

this account are of very frequent occurrence, and the State Courts have been kept busy in deciding the difference between individuals and districts. The present condition of affairs is one that may be very profitable for lawyers, but certainly is not in the general interest of agriculture. The regulations of the different states vary considerably, and this involves different systems in constructing irrigation works. Consequently many undertakings are of a fragmentary character and cannot be prosecuted so cheaply or so profitably as if they could be carried on independently of State boundaries and under uniform regulations. Another cause of waste and inconvenience is because there was not any proper and extended topographical survey before irrigation became general to determine what lands could be permanently irrigated, to apportion the proper water supplies to the proper districts, and to provide for the preservation of catchment areas. Now, so many interests have arisen that to systematize matters will be most difficult, if not quite impossible. Water is being relegated in some districts of land where the climate and soil are unfavorable to agriculture, and again it is being used on lands so far away from the source of supply that a vast quantity is lost in conveying it thither. Many early settlers who settled some distance down a stream and at one time had plenty of water for their wants, now find themselves suffering from scarcity because newer comers have settled further up stream and diverted their supply. Information to guard against errors of this kind cannot be obtained by individuals, for to arrive at it technical skill must be employed, innumerable circumstances must be considered and great accuracy in calculation exercised. From a consideration of these difficulties it is evident that, to avoid disputes and to ensure the most economical management of the water supply in our irrigable districts, the matter of irrigation should be under the control of the Central Government instead of being left to the haphazard regulation of different local authorities. The North-west not yet being carved into provinces, it will be possible to make provision when the Territories are admitted to the Provincial Status to reserve this as one of the subjects on which the Dominion Parliament may exclusively legislate. The necessity of a thorough survey of the irrigable area to indicate the best districts for permanent irrigation, the chief sources of water supply, how by the construction of dams and reservoirs that supply can be augmented and the best division of the country into water districts, as suggested in my former paper, is also made apparent. Not only its necessity, but its immediate necessity. If this matter be delayed too long, we may find, as the United States is now finding, how difficult it is to evolve order from chaos.

Another very important point which has been much debated elsewhere and which we should settle in Canada before commencing irrigation legislation, is whether it is advisable that the construction of irrigation works should be left to private enterprise or should be performed by Government. There appears to be very much stronger