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IRRIGATION CONGRESS

Very Successful Meeting Last Week at Boise City, Idaho

Matters of Great Interest to Imperial Valley Considered and Important Action Taken. A Splendid beginning for the Nationalization of the Colorado River.

The fourteenth session of the National Irrigation Congress, which convened at Boise City, Idaho, on Sept. 3rd, was a memorable one in many ways. It was the largest and best attended gathering of the kind that has ever assembled, the speeches, papers and discussions were all of the very highest order of excellence and the work that was accomplished was most important. To begin with we will say that it is doubtful if a more beautiful or pleasant place could have been selected for its meetings than the splendid little city of Boise. All Idaho is justly proud of its beautiful capital city. The large number of delegates and immense throngs of visitors which attended the congress taxed their capacity, but everyone was cared for and all were made to feel and appreciate the abundant hospitality of the people of Boise and the state of Idaho. The attendance of delegates was so large that it took three days to get them all listed and a permanent roll established.

When this was done it was found that 1135 duly accredited and credentialed delegates were present and that thirty states were represented in the congress. Many of our nation's most eminent men were in attendance. Vice President Fairbanks brought us a personal message from President Roosevelt and made us a splendid address on citizenship and how irrigated agriculture contributes to its upbuilding. Then there were Governors Gooding, of Idaho; Mead, of Washington; Chamberlin of Oregon, Cutler, of Utah; Sparks, of Nevada and the governors of Montana and Wyoming, besides the senators from Idaho, Montana, Utah and Nevada and a number of congressmen from various states.

But of all the great men that attended that convention the most captivating personality was Henry St. George Tucker, of Virginia, who came to plead the cause of Jamestown in the contest for the location of the congress for 1907. Mr. Tucker is the gifted scion of a most illustrious lineage, being a descendant of the proudest names in Virginia history and in both bearing and address he amply upheld the fame of his great family and the reputation of his state. But for the hard work that was done by the California delegation, Sacramento would not have won the congress for 1907, but the matchless Tucker would have borne it away to Jamestown, Virginia. The programme for the public part of the congress had already been prepared by the executive committee and consisted of a great number of papers and addresses on all manner of subjects connected with irrigation and drainage, forestry, water conservation, dry farming, climatology and all sorts of matters connected with arid land reclamation and the development of the arid west. Among the eminent men in our government that were present were Charles D. Walcott, the chief of the Geological Survey; Gifford Pinchot, Chief Forester of the United

States; Dr. Elwood Mead, Chief of the Irrigation and Drainage Bureau; E. M. Douglass, Geographer; Dr. Moore, of the Weather Bureau; Prof. F. H. Newell, chief, and Morris Bein, attorney of the United States reclamation service. In addition to these there were also present Mr. L. H. Taylor, the engineer in charge of the Truckee Carson government irrigation project and D. W. Ross, resident engineer of Idaho. There were also a number of other gentlemen present who were connected with the government departments in various capacities. The business of the convention was conducted through its various State delegations and for this reason each state delegation met promptly upon arrival at Boise and organized by electing a chairman and secretary and selecting a member each for the committee on resolutions and the committee on permanent organization. In the case of the California delegation this work was supplemented by opening headquarters and beginning a campaign for the next congress. We had 1000 badges with "Sacramento, California, 1907" printed on them and each one took a pocket full and went to work pinning them on every delegate he could get to wear them and pledging all the support he could get to bring the congress to Sacramento in 1907. But for this work being done promptly and pushed with all vigor St. George Tucker would have captured the congress for Virginia.

Through the resolutions committee thus organized resolutions are considered and prepared for final presentation to the congress. Before a resolution can be presented to this committee, however, it must be endorsed by the state delegation of which its sponsor is a member. In this way every declaration to which the congress pledged itself was carefully scrutinized by the friends of public ownership and those who were looking out to see that no private ownership schemes got endorsed. Our experience in this matter is a case in point. We presented the following resolution to the California delegation: "Resolved, That we urge upon the United States government the immediate necessity of solving the various problems involved in the use of the waters of the lower Colorado river for irrigation." Much to our surprise a leading delegate demanded to know if this resolution was in favor of private enterprise. We explained the situation and stated that what we wished was an international agreement doing away with the old treaty between Mexico and the United States and devoting the waters of the Colorado to irrigation. We also explained that there were numerous other problems involved and we wished the support of the congress in urging upon our government the necessity of their immediate solution. The importance of the resolution and the desire to act upon it with caution and full information led to the appointment of a committee of three, consisting of S. W. Ferguson, of

San Francisco; Frank H. Freeman, of Willows, and Judge William Conley, of Madera. After 24 hours this committee reported favorably and the resolution was adopted by the California delegation as above given. It was then presented to the resolutions committee of the congress by Mr. Estudillo the California member. There it met with the same objection that was urged in the California delegation that it looked too favorable to private enterprise. Twitchell of New Mexico attacked it and said he spoke from his experience with the Rio Grande when he insisted that private enterprise be allowed no place on the international streams. He said the conflicting claims of private irrigation companies delayed the solution of the Rio Grande problem for years and that no progress was possible as long as they were allowed to figure in the matter but that as soon as they were shut out and the matter taken up by the government as a reclamation project the trouble was quickly settled. He therefore would not consent to anything short of the complete control of the Colorado river by the reclamation service. At this juncture Mr. Osgood, of Montana, took up the matter and stated that there were a number of streams along on the line between the United States and Canada and that as irrigation was being practiced in that country on both sides of the line he insisted that the resolution be so amended as to cover all international streams where irrigation is practiced. The resolution was therefore changed to meet the wishes of these gentlemen, it being felt that the purpose for which it was drawn was thus accomplished and that by limiting the work on international streams to the reclamation service the certainty of solving the problems involved would be greatly increased and the interests of the settlers placed in the safest hands that can be found. Also by including all international streams the recommendation fully represents the character and scope of the organization making it. The question of adopting this resolution was fully discussed by the committee and many of them expressed their pleasure in seeing the congress take such a broad stand on this very important subject. There was one other matter before the resolutions committee and later before the congress that is very important and that is the question of giving the federal courts jurisdiction over all interstate streams. As it is now where a stream runs in more than one state the people of the state highest up the stream can take all the water, regardless of the prior rights of those in another state lower down. This matter is well illustrated on the Arkansas river in Kansas and Platte river in Nebraska, on both of which rivers water users have been robbed of their water by later comers over the line in Colorado. Colorado made a hard fight against this resolution, but as their attitude was so manifestly selfish they were voted down. The matter of preparing a bill to cover the matter was referred to a committee of five, of which Professor Ellwood Mead is chairman and Mr. Frank Freeman, of Willows, California, is a member. Such legislation will have the effect of placing all interstate streams under the jurisdiction of the federal courts and will protect the water user on the lower part of a stream from being robbed of his water by a later coming higher up in another state. To that extent it is of interest to the people of this Valley, for we want to have a method by which we can prevent the people of the

five or six states above us on the Colorado and its tributaries from robbing us of our water should they ever attempt to do it. These two resolutions were the most important of all that were adopted and were certainly of greatest importance to the people of this Valley. The rest of them were principally endorsements of the reclamation service and of the various branches of government work engaged in arid land redemption. Taken all together it can be said that it was a 'government ownership' convention. No one could have gotten a resolution or endorsement through that convention or through that resolution committee in favor of a private ownership scheme. The great work of the reclamation service, the unquestioned integrity and ability of its officials and the justice and wisdom of its policy was emphatically endorsed without a murmur of dissent.

While at the congress we talked with Mr. Newell and the rest of the reclamation service officials who were there about the Imperial Valley situation. They expressed themselves as quite hopeful of the success of the Southern Pacific in shutting the water out and getting the Colorado under control. I asked them how the questions affecting the Colorado as between the governments was progressing and they said they had not been informed but they did say that if it should become necessary for the government to undertake the control of the Colorado river they had no doubt but that a way would be found for them to do it. In reply to a question Mr. Newell said that whenever the Imperial Valley people were ready to make a proposition to them the reclamation service would be ready to consider it. Taken altogether their expressions were far more hopeful of the possibilities for government irrigation than we had expected to hear. We found a great deal better understanding of the Imperial Val-

ley situation than we had expected and everyone with whom we talked felt that Mexico is responsible for the damages done by the flood waters. Also that the government should control the Colorado river in all its relations with Mexico and that private enterprise should have no place in its irrigation development. We were much pleased with the irrigation congress and feel that its actions in everything that relates to our interests was well considered and timely.

Reports from 14 County Schools

San Diego Tribune:

Opening reports have been sent in to the county board of education by the following schools:

September 4, Bernardo, Elsie Sykes, teacher; September 3, Buna, Lila Barnes, teacher; September 4, El Cajon, Francis Bartliff principal; Miss Theodora Birdseye, teacher; September 4, Clover Flat, Francis Davis, teacher; September 4, Cuyamaca, Ruth Patterson, teacher; September 4, El Centro, Mrs. Mary A. Tuttle, teacher; September 4, Earle, Della Booth, teacher; September 17, Honey Springs, Cora Kline, teacher; September 3, Monserrate, Sadie Wells, teacher; September 10, Oakdale, Mary C. Beckler, teacher; September 10, Ocean View, Henrietta Smith, teacher; September 10, Otay, Mrs. Alderson, principal; Lu Harmon, teacher; September 14, San Felipe, Kate Schiller, teacher; August 27, Ramona, George B. MacGillivray, teacher.

Thirty-eight others, mostly remote desert and mountain schools are yet to be heard from.

The work of clearing away the debris on the ice plant is rapidly progressing. Mr. Ernest Fromme, who will supervise the erection of the building and installation of the machinery, arrived this week and is busily getting everything ready for rushing the work under his charge.

WHERE MORE THAN
\$200,000
IS BEING SPENT

The town of El Centro was started in the fall of 1905 and is now about 8 months old. It is located in the center of the best part of the Imperial Valley, and is destined to become the metropolis.

The following improvements now completed, or under way, make a record to be proud of:

Ice and Cold Storage Plant (Brick)	\$75,000
Hotel El Centro (Brick)	30,000
Transformer Station and Power Lines	20,000
Opera House Block (Brick)	40,000
Cement Sidewalks	10,000
Water Works System	10,000
Electric Light Plant for El Centro	5,000
S. P. R. R. Depot	6,000
Holt Block (5 brick stores)	15,000
Machine Shop and Equipment	2,500
Hotel Franklin	5,000
Hardware Store	2,000
El Centro Cantaloupe Association Packing House	2,000
Peterson Building (Brick)	1,200
Fuller's Residence	1,500
Three Cottages	3,000
El Centro Land Co's Office	800
Blinn Lumber Co. Yards	2,500
Fuller & Aten's Office	600
Grading Streets, Etc.	1,000
Total	\$234,100

For information regarding El Centro and the Imperial Valley, and its opportunities, address

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EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA