, that man who intend to keep capital permanently invested in cattle-grazing in the bunch grass country, should begin to think if it is not possible to adopt means for training their stock near some locality where their employees are enabled to enjoy more largely the civilizing influence of home. One means to this end might be the fencing of calf lots in size according to the number cattle kept, and let the cows to their calves at regular times, even though no part of the milk is taken for butter or cheese-making. In many localities the butter or cheese that might be made would be too important an addition to the income to be neglected. I may recur to this again, when I give my views of the bunch grass land as a wool-growing country.

LOCKY—On the stage road, between Gervais and Salem, May 27th (Sunday), a fine double black shawl. If the finder will leave it at the FARMER Office, or give information where it may be obtained, he will be rewarded for his trouble.

Douglas County Wool.

OAKLAND, JUNE 3, 1877. ED FARMER: In your report of the wool market of June 1st, I find these remarks: "It must be remembered that the flocks of Marion county average a higher grade than the rest of the State, and quotations are therefore higher here than elsewhere." Now, the wool-growers of Douglas county do not admit the superiority of Marion county wool, but on the contrary contend that Douglas stands ahead of any locality on the Pacific Coast for fine wools of the different varieties. In proof of this, and to show that buyers understand the situation, let us compare the prices paid here and the quotations in the FARMER and Oregonian. For a number of years our wool has sold from 2 to 4 cents higher than your valley wool at Salem or Portland. Wool opened at Oakland on May 23 at 25 cents, the FARMER quotes wool that week at 18 to 22 cents, yesterday, June 2, buyers were offering 27 cents; the FARMER same day quotes at 23, and some extra lots at 24 cents. Now the FARMER and Oregonian has long since ceased to be of interest to the Douglas county wool-growers as far as their market reports are concerned.

Since comparisons are in order, I would state that Douglas has three times as many sheep as Marion county, hence we can offer greater inducements to buyers. There is some Eastern buyers in this valley now. They are riding through the county examining our sheep and wool, and I don't think it will go through California houses this year.

Wool.

The wool market strengthens, as we predicted several weeks ago would be the case. Thursday morning, as we go to press, 25 cents is offered at Salem for good wool, sound, from healthy sheep, of at least average fineness.

A correspondent from Douglas county writes as to prices offered there, but all we can say is that the wool from the finest flocks of Marion in this vicinity, which we believe are as fine as can be found in the State, has sold here at 25 cents, and no higher has been paid that we can hear of. The advantage of selling large quantities, from large flocks may be illustrated by the Douglas county market, but we cannot explain the difference even on that account.

The Wheat Market.

The wheat market remains as it has been for weeks past, no change of condition either at Liverpool or in the chief markets of our own coast. It is supposed that the home supply is about all marketed as there is none coming in. Our people are therefore not personally interested in the market, except as far as it indicates the future prospects, and it seems safe to conclude that wheat will bear a good price after harvest, by which we mean a dollar a bushel or more, all through this valley. That, if the prospect of abundant crops is verified, will insure prosperity to all classes of men in Oregon. Late and abundant rains give assurance that all grain and hay crops will yield largely.

European Grain Market.

LONDON, June 5.—The Mark Lane Express in its weekly review of the corn trade says vegetation is very backward, having made little progress under the harsh weather which prevailed in May. It is probable the average under wheat is larger this year than in 1876, owing to more favorable seed time, but the harvest will entirely depend upon the future of the weather which up to the present has not given promise of large yield. The growth of a crop of wheat has been retarded. The stock of English wheat in farmers' hands is now very low as the recent rise in value was too tempting to be resisted, and a majority of holders sold out freely. As soon as symptoms of reaction set in the offerings at Mark Lane and in the country have been very meagre, and in spite of the downward tendency of prices holders of the little remaining wheat steadfastly refused to sell at less money, feeling confident that the annual scarcity would shortly bring quotations up again. As buyers have not been of the same idea, business has been almost at a standstill, and sales could only have been made at a decline of 3d per quarter. After two consecutive weeks of large imports of foreign wheat little else could be looked for in trade at this season of the year. The course of business at Mark Lane until Friday last, when a steadier tone was apparent, has been listless and uncertain, prices being fully 1½ per quarter below the recent highest point. Considerable uncertainty prevails as to the future course of the wheat trade. On one hand we have an exceptionally light stock of English in farmers' hands, which would indicate the probability of increased demand upon foreign, and the consequent enhancement of a value. On the other hand the fact of a large decrease of supply in America seems likely to be counterbalanced by an extensive outward movement from Germany, North Russia and India. Military operations in the East having been much impeded by the prolonged wet season the war continues without any apparently decisive action on either side, and for the present influence of politics has ceased to be felt in trade. The blockade of the Black Sea has tended to increase shipments from the Baltic, but beyond this business has been little affected.

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Summons. In the Circuit Court of the Six of Oregon for the County of Marion. George A. Eds and Rhoda Eds his wife, D. P. Campbell and Mary A. Campbell his wife, M. L. Mumpster and Mary A. Mumpster his wife, John G. Wright and Caroline M. Wright his wife, Charles C. Langston and Mary Langston his wife, and James C. Brown and Narcissa Brown his wife, Plaintiffs, vs. FR.

Notice. I HAVE A HOUSE AND LOT THAT I wish to trade for land in the country. Title good. May 14, 1877. J. HENRY BROWN.

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