

Preparing Medicinal Roots.

T. A. Bronson & Co., of New York, have issued the following directions for preparing ginseng and medicinal roots for market. Ginseng is found in largest quantities in hard wood timber, has one stem with three branches, each branch, five large, light green, thin leaves. Flower light green, succeeded by a bunch of red berries, and until these have disappeared, the roots should not be dug, as the sap then goes back into the roots, making them heavier, and consequently more valuable. After digging, shake off all adhering earth, wash thoroughly in running water, if possible, or in tubs, using fresh, clean water; *never split* the roots, to hasten drying, as it injures value. Dry in well ventilated shed or garret, spread out thin, turn the roots every day, taking out any mouldy pieces. Never dry in the sun, nor in stoves or chimnies, as either plan darkens the root. Break off all tops close to the root, also small fibres. When thoroughly dry, pack in barrels or boxes, *not in bags*, to prevent breakage in transportation.

The larger, clearer, and more entire ginseng is, when put on the market, the greater its value.

Pack by shaking, never pounding or jumping on the root to get more in.

Senega, Pink, Golden Seal, and other roots, follow same directions as for ginseng, and when dry, shake out the dirt, pack in clean, *strong* bags.

Gambling and Business.

The world's crop of wheat amounts in round numbers to 2,000,000,000 bushels. Of this not to exceed 500,000,000 bushels finds its way into the broad stream of general trade. The quantity that could properly come under the classification "commercial wheat" would possibly not exceed 400,000,000 bushels, and it might be even less. Upon that foundation rests the whole speculative fabric. Contracts for the transfer of twenty five times 400,000,000 bushels of wheat are entered into every year on the produce exchanges of half a dozen American cities. Not one person in ten, nay in a hundred, who contracts to buy or sell this wheat ever expects to handle a pound of it. The real intent is to bet on the rise and fall of prices and to receive or pay differences. The whole transaction is a gamble, a wager on price fluctuations. A leading commission merchant on the Chicago Board of Trade recently issued a circular over his own name in which he stated that not one transaction in a thousand contemplated the actual delivery of property stipulated in the contract. He was taken to task by his fellow members, not for misstating or overstating the facts, but for making public confession of the real character of the business done on the floor of the exchange and "giving us away."—*Price Current.*

It may be of interest to note that a large consignment of Canadian turkeys reached Liverpool on Saturday by the *Etruria*, for the British Christmas markets. This is not the first time that shipments of this nature have been made by Canadian growers. In the present instance the consignments came from Ingersoll, Ontario, and a fairly profitable market is anticipated.—*Canadian Gazette.*

The Last Spike.

The last spiko in the road connecting the two leading cities of the Pacific coast has been driven and another link in the great railroad system has been forged. It is therefore a matter for sincere congratulations, not only to the two great states of the west, but to the whole of the Union. From the City of Mexico to Tacoma and Seattle on Puget Sound, the line is now complete and British Columbia will not be long outside the steadily growing circle of our influence. The California and Oregon in conjunction with the original Southern Pacific is now the great trunk line of the west. From it on either side, lateral branches will now bring under cultivation and settlement the rich lands of the west.

The country near it and them will be the richest and most prosperous in the whole world. It has all the varieties of climate and soil found from New York to Florida in the east, and from the Baltic to the Mediterranean in the old world. All the fruits and cereals of the temperate and tropic zones flourish in the greatest luxuriance. The great mineral belt of North America, nay, the world, follows the road along its course and it is but as yet in the infancy of its development.

Gold and silver, lead, copper, tin, quicksilver, iron, coal, soda in all its compounds, salt and all other known materials are found here. There are now many flourishing towns and cities all along the line; in five years from to-day their development will be something wonderful to witness. Like cases produce like effects, and the connection of Southern California with the east which broke up its lazy sleep of a century, will work as wonderful a revolution from the City of Mexico to Vancouver. The great transcontinental roads did a wonderful work in making a pathway out west. This great line will do more—an empire will spring up along it.

On this long line of settlement San Francisco and Portland are happily placed to command its commerce, as is also Tacoma or Seattle, or both, on the waters of Puget Sound. The growth of the towns and cities along the route will be marvellous. Paso del Norte, Los Angeles, Fialia, Fresno, Stockton, Sacramento, Marysville, Chico, Redding, Salem, Portland and the Puget Sound will grow at an exceptionally rapid rate. With San Francisco as the great entrepot of the whole coast, they will draw new life from the circumstance in which they are placed, and will rival the array of cities that line the Atlantic sea-board.

At some future day this road will reach from Cape Horn to Alaska. As if to anticipate, Senator Hoar last Thursday introduced a bill into Congress providing \$100,000 for a survey which should trace out a line of road from Spokane Falls to Behring's sea, and which should tap the commercial currents of Asia. The bells which to-day tell the story of the spike driven by the silver hammer in the hands of Col. Crocker, will be the harbingers of glad tidings to the people of all this coast.—*San Francisco Journal of Commerce.*

The large flour train sent east from Minneapolis, over the new "Soo" route, was blockaded with snow, and had not crossed the bridge up to the 7th inst.

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