

The Bloomfield Times.

HOUSE, FARM AND GARDEN.

We invite communications from all persons who are interested in matters properly belonging to this department.

Farms and Free Homes in Kansas.

A writer in the Chicago Times has given the following relative to the fertility of Kansas lands:

Let the traveler throughout Kansas who from twenty-five to thirty years ago was familiar with the facts of agriculture in the now great states of Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, with their present large population of wealthy farmers, contrast the comparatively slow rewards of years of severe toil required in clearing those rich farms and in realizing their enhanced values, with the magical results of three or five years of well-directed effort in this young and marvelous state. I am not old enough to fall into the category which the Roman poet describes as "laudator acti temporis," praiser of the times gone by, but the American Farmer in the older States worked with an energy and will which, if the tillers of the soil on the far western prairies would moderately emulate, we should hear less of the terrors of the grasshopper pest or other obstruction to agricultural profit.

Ohio justly boasts of the singular fertility in her soil. In that state the grain product per square mile is three and a half times that of France, about three times that of Australia, and nearly twice as great as that of Great Britain. If the comparison be extended to include population, and three European countries named raise only a fifth as many bushels of grain to each inhabitant as does Ohio. The following table institutes a similar comparison between Ohio and Kansas, the population given for Ohio being that of 1870, and that of Kansas being for 1875. The figures include only the organized counties. At the same time it must be remembered that field culture has been undertaken to but a very slight extent in many of the counties included in the area given. The crop in each state is for the year 1875.

Table with 3 columns: Area-square miles, Population, Crop of 1875-bushels. Rows for Ohio and Kansas.

Figures do not lie, but they often astonish. They certainly make a surprising exhibit in the above table.

Among other objects of personal inquiry I have interested myself to collect certain data in regard to

SALINE COUNTY.

Salina, its county seat, is one hundred and eighty-five miles west from Kansas City, on the line of the Kansas Pacific railroad. The General Land office of said Company located here. Settlement and agriculture in Saline and McPherson counties practically commenced with the entrance of the Swedish colonies in 1868. They purchased from the land grant of the Kansas Pacific railway twenty-five thousand acres of the land on the liberal terms of credit offered by that company. They have paid in full for their lands and have become a rich settlement. Their general appearance, as I have seen them in Salina, is that of farmers of snug means. They are well clothed, their horses, wagons, and harness of the best and best kept. In personal appearance they are like the members of the wealthy Amana society near Iowa City, in Iowa. From these original settlements Saline county, like its neighbor, Dickinson county, has when its population is considered, become with astonishing rapidity one of the richest and most productive counties in the State. At Salina are three elevators and three flouring mills. From the railroad depot there were shipped during the year 1876, as exhibited by the books in the auditor's office of the Kansas Pacific Railway company, 34,181,570 pounds of the following named agricultural products: Of wheat there was shipped 299,766 bushels; of corn 66,000 bushels; of flour, meal, and bran, 1,900 tons; of broom corn, 2,457 tons, the latter a very valuable product, worth \$90 per ton. There were also considerable shipments of live stock and other products. Of the products thus shipped, the two most valuable, that of wheat and broom corn, aggregate a value of \$500,000. Saline county has a present population of about 11,000.

ELLSWORTH, ELLIS, AND RUSSELL counties west of here offer, I should say, inducements to settle on cheap farms scarcely equaled elsewhere in the State. In them the lands are fully as favorable for wheat production as those of Saline county. In each of them limestone and gypsum abound, the latter a very valuable plaster for wheat fields, and efficiently retaining moisture.

A considerable portion of intrinsically the most valuable unoccupied lands in this State and of those most desirable as being continuous to market are included in the

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The competition in the sale of railroad lands belonging to the grants lying west of the Missouri river is remarkably active, and the companies are exercising great liberality to purchasers. The present year will doubtless witness a largely increased activity in the sale of Kansas lands. Her magnificent Centennial exhibit is reawakening inquiry and stimulating personal visits to the young and lusty state which so successfully challenged comparison with her other sisters at Philadelphia. Accepting no man's judgement for my own, and speaking from observation, I have no doubt that the lands owned by the Kansas Pacific company surpass in general excellence and value those of any other United States land grant in the west for an equal distance.

The operations of the Kansas Pacific land department are not confined solely to the sale of the company's lands, but promote and facilitate settlement on the lands of Kansas under the homestead and pre-emption acts.

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