

THE ARID LANDS

As the Seat of a New Civilization.

From Address of the Irrigation Convention

The public lands which still belong to the people of the United States are for the most part arid or semi-arid, requiring the artificial application of water to make them productive. They lie between the ninety-seventh meridian and the Pacific ocean, and are divided between seventeen states and territories. This domain is estimated by the general land office to contain 542,000,000 acres. Enough of land is arable to provide homes and farms for millions of people. The portion which can never be cultivated is valuable for range purposes or for forest reservations.

Notwithstanding the present condition of these arid lands, we confidently predict that they will become the seat of the highest civilization and of the greatest average prosperity yet developed on this continent. The intensive scientific cultivation rendered possible by irrigation results in the largest conceivable development of independence and prosperity on the fewest possible acres.

The conditions of social life which naturally grow up in a region of small farms are among the strongest attractions of the irrigated districts of the west. It is the experience of the world that the acre value of land increases as the farm unit diminishes. The reclamation of the arid public domain means the improvement of the people's estate and the consequent addition of a vast sum to the national wealth.

The progress thus far made in the reclamation of the arid regions has been along the lines of local effort and individual enterprise. Nevertheless, the problem of conquering these desert lands is national in its essence. These lands are the heritage of the American people. To have a home upon them is the birthright of every American child. The conditions under which they shall be reclaimed and acquired by the settler must be founded on the recognition of these facts. There are also questions between states which require national legislation and oversight, and however western men might desire to settle the problems which nature has placed about them, the result cannot be attained except through national legislation.

The laws now governing waters and lands in a number of states and territories are inadequate and dangerous. Streams are appropriated under lax and conflicting state laws, and the absorption of interstate waters promises to become the fruitful source of future litigation and social disturbance. The desert land law, under whose operation the public land is passing away from the people, is largely perverted from its original purpose. It offers the settler land upon terms with which he cannot ordinarily comply.

We declare it to be the correct principle that water in natural channels and beds is public property; and when, under the vested law of any state, vested rights have been secured thereto, such rights, like all

other private property, may be supervised for beneficial purposes and condemned for public uses under the exercise of the power of eminent domain.

We declare that all streams rising in one state and flowing by natural courses through one or more other states must be conserved and equitably divided under federal authority.

INSECT PEST LAWS.

This resolution of the Northwestern fruit growers' association at Spokane hit the nail squarely:

Having in view the fact that California was the first to enact laws for the destruction of insect pests, and quarantine laws to prevent their introduction, and these laws having from time to time been amended until they have been declared in a degree satisfactory by the fruit growers of the state; and further, having stood the tests of the highest courts and been declared constitutional; and regarding uniformity of laws as absolutely necessary to the Pacific coast states and British Columbia for the effective and economical control of the pests.

Therefore be it resolved that it is the sense of this convention that the laws of California on this subject are recommended for adoption by the northwestern states and British Columbia."

Col. Babcock's committee also strongly urged immediate and concerted action by all the people, intended to secure the passage of the laws above suggested. The way to do this quickest is to secure pledges from your representatives in the legis re.

MORE OF PICKING AND PACKING.

J. R. Willis Before the Fruit Grower's Convention.

Unripe and decayed fruit is unfit for man. The hog can use it profitably; no other animal can. He who tries to sell to his fellow man wrongs himself as well as the buyer. I venture the assertion that no honest shipper ever received dishonest returns for straight packed goods shipped to reputable houses. It is the shippers duty to inform himself as to the commission house. When you ship imperfect fruit you throw down the gauntlet to the commission man to be as dishonest as yourself.

Concord grapes from Eastern Michigan once sold in Chicago on the credit of the reputation of the growers. That was a guarantee of fair dealing. In the past few years, however, the cupidity of the growers has impelled them to ship inferior fruit. Result: they have lost their market, and the good name of the state injured.

Only the best quality should go to market. The successful grower is the one who employs the most useful, ornamental and reliable package. In the early days, California methods were crude. Now they have well nigh reached perfection. Follow their example and their methods. The package helps to

sell the goods. A box of handsomely wrapped, properly encased pears, plums, peaches or prunes will bring mostly twice as much as the same grade poorly put up.

In a three month's sojourn last fall in this veritable land of promise, I discovered some weaknesses, but none more glaring than that your fruit was put up in the plainest, most unsophisticated of packages. Only on Snake river did I see such packages as are used by California fruit growers. The Snake river people hired an experienced man from California to teach them how to do it.

Do not put your luscious fruits into soap boxes, or barrels, or into any package that has been used before. Have every one as neat and attractive as art can make it. Do not hide your light under a bushel. Be up to the times with your neighbors, the deciduous fruit growers of California.

In no country have we seen greater promise, or more beautiful, saleable fruit than in this region. Yours is a land of promise. A land flowing with milk and honey and we came here as Calebs and Joshuas. We shall go back to our Moses, the people we have left behind, and tell our story. It will impress them with a sense of the relationship that exists between these mountain-surrounded valleys and great plateaus, with the farming and manufacturing region of the northeast—greater only in age.

WHO WILL BUY CHICORY?

It might prove a paying proposition for some one in this part of the state to experiment in a moderate way with chicory. The only locality in this country where it is grown to any extent is in San Joaquin valley, California. There 400 acres are in the crop, and \$300 per acre is the estimated profit per year.

Chicory, as is generally known, is used principally for the adulteration of coffee, and for that purpose 10,000,000 pounds are annually imported into this country at about 2½ cents per pound, unground. In San Joaquin county the dried root brings about \$200 per ton, gross.

The chicory plant belongs to the dandelion family, but it has a long root something like a small parsnip in appearance. The cultivation required is such as is usually given the carrot. The writer of this once grew a half acre on dry, deep light soil near Chicago. A fine crop was secured, but there being no apparatus for slicing and drying the product west of the Atlantic states no use could be made of it without its costing more than it would bring. Chicago coffee dealers would have taken it at a fair price could it have been furnished ready for the grinder.

When eastern Washington gets its experiment station in the Yakima valley it will be a very easy matter to test the adaptability of the soil and climate here for the production of the crop, or individ-