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RAILROAD PROSPECTS.

Much New Building Is Scheduled for New Mexico.

The New Mexican has made a careful survey of the railroad situation in New Mexico and after due and diligent inquiry, finds it to be very favorable to the building of several hundreds of miles of track during the present fiscal calendar year. This is not building railroads on paper, but this information is based upon facts and letters from first class sources. The Albuquerque Eastern railroad is in course of active construction between Moriarty on the Santa Fe Central railway and the city of Albuquerque. The line when completed will be forty-five miles in length and the branch to the Hagan coal fields, eighteen miles in length, thus will be added sixty-three miles of railroad to the mileage now in operation. The Eastern railroad of New Mexico, or "The Cut-Off" as it is commonly called, from Texico through the counties of Roosevelt, Chaves, Torrance and Valencia to Puerco station on the Santa Fe Pacific will also be built during the year. It may not be completed, but that part of it will be in running order by the 1st of January, 1906, seems assured.

Work will commence at an early date from Texico west and from Helen east. The line will be 212 miles in extent. It is not exactly known as yet where it will cross the El Paso & Northeastern and the Santa Fe Central on the eastern side of the Rio Grande, but that it will cross the Santa Fe at Belen is fixed.

The Denver & Rio Grande railroad has made and is making several surveys in San Juan county and the New Mexican is informed by reliable authority that it is very likely that grading on the extension of that line from Durango to Farmington along the Animas river, a distance of about sixty miles, will commence about April 1st. It is said that grading contracts have been awarded to J. B. Orman of Pueblo and Kirkpatrick Brothers of Wyoming. It is also said that this extension of the Denver & Rio Grande railroad will be broad-gauge and will be finished in time to move the great and increasing fruit crop of San Juan county this fall. What the plans of the Denver & Rio Grande are as to extensions to the south, this paper has not as yet been enabled to learn, but it believes that the report it has received as to a broad-gauge extension to Farmington is correct and will so prove within a few weeks.

The Durango & El Paso railroad, which is backed by the Phelps-Dodge & Company people and the El Paso & Southwestern railroad, has several corps of surveyors in the field in San Juan, McKinley and Valencia counties. As far as can be determined now, the Durango & El Paso will build and that within the next twelve months from Durango to some point on the Santa Fe Pacific west of Grant station and east of Gallup and will strike the Santa Fe Pacific in that section. It will then, so this paper is informed, use the tracks of the Santa Fe Pacific and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe via Belen south to a connection with the El Paso & Southwestern at or near El Paso, Texas. The trackage from the New Mexico line to the Santa Fe Pacific is estimated at 140 to 170 miles.

The Colorado & Arizona railroad has also several corps of surveyors in the field in western New Mexico and the commencement of active work on its proposed lines may also be expected during the coming year.

The Durango, Roswell & Gulf railroad, incorporated by the Pittsburg capitalists, who have built the Santa Fe Central and are building the Albuquerque Eastern, namely, General Francis J. Torrance, Senator Arthur

Kennedy, Leigh Clark of Pittsburg; Delegate-elect W. H. Andrews of Albuquerque, and W. S. Hopewell of Hillsboro, are contemplating a serious move in the way of building and that before long. The next few months will develop the intentions of this company. Its lines are to run from Albuquerque northwesterly to Durango and from Torrance on the Santa Fe Central, southeasterly to Roswell.

This proposed new railroad mileage amounts to considerably over a thousand miles and it certainly looks as if at least 500 miles of it will be under actual construction during the year and be completed by January 1, 1906. The Albuquerque Eastern railroad, the extension of the Denver & Rio Grande from Durango to Farmington and the Eastern railroad of New Mexico from Texico to Puerco station, can safely be put into that category. The building and extensions of the other lines mentioned herein are more than probable, in one or two cases almost certain. The indications that New Mexico will boom during the present year and in 1906 are multiplying and are slowly crystallizing into agreeable facts.

Bills Passed by House.

The lower branch of the Legislature on February 1st passed the following:

An act providing for protection against floods along the Rio Grande at San Marcial, Socorro and Hillsboro, which provides for an appropriation of \$4,000; an act relating to registration, an act providing for the construction of dams and dykes and the raising of money therefor; an act creating counties of the first class; an act to change the name of the county of Leonard Wood to Guadalupe.

About fifty bills were introduced, the most important being:

An act to provide for a system of public highways to be built by convict labor; an act appropriating \$10,000 for the completion of the scenic highway; an act fixing a levy of 1/4 of a mill to build a road from Raton to El Paso; an act providing for the fixing of a standard scale of weights and measures; an act providing for the construction of a bridge over the Mimbres river in Luna county.

New Mexico Weather Conditions.

Following is the weather bulletin, issued February 1st, for New Mexico:

"The month of January has been a mild and rather wet one, the first half especially having much rain and snow over practically all of the territory. The soil is thoroughly soaked and in excellent condition for early plowing and seeding, while the outlook for early and excellent range and abundant water was seldom better. A little plowing has been done in the lower Rio Grande valley.

"Alfalfa is apparently wintering well, also fruit. The mountains are heavy with snow, but the valleys and southern slopes are generally bare. Range in northeast counties is poor and some loss of cattle and sheep is reported in that section, but generally stock is in fair to good condition and farmers and ranchmen appear confident of a most favorable season."

Robbed and Murdered.

An Albuquerque dispatch of February 1st says: John M. McMann, an ex-soldier, who was employed at the government's Fort Bayard sanitarium, got on a drunk yesterday and wandered over to the mining camp of Central, where he gambled. Last night he had won considerable money and this morning his dead body was found.

It is understood that after pocketing his winnings he started to walk to Fort Bayard, where he was overtaken, robbed and a shot fired through his head. Sheriff Farnsworth may make an arrest to-night.

Hearing at Santa Fe.

A Santa Fe dispatch of January 31st says:

In the Kansas-Colorado water right suit, testimony was heard to-day in the Supreme Court chamber by Commissioner G. A. Richardson of the United States Supreme Court. The United States was represented by A. C. Campbell of Washington, as assistant attorney general; the state of Colorado by C. D. Hayt of Denver and C. C. Dawson of Canon City, and the state of Kansas by S. S. Ashbaugh, with John R. Doyle of Denver, official stenographer.

Among the witnesses examined were Governor Otero, President Luther Foster of the College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts at Las Cruces, M. W. Mills of Colfax county, W. S. Hopewell, general manager of the Albuquerque Eastern railway, R. E. Twitchell of Las Vegas, T. B. Catron of this city and Solomon Luna of Los Lunas. The testimony introduced by these witnesses went to show the importance of irrigation in the arid regions and how land would be enhanced by the construction of irrigation systems and storage reservoirs under the reclamation act.

The great benefit to agriculture and horticulture due to irrigation was testified to by the witnesses and it was proved that from 3,000,000 to 15,000,000 acres of land could be irrigated in New Mexico by the proper storage and use of the waters from the streams in the territory.

Irrigation in New Mexico.

A Santa Fe dispatch of February 1st says: At the hearing before Commissioner G. A. Richardson in the Kansas-Colorado water case testimony was given to-day by R. E. Twitch, T. B. Catron and Solomon Luna. Their testimony was in regard to ancient methods of irrigation in New Mexico and how irrigation benefits the arid land.

Mr. Catron estimated that under the reclamation act at least 15,000,000 acres in this territory could be made productive, although only 250,000 acres are cultivated now. The commission completed its sitting here this evening and will proceed to Roswell for a couple of days. From there Commissioner Richardson and the attorneys in the case will go to Little Rock and Fort Smith, Arkansas.

How the Navajos Farm.

Mr. Prewitt of Aztec, San Juan county, in an interview published in the Santa Fe New Mexican, says:

"The Navajo Indians, whose reservation covers the entire western part of the county, have lately made wonderful progress in agricultural pursuits under the guidance of W. T. Sheldon, the agent for the north half of the Navajo reservation, and formerly of Santa Fe.

"Up to the present year the agriculture of the Navajos have been confined to small patches, easily irrigated along the streams, but in 1904 the matter was taken hold of systematically, the government having previously assisted the Navajos in constructing small ditches along the lower lands of the San Juan valley, and the results were more than could have been expected by the most sanguine. One Indian, besides supplying his own needs, sold 15,000 pounds of his wheat, and a careful estimate showed that the Navajos along the San Juan river had raised some 250,000 pounds of grain, besides other crops such as alfalfa, beans, potatoes, and a variety of other vegetables.

"The wonderful progress these Indians have made in agriculture should entitle them to a great deal of consideration from the government. I should say that from fifty to a hundred thousand acres of land along the San Juan valley, within the boundaries of the

Navajo reservation, could be irrigated from the San Juan river at a very reasonable cost. If the government would take this matter up and furnish sufficient money to take out ditches to cover this land, it could at once begin to put the Navajo Indians on a self-sustaining basis.

"First, the building of these ditches would furnish employment to the Indians, and to this class of work they are well adapted. Then, after the ditches were completed, enough land would be brought under irrigation to furnish practically every Indian on the reservation (of which there are some twenty thousand) with a home, on which he could become an independent farmer. And, as Commissioner Leupp is more or less familiar with the condition of the Navajos, I am in hopes he will take the matter up, and vigorously push it to completion."

Reservoir for Las Vegas Grant.

A Las Vegas dispatch of January 29th says: Las Vegas believes it is certain to secure a government reservoir. So satisfactory have been the assurances from the engineers as to the report that will be made upon the proposition that has been under consideration here for months, that a committee of citizens is now disposing of the 10,000 acres of land to be brought under irrigation. In less than one day's work 4,000 acres were taken up by residents and contract forms are being sent outside.

The commissioners of the Las Vegas grant will cede the land back to the government, and each taker of the land obligates himself to pay \$5.70 an acre for the land for ten years, at the expiration of which time the permanent water rights and the deed to the land go to the settler.

The land is deep and rich and the water would be sufficient to irrigate 25,000 acres. However, the amount available will not amount to much more than 10,000 acres. The small amount of land for a time made the recommendation of the project doubtful, but now that it is certain that every acre will be subscribed for in advance, and the government assured of the repayment of the money, it is felt that there will be no danger of the failure of the project.

In every respect, the statistics asked for by the department regarding the home markets, the kind of crops that can be raised, and the yield per acre, have been more than assuring.

Territorial Ranger Bill.

A Las Vegas dispatch says: The officers of the cattle sanitary board are taking the greatest interest in the fate of the ranger bill that has been prepared for introduction in the legislature. The general feeling of the cattlemen in this section is that the measure has no chance of passing, as it seems to be regarded by many as serving a special interest. Therefore, it is argued, the territory should not be put to the expense of paying for the ranges.

Secretary Barnes of the Territorial Cattle Growers' association, suggests a compromise measure, in case the bill fails, that doubtless will go through. It is that the cattlemen of the territory pay an additional mill taxes, and that this amount go to the payment of the salaries of seven or eight rangers to be under the supervision of the cattle sanitary board and the Cattle Growers' association.

Governor Otero has signed the bill changing the county seat of Torrance county from Progreso to Estancia and increasing the area of the county, and a bill providing for the salaries of the judge and the district clerk of the Sixth judicial district.