

GRASSHOPPERS.

(Winnipeg Free Press.)

The genuine Rocky Mountain locust has made its appearance this season in a number of localities south of the boundary line, and, as a consequence, there is not a little alarm in the settlements affected. Past experience has taught how destructive to every kind of vegetable growth these pests can be. A bulletin from the United States department of Agriculture, just issued, is wholly devoted to the consideration of the several kinds of destructive locusts, together with the best means of destroying them. The Rocky Mountain species is the worst, and it is also the one which infests this part of the continent. The territory, covered by them, or liable to their invasion, is divided into permanent, subpermanent and temporary. Manitoba is divided between the two latter in about equal proportions. The permanent region, or home of the species, embraces the greater part of Montana, a narrow strip of Western Dakota, all but the northwestern quarter of Wyoming, the central and northwest portion of Colorado, a small tract in north central Utah and southeastern Dakota, another similar tract in eastern Oregon and southern Idaho, and a large area of our own Northwest Territories north of Montana. The subpermanent takes in about half of Manitoba, nearly the whole of Dakota and other territory south. The temporary includes the rest of Manitoba, and extends south almost to the Gulf of Mexico. The permanent region is described as that in which the locusts breed each year and is always to be found in greater or less numbers; the subpermanent, that in which it is liable to breed for some years, when it multiplies in excessive numbers in its truly permanent breeding grounds, but from which it in time disappears; and the temporary as that over which the locusts migrate in years of excessive abundance, but in which they seldom breed and generally disappear in a year.

Manitoba was visited by the Rocky Mountain locust in 1818 and 1819; next in 1867, then in 1861, 1874 and 1875. The invasion of 1874 was the most disastrous one, and covered nearly the whole of the territory in the United States embraced in the three divisions. The hatching season, in these more northern latitudes, is from the middle of May to the first of June. When full grown, the rate of migration is about twenty miles a day, although very irregular and dependent on the wind. The length of their stay depends much on circumstances. Early in the summer, when they first begin to pour down on the more fertile country, they seldom remain more than two or three days, but later in the season they stay much longer.

The remedies and devices for the destruction of locusts in their various stages, in the States most subject to them, are as numerous as the locations they invade. The eggs are destroyed by harrowing in the autumn, by ploughing and by other modes of cultivation; by irrigation, by tramping in fields where hogs, cattle and horses can be confined; and by a laborious system of collection. The young or unfledged locusts are burned, crushed or trapped; they are destroyed by ditching and trenching; they are dosed with coal oil and coal tar; and barriers are erected

to impede their march. Ingenious machines, some with netting and bags are invented for these purposes. The legislatures of several of the States have laws intended to fight this scourge, and in times of invasion they are rigorously enforced. From all this it will be inferred that south and west of us across the border the Rocky Mountain locust is a plague of very great seriousness. Fortunately we in Manitoba, although not wholly safe from invasion, are pretty well to the northern and eastern limit of their foraging ground, and are liable only to occasional visits. Although the telegraph and newspapers inform us of their presence in several localities in the adjoining States, and in sufficient numbers to cause uneasiness, there is no apparent cause to apprehend that they will extend this far.

The grasshoppers that are at present somewhat numerous in a few localities in Manitoba are not the dreaded Rocky Mountain locusts, but are a local and indigenous species, that are always present in greater or smaller quantities. They are sometimes quite destructive, but only in a local and comparatively limited sense.

TRANSFER OF THE MOODYVILLE SAW MILL.

In referring to the return a few days ago of Mr. J. Wulfsohn, of Vancouver, from Europe, the *News Advertiser* stated that among other important transactions he had completed during his absence, was the sale of the Moodyville Saw Mill property to an English company. The formal arrangement, not having then been completed, it was impossible to give all the details. Last Tuesday, however, the transfer was effected by Mr. Wulfsohn paying over the purchase money and the new owners, the Moodyville Land and Saw Mill Company, have taken formal possession of the property. The transaction amounts in value to about one million dollars, and is probably the most important which has occurred in the commercial history of Vancouver. The board of directors is a very influential one, comprising the following noblemen and gentlemen: The Earl of Chesterfield, the Earl of Durham, Mr. Arthur Heywood Lonsdale, Colonel: the Hon. Oliver Montague and Mr. Edmund Evan-Thomas. Messrs. Wulfsohn & Bewicke, (Limited), will be the general agents in British Columbia, and Mr. Johann Wulfsohn of that firm the general manager of the company.

The property acquired by the new company is a very extensive and valuable one, including large and valuable tracts of land besides that embraced in the mill property itself. On the north shore of the Inlet, surrounding the mill, there are 1,786 acres, with a valuable water frontage of three miles. Other valuable agricultural lands are situated at Mud Bay, Strainer Island, in the Coast District and elsewhere, aggregating 9,381 acres. There are also no less than 31,448 acres of valuable timber limits included in the purchase. The local management of the mill and the general conduct of the business will be the same as at present, the results of the operation of the business having given results that show this policy to be in accord with the interests of the concern. The successful completion of the negotiation by Mr. Wulfsohn cannot fail to be of great advantage to Vancouver.

HIMALAYAN [EXPLORATION.

It is something of a reproach to the Indian Government that the stupendous mountain barrier which hedges in Hindostan on the north has been mainly left to private explorers. Thanks to them, the *fauna* and *flora* are pretty well known, but it remains to be ascertained whether the Himalaya contains any mineral wealth of a valuable sort. In the interesting paper he read at the Royal Geographical Society on Monday, Colonel Tanner laid yet more stress on our ignorance of Himalayan philology. Here and there some more or less feeble efforts have been made to investigate the languages and customs of remote hill tribes. Dr. Leitner brought back a marvellous tale from Kafiristan many years ago; he ascertained quite enough about the Posh Kafir to create great interest in their origin. But the work was never continued, and we know nothing farther about the people except that the Afghans regard them as infidels, and, therefore, as only fit for slaughter. There are other interesting races, it is believed in Tibet, on the confines of British India, peoples who have many characteristics, both physical and linguistic, which differentiate them from their neighbors. Were any other Power but England in possession of Hindostan, the work of investigation would have been taken in hand long ago at Government expense. But it in the British way to leave such matters to private inquirers; the whole revenue is always required for purposes of more immediate benefit to the governed. Perhaps, after all, it may be just as well that this is the case. If reproached with our ignorance of Himalayan humanity in its scientific aspect, we can, at all events, point to the diminution of disease, to the disappearance of famine, to the spread of education, to the multiplication of industries, and to one of the finest railway systems in the world, as proofs that John Bull is a faithful trustee for subject races. — *The Graphic*.

DIFFERENCE IN GOLD.

Most people suppose that all gold is alike when refined, but this is not the case. An experienced man can tell at a glance from what part of the world a gold piece comes, and in some cases from what part of a particular gold district the metal was obtained. The Australian gold, for instance, is distinctly redder than the Californian, and this difference in color is always perceptible, even when the gold is 1000 fine. Again, the gold obtained from the placers is yellower than that which is taken directly from quartz. Why this should be the case is one of the mysteries of metallurgy, for the placer gold all comes from the veins. The Ural gold is the reddest found anywhere. Few people know the real color of gold, as it is seldom seen unless heavily alloyed, which renders it redder than when pure. The purest coins ever made were said to be the \$50 pieces that used to be common in California. The coinage was abandoned for two reasons—first, because the loss by abrasion was so great, and, secondly, because the interior could be laced out and lead substituted the difference in weight being too small to be readily noticed in so large a piece. These octagonal coins were reputed to be the most valuable ever struck.