

by the fungus and eventually is converted into the characteristic smut.

Of these smuts, those parasitic on cultivated crops are frequently very destructive and reduce the yield of the grain. But there are instances in which the fungus may be beneficial to man. For example, the pestiferous fox-tail grass is frequently attacked and its annual crop of seeds consequently reduced. But unfortunately in this instance the amount of injury is scarcely noticeable the next year.

The smut of grain can easily be prevented. The simplest method is to sprinkle the seed with a solution of formalin of the strength of one pound formalin to fifty gallons of water until the seeds are nearly moist enough to pack in the hand. The seed should then be shaken about or shoveled over into a pile and covered with sacks. After a couple of hours or more the seed is ready to sow, or they may be spread out and dried and kept for future sowing.

Formalin is a gas dissolved in water, and the reason for covering the seed is to keep the gas confined and give it time to penetrate between the chaff of the grain and thus reach

every spore of the fungus and kill it. After the spores of the fungus are killed it matters not whether the seed is sown at once or dried and sown at a later time, but if kept for later sowing the seed must be stored in sacks or bins which are known to be free from smut spores. Otherwise there will be no appreciable value in the formalin treatment.

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**PROPOSED LEASING LAW.**

In the West they are much stirred up over the proposition to take from the unreserved, unappropriated public domain reserved for settlers a vast area of 300,000,000 acres and place it in the Forest Service and lease it out for fencing and grazing for the big cattle barons and others whose interests are being crowded by encroachments of the homesteaders.

This would shut out settlers from a pretty big strip of country—well, equivalent to an area 200 miles wide and over 2,000 miles long. This land

is not included in the lands concerned in the regulation of streams or conservation of timber supply. This vast area has never been included in the Forest Reserves; it is part of the public domain awaiting settlement.

The agricultural lands of the public domain belong not to the people of the West alone; they belong to the citizens of every state in the Union. Anybody may go out there, take up a homestead of 160 acres, and make a home in the manner the law specifies.

The act of June 4, 1897, which set aside timbered areas and mountain watersheds for Forest Reserves specifically and distinctly forbade the including of lands good only for other purposes. The idea was that the interest of the settlers should have first consideration. Land unavailable for timber protection or reforestation or for conserving the flow of streams was to be kept open for farms and homes and communities.

Under the proposed "leasing policy" any big cattle magnate may lease and fence up for ten years as much as 10,000 acres; his friends may lease next door to him 10,000 more, and another friend the next, and so on.

It is not likely that any settler would care to undertake the responsibility of taking a family upon a homestead within such inclosure; his life would be a sultry one at best.

But the settler is not likely to have this opportunity, for if the leasehold has had one penny over \$100 spent on it by the cattle owner (which amount is easily covered by the fence), the lessee has a right to debar the settler from entering.—Globe-Democrat.

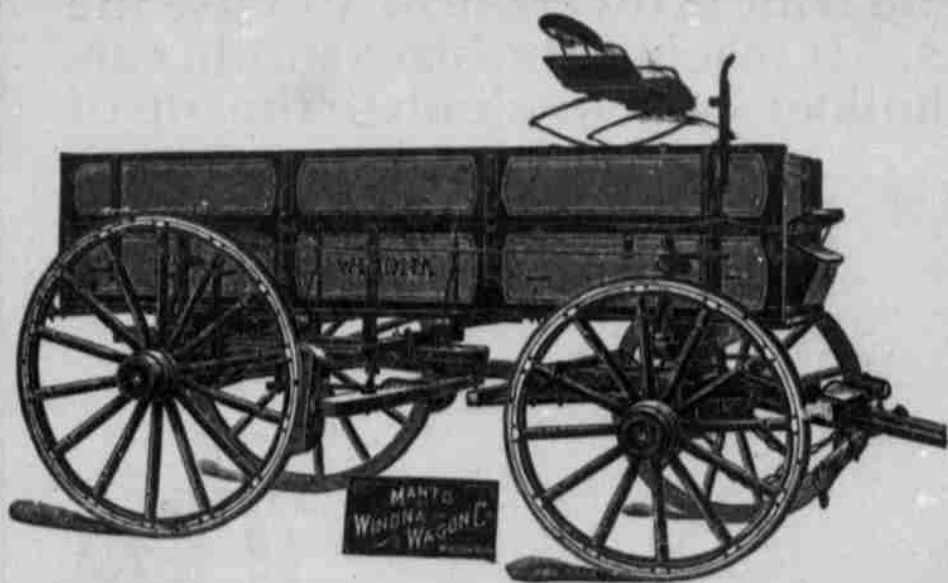
**STEADY-GOING.**

A shooting party, putting up at Amos Libby's Maine camp, found their sport much interfered with by rain. Still, fine or wet, the old-fashioned barometer that hung in Amos's general room persistently pointed to "set fair."

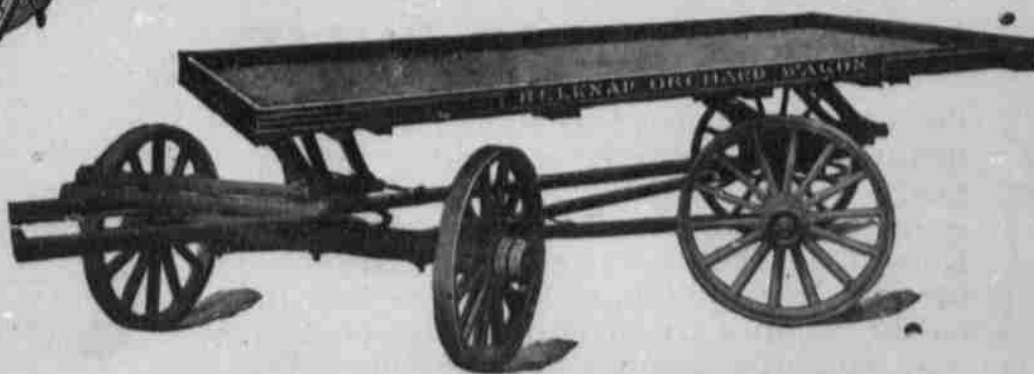
At last one of the party drew his attention to the glass.

"Don't you think now, Amos," he said, "there's something the matter with your glass?"

"No, sir, she's a good glass an' a powerful one," Amos replied, with dignity, "but she ain't moved by trifles."—Companion.



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