

## LAND CRYING FOR WATER

Public Domain Must be Irrigated to be Habitable.

Attention of Congress Demanded in the Matter—Public Contract the Accepted Principle.

When the last convention of the trans-Mississippi commercial congress met at Houston, Texas, some very interesting statistics on the needs of the irrigation of the arid lands of the United States were brought out.

Elwood Mead, of the department of agriculture, in the course of a long speech on the needs of irrigation, said in part:

"The arid region embraces an area larger than any European country save Russia, and is capable of supporting a larger population than now lives east of the Mississippi river. In this vast district, when reclaimed, homes may be made for a population of 100,000,000 souls. To effect this result is a task superior to no other in the realm of statesmanship or social economics. Its public lands comprise the nation's farm and are the chief hope of those who have little besides industry and self denial with which to win landed independence. As it is now, this land has but little value. In many places a township would not support a settler and his family. This is not because the land lacks fertility, but because it lacks moisture. Where rivers have been turned from their course, the products which have resulted equal in excellence and amount those of the most favored districts of ample rainfall.

There are only 6,000,000 acres of cultivated land along the Nile. It is all irrigated. Where there is no irrigation, there is desert. This little patch of ground has made Egypt a landmark in the world's history. It supports over 5,000,000 people and pays the interest on a national debt half as large as our own. The possibilities of the valleys of the arid west are equally great. The Missouri and its tributaries can be made to irrigate five times the land now cultivated along the Nile.

The essence of the problem of reclaiming these lands which confronts us at the outset is the control and distribution of the water supply, since not only the enduring prosperity, but the very existence, of the homes created will be conditioned upon the ability to use the rivers for irrigation. The diverse interests of individuals and communities and even of different states will all be dependent upon streams flowing from a common source. To reclaim all the land possible will involve the spreading of water over a surface as large as New England, with New York added. Standing now at the birth of things, and looking down the vista of the future, we can see in the course of the rivers the dim outline of a mighty civilization, blessed with peace and crowned with a remarkable degree of prosperity in case wise laws, just policies shall prevail in the years of the immediate future, while institutions are forming. If it be otherwise, if greed and ignorance be allowed to govern and we ignore the experience of older countries than our own; then we behold only a gloomy forecast of social, economic, and possibly even civil strife.

The entire discussion leads up to one inevitable conclusion. This is that irrigation, over and above all other industries, is a matter demanding public supervision and control. Every drop of water entering the headgate, and every drop escaping at the end of the canal, is a matter of public concern. The public must determine, through constitutions and statutes, the nature of water ownership. The public must establish means for the measurements of streams and for ascertaining how much water may be taken for each acre of land under the principle of beneficial use. The public must see that justice is done in the distribution of water among those who have properly established their rightful claims to it. We have thoroughly tried the method of leaving all this to private initiative management, and, along with magnificent material progress, we have reaped a large crop of deplorable financial results. What may be said of fraternalism elsewhere, the principle of public control and supervision in this particular field is inseparable from peace and progress.

While much may be left to the action of states and communities, there is still a wide field for national efforts. Only the nation can legislate as to the public lands and reform the abuses in connection with the present system of land laws. There is a strong popular de-

mand in the west for legislation providing public aid in construction of works of top great magnitude and cost for private enterprise. There is a growing belief that one of two things should be done. Either arid states should be placed in a position to extend this aid, or the general government should extend the work it is now doing in the reclamation of certain Indian reservations to the reclamation of the unoccupied public lands. One policy—much discussed and widely favored is legislation which will permit of the leasing of public grazing lands for a term of years at a small annual rental, the proceeds to be given to the several arid states and applied by them to irrigation development.

If this is carried out, the settlers owning the contiguous irrigated land should be favored, the object being to unite with the lands reclaimed a certain portion of the public pasture. Only the national government can make the best and broadest study of the various economic questions related to the development of agriculture on arid lands. The investigation of the office of experiment stations into the methods employed in distributing and using water and its efforts to secure more uniform and efficient water laws are destined to have untold value in correcting existing evils and in promoting development upon broader lines in the future. What is true of the efforts of this one branch of the national government applies also to work of the geological survey and to other divisions of the department of agriculture. The national government is already active along all these lines, and the field of its labors is wide and inviting."

**Horseshoes Are Scarce.**  
There is a dearth of horseshoes in Dawson, but people who have horses to shoe need labor under no apprehensions concerning the price of horseshoeing, as it is generally understood from the horseshoers that the present price of \$8 per head will not be raised, as they realize that the conditions will not stand it. So, if the present scarcity of shoes, operates to raise the present rate, those who do the shoeing will be the losers.

There is plenty of material in town from which to make shoes, and while that lasts no difficulty of any consequence to the owner of horses can arise.

"The hardware dealer is the man who makes more money than we do," said a well posted blacksmith, this morning. "The price of our work has gone down during the past two years, but the price of the material we buy from him remains just what it was then, and now that shoes are scarce, if prices go up, he will be the gainer, we will be the losers, and the man with horses to shoe will not be affected at all, because we realize that he is paying already all that he can afford for the work and material used.

"Coal is another thing which does not decrease in value any I notice. I paid two years ago for two or three tons of Cumberland coal, ten cents a pound, and here a short time since I was charged 12 cents a pound for the same thing.

**MARINE MYSTERY.**  
(Continued on Page 1.)

for such enactments as are required to meet the demands. Aside from this you are to transact no other public business this session."

The Canadian contingent has been received in the house of lords by the peers. Col. Otter made the first layman speech in that chamber. Chamberlain replied, expressing the keenest appreciation of Canada's patriotism in helping out the mother country in her great national crisis. "We have," he said, "taught the world that in any national crisis the British empire will present a solid front."

**Maxwell Wins in B. C.**  
Burrard, B. C., Dec. 6, via Skagway, Dec. 12.—Geo. B. Maxwell won his election by a majority of 471, and the Liberal-Labor party is preparing for a great celebration.

(After the defeat of Hugh John McDonald in Manitoba by Clifford Sifton, telegraphic information stated that he would come to British Columbia and that Mayor Gardner, of Victoria, who was the Conservative nominee against Maxwell, would resign and that Hugh John would contest the seat with Maxwell. It has since been learned that the arrangement was never carried out, therefore, Victoria's mayor is the man defeated by Maxwell.—E.D.)

Six varieties fresh vegetables at Meeker's.  
Large Africana cigars at Rochester.

## CREEK NOTES.

Messrs. Shroyer and Lewis, of 60 above Bonanza roadhouse are now open for business.

Mr. Wilson, of 57 above Bonanza, has been confined to his room for the past week with rheumatism.

Messrs. Frame & McLean are completing a building 20x30 to be used for balls and entertainments.

Mr. Rob Dick who has been at the Good Samaritan hospital for the past three weeks with typhoid fever, is on the recovery list.

The Kangaroo Court of 24-5-6 Eldorado gave their first dance in the big tent last Thursday, and set plates for 120 members and guests.

Messrs. Wilson and Hicks and Kinsey and Kinsey of Gold Hill, who own adjoining claims, have gotten down to business in good earnest and will work their claims from the same tunnel.

Mr. Wm. McRice, foreman on 29 Eldorado, has been confined to his room for the past three weeks with inflammatory rheumatism. As his condition is not improving Mr. McRice will go to town for treatment.

Mr. John Gorst, who intended to start a restaurant at 17 Eldorado, had his foot so badly frozen last Tuesday that he was obliged to go to the hospital. It is feared that amputation of part of the foot will be necessary.

One would hardly suspect in passing a little cabin on 44 above Bonanza that therein resides a real artist. We saw a piece of tapestry work done by Mrs. Shaw. It was only the interior of her former home on Hunker creek, but the natural coloring and exact representation of every detail, even to the matting on the floor, mosquito netting, blankets, robes, etc., convinces an observer that Mrs. Shaw is not only a real but natural and true artist.

Mr. Thompson, of 43 above Bonanza was given a birthday surprise party last Wednesday, it being his 47th birthday. Plates were laid for 20 persons, and the most completely surprised man imaginable was Mr. Thompson on arriving home in the evening to see a long table loaded down with all the good things obtainable, surrounded by a merry throng of guests. After the repeat songs and music were indulged in. Mr. Douglas, a former grand opera singer, surprised the guests in his rendition of "Suwanee River." Jack Lindsey brought down the house with "The Blow Almost Killed Father." Mr. Smith with his own mandolin accompaniment sang "My Old Kentucky Home." Miss Thompson recited "Drifted Out to Sea," after which all joined in popular melodies, and wished Mr. Thompson many more such days as the one celebrated.

**A National Waterway.**  
The idea of a continuous waterway from the Great lakes to the sea for the transportation of freight is not a new one, says an exchange in speaking of some recent agitations of the question, and then discusses the matter as follows:

The idea of a waterway from the Great lakes to the Gulf of Mexico is very old. The ordinance of Virginia, of 1787, for the government of the Northwest territory, now included in the states of Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, and a part of Ohio declared the tributaries of the St. Lawrence and Mississippi and the portages connecting the same to be forever free to all the citizens of the United States. Various waterways of the old fashioned and now obsolete type were built or projected through this territory before railways had developed their functions as a system of transportation, and some of these early waterways have been abandoned while others are still in use.

This railway development is now so far advanced that we can say with probable truth that the small waterway is doomed likewise the movement by water over short routes. In other words, the function of the future waterway is to carry in large quantity over long routes.

Considered as a waterway of magnitude, one route from the Great lakes to the gulf is pre-emiuent over all others—that is, from Lake Michigan, via the Chicago portage, the Illinois river and the Mississippi river. It follows the lowest line of the Continental valley, with its level in Lakes Michigan and Huron, only 580 feet above tidewater. It is the one trunk line to which all waterways between the Rocky and Allegheny mountains, as now existing or as they may be developed in the future, are necessarily tributary.

This canal is now opened for a part of the water contemplated, at a cost to the taxing district, known as the sanitary district of Chicago, of \$40,000,000, and its full development will cost several millions more. Including the Chicago river, it is 30 miles long, 160 feet wide, with vertical sides in rock, and 202 feet wide on the bottom and about 300 feet wide at the top in earth. The nominal depth is 22 feet, but the ultimate development will make it 24 to 26 feet.

From the end of the canal to the Mississippi is about 290 miles.

The immediate result of building this canal is to bring lake and river navigation within 62 miles of each other which were before some 320 miles apart for all practical purposes. The large water supply makes the Illinois river a very good navigable stream to

Utica without any work at all. Dredging and the construction of locks and dams at the abrupt declivities will produce the depth required and the results obtained will be substantially permanent. The Mississippi river when reached presents a different problem.

This large depth can be extended to St. Louis and maintained at all seasons. Below St. Louis, we are now advised, it is found possible to maintain nine to ten feet throughout the low water season by means of hydraulic dredging. The stages of water below St. Louis are such that 14 feet can be carried through for five to seven months in the natural conditions of the river and this period should be prolonged for seven to nine months by the methods now developed. The remainder of the season will simply have use down to the minimum of nine to ten feet. So 14 feet may be had at all times from the lakes to St. Louis and for a good part of the year to the Gulf of Mexico.

Such a waterway will permit navigation by a fleet of six barges carrying 2000 tons each. Such barges can be made strong enough to go anywhere about the Great lakes or the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean sea, with differences in methods of towing only.

Hay and oats at Meeker's.  
For watch repairing see Lindemann.  
Outside fresh cabbage at Meeker's.  
Flashlight powder at Goetzman's.  
Goetzman makes the crack photos of dog teams.

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ONE OR ONE HUNDRED CASE LOTS.  
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**You Fellows**  
From the Creek . . . . .  
Want to drop in and see us when you come to town.  
You know you were always welcome to sit on the counter and whittle in '97 times, and it's just the same old place now.  
You can sit on the steam pipes and shoot out the electric lights, and be perfectly at home as of yore.  
**Incidentally we can swap yarns about how much cheaper goods are, and possibly fit you out for the season for about what you used to pay for a sack of flour.**  
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