

THE COMMERCIAL

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THE STATEHOOD QUESTION.

LIKELIHOOD OF THE ADMISSION OF OKLAHOMA AND INDIAN TERRITORY.

Disposition to Grant Them Statehood Irrespective of Arizona and New Mexico—New Congressional Alignment on Question.

The assembling of congress will bring new blood in both the House and Senate. There is promise of a long and very important session. New policies are to be discussed and material changes in existing economic conditions are to be proposed. Coming upon the eve of a congressional election, the session will feel the effects, to a certain extent, of political considerations.

The admission of new states to the Union will be one of the hold-over questions to occupy the attention of the new congress. It appears now that there will be a decided shifting of position on the statehood problem, some new lights having dawned since statehood was discussed at the last session.

It is understood that the committees on territories of both House and Senate are inclined to stand by the old program of creating two states out of the four territories, but it will not be a surprise if this program fails to meet the approval of a majority of the republican senators and representatives. Since the question of statehood for these four southwest territories was brought into congress many senators and representatives have personally investigated the existing conditions in the territories, and the result is that public sentiment among public men is crystallizing in favor of the plan of admitting Oklahoma and Indian Territory to statehood and, if necessary, letting Arizona and New Mexico wait.

There seems to be few dissenting voices against the proposed admission

of Oklahoma and Indian Territory. Difference of opinion does exist as to whether the two territories should be admitted as one state or whether they should be admitted as separate states, but on the main proposition—the preparedness of these two territories for statehood—there is little dissenting opinion. In fact, the prevailing view is that statehood has already been too long delayed in the case of Oklahoma and Indian Territory. It is almost disgraceful, well-informed public men are saying, that these two progressive territories should be held back simply because of disagreement as to whether those unprepared territories, Arizona and New Mexico, should be admitted. It is high time, many men declare, for congress to cut loose from the Arizona and New Mexico position, no matter what form it may take, and admit Oklahoma and Indian Territory.

The Royal Crown of England.

"Uneasy is the head that wears the crown." The crown of England is a costly toy and is better to look upon than to wear. Around the circle there are twenty diamonds, worth \$7,500 each, two large center diamonds, \$10,000 each; fifty-four smaller ones at the angle of the former, \$500 each; four crosses, each composed of twenty-five diamonds, \$4,000; four large diamonds at the top of the crosses, \$20,000; twelve diamonds contained in the fleur-de-lis, \$50,000; eighteen smaller ones in same, \$10,000; pearls, diamonds, etc., upon the arches and crosses, \$50,000; also one hundred and forty-one small diamonds, \$25,000; twenty-six diamonds in the upper cross, \$15,000 and two circles of pearls about the rim, \$15,000. The cost of the precious stones alone is nearly half a million dollars.

Here lies my wife's nearest relative. All my tears cannot bring her back. Therefore I weep.

MARK TWAIN AT SEVENTY.

THE HUMORIST ENTERTAINS GROUPS OF AUTHORS AT BANQUET.

At Three Score and Ten He Is Hale and Hearty—Gives Views on How to Live—Never Smokes or Drinks While Awake.

Mark Twain, that prince of humorists has reached the limitation of life as laid down in the Scriptures—three score years and ten. And yet he is still able to give us gems of humor and wit—such gems as attained fame for him years ago when Huckleberry Finn, Tom Sawyer and Innocents



MARK TWAIN, TO-DAY.

Abroad were first given to us. On December 6th he was the guest of honor at a dinner in New York, to celebrate his seventieth birthday. The guests were confined closely to writers of imaginative literature, and about 170 authors were present, nearly half of them women. Every guest received as a souvenir a bust of Mark Twain, half-life size. Naturally Mr. Clemens was the principal speaker; he took as his text, "How to get to be seventy and not mind it." He said:—

"The seventieth birthday! It is the time of life when you arrive at a new and awful dignity; when you may throw aside the decent reserves which have oppressed you for a generation, and stand unafraid and unabashed upon your seven-terrace summit and look down and teach—unrebuked. You can tell the world how you got there. It is what they all do. You shall never get tired of telling by what delicate arts and deep moralities you climbed up to that great place. You will explain the process and dwell on the particulars with senileapture. I have been anxious to explain my own system for a long time, and now at last I have the right.

Regularly Irregular.

"I have achieved my seventy years in the usual way—by sticking strictly to a scheme of my life which would kill anybody else. It sounds like an exaggeration, but that is really the common rule for attaining to old age. We have no permanent habits until we are forty. Then they begin to harden, presently they petrify, then business begins. Since forty I have been regular about going to bed and getting up, and that is one of the main things. I have made it a rule to go to bed when there wasn't anybody left to sit up with, and I have made it a rule to get up when I had to. This has resulted in an unswerving regularity of irregularity.

"In the matter of diet—which is another main thing—I have been persistently strict in sticking to the things which didn't agree with me until one or the other of us got the best of it. Until lately I got the best of it myself. But last spring I stopped frolicking with mince pie after midnight; up to then I had always believed it wasn't loaded. For thirty years I have taken coffee and bread at 8 in the morning and no bite nor sup until 7.30 in the evening.

"I have made it a rule never to smoke more than one cigar at a time. I have no other restriction as regards smoking. I do not know just when I began to smoke; I only know that it was in my father's lifetime, and that I was indiscreet. He passed from this life early in 1847, when I was a shade past eleven; ever since then I have smoked publicly. As an example to others, and not that I care for moderation myself, it has always been my rule never to smoke when asleep, and never to refrain when awake.

"As for drinking, I have no rule about that. When the others drink I like to help; otherwise I remain dry, by habit and preference. This dryness does not hurt me, but it could easily hurt you, because you are different. You let it alone.

First Standard Oil Trust.

"Since I was seven years old I have seldom taken a dose of medicine and have still more seldom needed one. But up to seven I lived exclusively on allopathic medicines. Not that I needed them, for I don't think I did; but it was for economy. My father took a drug store for a debt, and it made cod liver oil cheaper than the other breakfast foods. I was the first Standard Oil Trust. I had it all—By the time the drug store was exhausted my health was established, and there has never been much the matter with me since.

"I have never taken any exercise, except sleeping and resting, and I never

intend to take any. Exercise is loathsome. And it cannot be any benefit when you are tired; I was always tired.

"I have lived a severely moral life. But it would be a mistake for other people to try that, or for me to recommend it. Very few would succeed. You have to have a perfectly colossal stock of morals, and you cannot get them on a margin; you have to have the whole thing and put them in your box. Morals are an acquirement—like music, like a foreign language, like piety, poker, paralysis—no man is born with them. I wasn't myself. I started poor.

WHAT A STRIKE COST.

Chicago Obligated to Divert Money Needed for Improvements into Payments For Police Service.

It will never be known definitely just what the recent strike of the teamsters cost the people of Chicago. That the total would run well into the millions, however, is a conservative estimate, judging from the single item of the expense to the municipality for extra police protection.

Some time ago it was discovered that the city could add \$5,000,000 to its bonded debt, and the people authorized an issue of bonds to this amount for specific public improvements. The end of the teamsters' strike found \$2,000,000 of these bonds still unsold and an emergency strike debt of some \$365,000. To pay this bill the council has retired the \$2,000,000 of bonds and ordered their reissue in such form that they may be used for general corporate purposes.

Thus \$365,000—or the estimated cost of lowering the two river tunnels—goes to pay extra policemen for defending the lives of citizens and protecting their property while a supine city administration practically gave license to the striking teamsters to make the ordinary business of peaceful citizens full of turmoil and hazard.

Money that the people intended to go into sorely needed permanent improvements has been diverted to meet the cost of lawlessness that never should have gone to the extent it did.

The cost of this one strike is the \$365,000 the city pays for extra police service, plus what the county has to pay for special deputy sheriffs, plus the loss to merchants, railroads, manufacturers, etc., in business; plus lost wages to the strikers, plus a dozen other items that it would be difficult to enumerate. And this only embraces money cost. It takes no account of inconvenience to citizens, of assaults on citizens, of the killing of citizens.

It is a tremendously expensive thing to fight a labor war in a great city.

A Ring for a Throne.

Miss Josephine Strong, who was private secretary at Washington for Congressman Hawley, has a diamond ring that was once owned and worn by Louis Philippe, king of France.

The ring has a peculiar history. It will be remembered that Philippe lived in this country when he was an exile. He lived one winter in Zanesville, Ohio, and spent another winter with

AMERICAN LAND MONOPOLY.

IS BEING FOSTERED BY OUR PRESENT SYSTEM OF LOOSE LAND LAWS.

Homestead Commutation and Desert Land Act, Supposed to Encourage Settlement—Largely Utilized for Land Grabbing.

Land monopoly is a black cloud of dread from which Ireland is just emerging, and we applaud England's act, while we may yet possibly be a little skeptical, in providing a plan whereby free Ireland may become a fact.

Yet we ourselves are as rapidly approaching land monopoly in America as it is possible to do, considering our vast extent of territory. Land monopoly brings with it more state evils than can be recounted in any single article. It retards every internal development, it smother's individual effort and enterprise and finally it transforms the stem and fiber of the individual citizen from that of a substantial, self-reliant supporter of free government to a supine, indifferent and passionless individual, lacking in mental and moral poise and in those sturdy and heroic qualities which have made America the greatest name in history.

"Land monopoly, did you say?" says the American land grabber. "Why, there is enough land for the children of the nation for generations if not centuries to come. The government owns in the West alone nearly half a billion acres and how can there be any land monopoly when this vast area is always open to free entry under our various land laws?"

Half Billion Acres Remaining.

It is true that there are valuable lands in the West yet remaining open to entry, or at least land which will be valuable when it shall have been furnished water for irrigation, but what is the general description of this half billion acres yet remaining under Uncle Sam's control? Is it reasonable to suppose that the shrewd land operators, living on the ground, have not skimmed the cream of this land, and are not doing so to-day—the fertile valleys and the rich plains, where water can be applied—and leaving the great bulk of the land to their posterity, land composed of mountain tops and impassable canyon sides which will probably forever remain in the hands of the government and at least can never support life. Glance at a physical map of Colorado, just for an instance, and note the vast preponderance of mountains. There are many fertile valleys in Colorado, for the map is on a much reduced scale, but from its appearance you would think the entire State was composed of nothing but chain upon chain and range upon range of untillable mountains.

Denounced by Commission.

This question of land monopoly in the West, as it is fostered through the use of the commutation clause of the homestead act and the desert land act has been studied by the President's Public Lands Commission, and their report, the third installment of which

There is a class of people who have apparently lost sight of the fact that the federal land laws, from the homestead law down, and even before the homestead law, were enacted for the purpose of fostering the making of homes for the nation; they seem to think, and it must be confessed that they have successfully put into practice their belief, that the laws are to be construed into passing on the title from the government into private hands with absolutely no regard to homemaking. They argue that when the public domain goes into private ownership it becomes taxable property and this helps the country and the State, and the question is ignored as to whether men and women go upon that land and make homes and rear families.

The following part of the report of the Public Lands Commission shows that the commutation clause at present is a farce and that land can be entered under it and almost immediately added to already large individual holdings. The Commission recommends that the period of residence be extended from fourteen months to three years and that the residence be actual and not constructive, as it is at present. With such a law strictly enforced the evils of the commutation clause would be largely obviated. It is, however, highly improbable that if a man actually resided and improved his homestead for three years



FREDERICK H. NEWELL, Chief Engineer of the U. S. Reclamation Service and Member of the Public Lands Commission.

he would be unwilling to pay \$1.25 an acre for immediate title, when by an additional two years' residence, he could save this amount.

The provisions of the desert land act, and the recommendation for the amendment of which is included in the following report will be discussed in next week's article.

Commutation Clause of the Homestead Act.

In the preceding report a statement was made that our investigations respecting the operations of the commutation clause of the homestead law were still in progress. We were not at that time prepared to recommend its repeal. Investigations carried on during the past year have convinced us that prompt action should be taken in this direction and that, in the interest of settlement, the commutation clause should be greatly modified.

A careful examination of the districts where the commutation clause is put to the most use shows that there has been a rapid increase of the use of this expedient for passing public lands into the hands of corporations or large landowners. The object of the homestead law was primarily to give to each citizen, the head of a family, an amount of land up to 160 acres, agricultural in character so that homes would be created in the wilderness. The commutation clause, added at a later date, was undoubtedly intended to assist the honest settler, but like many other well-intended acts its original intent has been gradually perverted until it is apparent that a great part of all commuted homesteads remains uninhabited. In other words, under the commutation clause the number of patents furnished no index to the number of new homes.

To prove this statement it is only necessary to drive through a country where the commutation clause has been largely applied. Field after field is passed without a sign of permanent habitation or improvement other than fences. The homestead shanties of the commuters may be

(Continued on next page.)

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THE CHINESE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

Visitors to the Chinese Legation at Washington have often been attracted to a tiny little figure perched at the head of the grand stairway. It is always there when a dinner party is going on or when Sir Chengtung Liang Cheng, the Chinese Minister, is giving a reception. It never fails to appear, and the uninitiated have been heard to remark in undertone that it is a queer little figure which guards the head of the stairway.

However, it is a very animated somebody after all, for it is no other than the young daughter of the Minister, Miss Liang, who, though barred through the custom of her country and her youth from taking actual part in these entertainments, is, nevertheless, determined to see as much of them as she possibly can. Perhaps her father, the Minister, does not know she is there and perhaps he does, but nobody knows, for no mention of the fact has ever been made to him, and Miss Liang continues to enjoy these many social affairs from afar.

This dainty little Chinese maid has been in this country ever since her father was delegated to represent his empire at Washington. She is just seventeen years old, and until she came to America she did not know what it was to be allowed to go out unattended.

Over in China the women never show their faces on the street, but with the appointment to Washington of Wu Tingfang, former Chinese Minister, members of the legation, and especially the women, were given greater freedom and now they go about with never a thought as to the propriety of the ex-

perience. At home they would not dare.

Society is eagerly awaiting the expected announcement that Miss Liang will be formally presented this season. She has learned to speak English exceedingly well and is a familiar figure in a box at the theatres on Monday nights. When she wishes to go shopping she does so unhesitatingly, and her carriage is frequently seen standing in front of some of the fashionable shops.

Fewer girls, especially among those who have not been presented to society, are more popular than this charming daughter of the Chinese Minister. She has made friends with every girl in Washington society, and her chief delight is to jump in her carriage in the afternoon and drive about, calling on her young American friends. They are all delighted to see her, and no matter what is on the programme it must wait if the attractive little Miss Liang happens to call. She is so piquant, and appreciates an American joke as well as any of her American associates.

Miss Liang is the constant companion of her father and accompanies him on all his drives. They are great friends and apparently enjoy every minute of their time together. The Minister is very proud of his daughter's progress in learning American customs, and it is not unlikely that before many more years are past the Chinese Legation will be enjoying even to a greater extent the American freedom in living which makes the assignment of Washington a diplomatic plum for which many hands are always ready.



A COUPLE OF HOMES IN THE WEST.

Gen. Morgan Neville, a rich pioneer and taught the district school. He had word from France that there was a chance to regain the Bourbon throne if he could but get to Paris, but he had not money enough for the trip. Gen. Neville lent the prince the money, something like \$800, and the prince gave in pledge the ring that Miss Strong now wears. Going to New Orleans by boat, Phillippe got to France and the rest is history. He regained his throne and the money lent by Gen. Neville made it possible. The king sent back the amount of the loan, told the general to keep the ring and asked him to visit him at the royal palace. The ring is a pear shaped diamond, set in black enamel and is naturally highly prized.

Into the Earth's Bowels.

At Bendigo, Australia, there is a gold mine 2,900 feet deep, or only 60 feet short of three-quarters of a mile. This is said to be the deepest gold mine in the world.