

IMPERIAL VALLEY PRESS

Official Paper of Imperial County and City of El Centro.

VOL. X.

EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA, SATURDAY, MAY 28, 1910.

No. 8.

FLOODS OF THE COLORADO BARRED FROM THE VALLEY

THIRTEEN MILES OF LEVEE BUILT IN FIVE WEEKS TO HEAD OFF RIVER'S FLOW TO SALTON SEA

Work Was Begun Just in Time to Avert Danger to Irrigation System. Receiver, Engineer and Editors on Tour of Inspection See The Water Standing Against The Barrier Thrown Up Below the Boundary.

Imperial Valley is safeguarded against invasion by the flood waters of the Colorado river this year by extension of the levee thirteen miles southwest from the end of the levee built by the Southern Pacific when the break of the river was closed in 1907. This work has been done in five weeks by Manager W. K. Bowker, of the C-M. ranch, under a contract with Receiver Holabird that allowed fifty days for completion of the levee.

Quick work was necessary because the start was delayed by the efforts of Boaz Duncan and other creditors of the California Development Company to force settlement of their claims by obstructing the Receiver and creating a situation so menacing to the irrigation system of the valley that the Southern Pacific or the settlers would have to submit to their extortionate demands or compromise with them in order to save the valley. It was the intention of the Receiver and the engineers to begin the work in March, and the Superior Court was about to authorize the Receiver to issue the necessary certificates, when the Supreme Court interfered with a writ of prohibition on March 25 on application of Boaz Duncan, restraining Judge Cole from taking any action and directing him to show cause on April 11 why the appointment of a receiver should not be set aside.

That placed the valley between the devil and the deep blue sea for fair. Judge Wellborn had issued an injunction restraining the C. D. Co. from letting any water run from the river into Salton Sea, and that injunction, so interpreted as to permit necessary use of water in the valley, had been made permanent. Then the Supreme Court, in the abundance of its ignorance, enjoined the receiver of the C. D. Co. from doing anything to prevent the whole Colorado from pouring through New River into Salton Sea. One court came near destroying the canals by drying them up, and the other proposed to let a flood wash them away and ruin the valley. With the receiver it was a case of I'll be damned if I do, and I'll be damned if I don't. And both injunctions were issued ostensibly to protect the interests of the Salt Company, whose works have been under eighty feet of water for the past four years.

But the Supreme Court was enlightened promptly and persuaded to advance the hearing, and on April 4 the writ of prohibition was dismissed. The receiver was authorized by Judge Cole to proceed with the work, the contract was closed and Bowker's forces began operations on April 12. Duncan, the Salt Company and other obstructive litigants made one more attempt at a hold-up by moving for change of venue to get the control of the canal system out of Imperial County and into the hands of some Judge conveniently ignorant of conditions. The hold-up failed and the canal system was saved from destruction.

This is the season of floods in the Colorado. The river begins to rise in April, overflows the delta lands in Mexico in May and reaches its highest stage in June. The river left its old channel last year and took a new course to the gulf, pouring its whole volume through old drainage channels in the delta and flooding a great area of forest below the line. There is a low "divide" between the delta lands and the basin of the Imperial Valley, and the flood, if unobstructed, would pour over that slight elevation and flow northward to Sal-

ton Sea by way of New River, carrying out the flume over New River and cutting off the water supply of the west side. The levee is on the crest of the divide, and its function is to bar the northward overpour and force the waters to take a southerly course by way of Volcano Lake and numerous channels through the delta into the Hardy and thence to the gulf. A levee built two years ago from Black Butte eastward north of Volcano Lake and across New River outlet prevents the flood from invading the valley at that point. A gap of nine miles between the Volcano levee and the new levee is on higher ground and will not be crossed by the flood this year, but unless the Colorado is put back into its old bed, the silting up of the delta may make it necessary to close the gap with protective works.

Receiver Holabird's levee was not started a moment too soon, and if the work had not been done with extraordinary celerity by Mr. Bowker's forces it would not have been completed in time to avert serious damage to the canal system. The flood waters were lapping the southern slopes of the earth banks, thrown up to check them, before the levee was finished. On Thursday, May 19, Receiver Holabird, Engineer C. K. Clarke Mr. Bowker and others, including several newspaper men of the valley, inspected the work and found the water standing against the levee for about five miles along the western end. In one arroya crossed by the levee there was a sixteen-foot head of water against the bank, and the work was being widened and strengthened at that point to avert any possibility of a break.

The contract called for eleven miles of levee, but the overflow found unexpected courses to the northward beyond the end and an extension of two miles was made. Also the height of the levee was increased by two feet for a considerable distance. The water standing against the levee is back water from the overflowed delta and has no current and no erosive action. Seepage and undercutting have been guarded against by "muck-trenching" the foundation of the levee, and the engineers have no fear that the high water next month will make any breach in the work. All the arroyas leading northward from the overflow were cut off with tapoons before the levee work was begun, and as there is a sharp fall of land to the south it is expected that the flood will cut deep channels in that direction and drain off through the Abejos and the Pescador into the Hardy without rising against the levee. The overflow south of the levee is now about sixteen miles wide.

Construction of a levee thirteen miles long, eleven feet wide on the top and varying in height from five to fifteen feet is something of a feat to be performed in five weeks by a force organized specially for the occasion. A contracting company already organized and having equipment in the field under experienced men would be going some to do the work in that time. Mr. Bowker had to organize his outfit on the jump, put green men and green stock on the fresnos and break men and mules to the work as he went along. He had 700 mules on the job two days after signing the contract, and the flood was so imminent that he had to throw up a protective border outside of the line of the levee to keep out the water while he was clearing the line of brush and digging the muck trench.

The foresight of the engineer and the judgment of Receiver Holabird and Judge Cole in authorizing the ex-

penditure of \$80,000 for protection of the canal system are vindicated by the event. The receiver took the risk of being criticised for spending money for unnecessary work, in case the flood should not come up to the levee, but he chose that chance in preference to incurring the possible charge of criminal negligence if the flood should destroy any of the canals.

Under Engineer Clarke, the engineers in direct charge of the work were F. M. Upstill and Chester Allison, and Mr. Bowker's foreman was Bert Phillips, all of whom made good and proved their efficiency.

Mr. Bowker made a picnic tour of inspection last week and took a party of twenty in four automobiles from Calexico to the levee and thence to Volcano Lake. His guests, besides the receiver and engineer and news writers, were Mrs. Bowker, daughter and two sisters, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney McHarg and Messrs. Austin and Whelon, irrigation experts from Utah, who have been making a thorough study of the Imperial Valley system.

All day Friday the party cruised about Volcano Lake on the "Lucy B" trying to find a way into the channels by which the water enters the lake from the flooded forest, but had to conclude that the Colorado in that part of its course is not navigable by anything larger than a canoe.

CANDIDATES ON A TOUR

Eshleman, Johnson and Wallace Open Campaign in Imperial Valley.

Today the State political campaign begins in Imperial Valley so far as personal visits of candidates is concerned. Three candidates of the Lincoln-Roosevelt Republican League will make the rounds in this valley today, closing with a grand rally at the Holt Opera House, in El Centro, this evening, at 7:00 o'clock. The party will be composed of John M. Eshleman, of this city, candidate for Railroad Commissioner from the Third District; Hiram W. Johnson, candidate for Governor, and A. J. Wallace, candidate for Lieutenant Governor.

They will go first to Calexico, and from thence to Holtville by automobiles. Then they visit Brawley and Imperial, and will arrive on the 6 o'clock train at El Centro, where they will be met by the local John M. Eshleman Club and the El Centro Concert Band, and will be escorted to the Hotel Oregon for an informal reception.

The meeting at the Opera House will open promptly at 7:00 o'clock, so that it may be concluded in time for the Elks to have their meetings afterwards.

Details for the meeting were arranged at a meeting of the Eshleman Club held at the City Hall Wednesday evening. Badges and cane pennants have been provided, and each club member is to consider himself a committee of one to show the visitors that Imperial County is enthusiastically behind the candidacy of John M. Eshleman.

ADVENTURE IN THE DESERT

Sheriff Sized Up as Highwayman and Eluded by Lost Man Carrying Diamonds.

Sheriff Meadows went out in his automobile last Thursday to rescue a party of Los Angeles jewelers that had started from San Diego to come to the valley over the mountains and had been reported as lost with a disabled car somewhere on the desert. One of the party, F. M. Raiche, was on his way to El Centro afoot, and when he saw an automobile carrying armed men approaching he had visions of highwaymen and hid in the west side ditch until it passed. Raiche arrived in town well satisfied that he had eluded the bandits and saved diamonds of vast value and a wad of money big enough to choke a whale that he said he carried in his clothes.

The sheriff met the rest of the party and the disabled car near Coyote Wells. Forrester was towing the outfit with four mules.

BUYS SCHOOL LAND

The State of California has issued a certificate of purchase to Ida Palmer for all of section 16, township 14, range, 17. The receiver of this certificate has transferred by deed this land to Bruce L. Dray.

BUSINESS OF CITY ADVANCED BY BOARD

Making Provision for Irrigation of Shade Trees in the Streets

Trustees Consider Ordinances Regulating Payment of Claims and Salaries, Appoint Night Watchman, Amend Building Regulations and Sidestep Contract For City Printing.

The El Centro City Trustees met at the City Hall on Tuesday night, all being present except Trustee Burger. The minutes of the meetings of May 10, 17 and 19 were read and approved.

A communication was read from W. T. Bill stating that he had deposited in a bank here the deeds for the twenty acres of land desired as a site for the water works, subject to transfer to the city upon its payment of \$5000. The clerk was instructed to ask Mr. Bill to send an abstract of title to this property.

City Engineer Pearson reported that the intake ditch from the settling basins to the Date canal had been cleaned out and that a portion of the ditches for irrigation leading from the Orange ditch had been constructed.

A communication from W. F. Holt was read, asking that the City Trustees meet him today to confer in regard to the proposed transfer to the city land now occupied by the settling basins and intake ditch.

A communication from the Women's Ten Thousand Club was read. That body objects to the plans adopted for street tree planting, asserting that it will be inartistic and unattractive, and asks that the board reconsider a resolution adopted by the previous board in which eucalyptus and pepper trees are designated as the varieties to be used on the streets. The Club asks that property owners be given broader liberty in the selection of tree varieties. After discussion the communication was tabled.

The board approved bills as follows:

Imperial Valley Press, \$41.12; Hazel Crabb, \$11.30; Frank Valley, \$15; Frank Valley, \$7.50; City Treasurer, for money advanced to pay laborers, \$53.74 and \$72.50.

The City Clerk was instructed to draw warrants for these amounts.

Ordinance No. 53, prescribing the form and methods to be used in filing claims against the city was read and adopted.

Ordinance No. 54, amending Ordinance No. 1 as to time of payment of city officers' salaries, was read and adopted.

The board adopted a resolution creating the position of night watchman, with a salary of \$65 per month attached thereto, and appointing H. A. Havens as night watchman.

City Attorney Noland presented a communication relative to the payment of poll tax by members of the fire company. This stated that as the fire company had filed no list of its members with the city, there was no legal method of designating who would be exempt from the payment of poll tax, although the State law provides for such exemptions when the proper steps are taken.

Bids for city printing for the ensuing year were opened. The Imperial Valley Press bid fifty cents per inch for first insertions, and twenty-five cents per inch for each subsequent insertion. The Free Lance bid fifteen cents per inch for first insertions, and seven and one-fourth cents per inch for subsequent insertions.

The call for bids stated that all bids must be received before noon of May 24. The bid of The Imperial Valley Press was the only one so received. Action on bids was deferred until the next regular meeting of the board.

Dr. J. C. Blackinton appeared before the board and asked for permission to erect a lath house for the display of greenhouse plants on the lot adjoining the old postoffice building. Trustee Hamilton objected to this apparent violation of the city ordinance prohibiting the erection of wooden buildings within certain districts, and the City Attorney refused to give his opinion as to whether the

proposed structure came under this prohibition until plans and specifications were placed before the board. For this purpose the board arranged an adjourned meeting for Wednesday evening.

Wednesday's Meeting

At the adjourned meeting of the City Trustees on Wednesday evening all members were present.

Dr. J. C. Blackinton presented the plans and specifications of the lath house building which he proposes to erect on Main street, adjoining the old postoffice building, and City Attorney Noland gave his written opinion that the erection of such a structure would be in violation of the city ordinance, No. 14.

After a general discussion, the Board decided to amend the ordinance so as to admit of the erection of greenhouses for plants within the fire limits, and instructed the City Attorney to prepare such an amendment to be presented at the next meeting of the Board.

The Board voted to reconsider its action of the previous evening postponing action on the bids for city printing until the next regular meeting, and voted to take up the matter of bids at once.

Trustee Hamilton moved, seconded by Trustee Whitescarver, that the contract be awarded to the Free Lane.

Objection was raised that the bid of the Imperial Valley Press was the only one legally before the Board, and City Attorney Noland sustained this objection and advised the readvertisement for bids. The Board voted to readvertise for bids, and instructed the City Attorney to prepare the necessary notice to bidders.

Paul Boman, representing the trustees of the El Centro school district, appeared before the Board and asked for the vacation of the alley between Olive and Brighton streets extending through the school grounds. The vacation was allowed.

The Board then adjourned until the next regular meeting.

COMMENCEMENT DAY

Central Union High School Will Grad- uate Two Students Friday Evening.

The second annual commencement exercises of the Central Union High School will take place in the Holt Opera House on Friday evening, June 3. The graduating class consists of two students, Miss Beryl Rapp, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. V. Rapp, and George Clinton Hell, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Hell.

The graduates will each present topics of general interest. The principal address of the evening will be delivered by Prof. W. S. Thomas, examiner of secondary schools and a member of the faculty of the University of California. His theme will be "The High School and the Community." This speaker has been a high school principal of many years' experience, and as he knows high school work to its last detail his address will be full of practical points.

M. W. Conkling, president of the Board of Trustees, will speak of the practical administration of the high school, including its finances, its courses and subjects of study, and the policy of the board in the conduct of the school. He will also speak of the growing needs of the school and the tentative plans of the board for its development.

A special musical program has been prepared by the high school chorus and members of the school, under the direction of Miss Ethel Foster, who has been instructor in music in the high and grammar schools the past year.

BUYS FOURTEEN-ACRE TRACT

W. H. Rakestraw, president of the Automatic Vacuum Cleaner Company, of Bloomington, Illinois, has purchased a fourteen-acre tract of land in the Meloland district from the Joseph R. Loftus Company, and plans to make further investments in Imperial Valley lands. He is enthusiastic over the outlook for the valley.

COLLEGE MEN MEET

The college men and women of El Centro and vicinity gave an informal dinner at Hotel Oregon on Wednesday evening, with Dr. Kendrick C. Babcock, president of the University of Arizona, as the guest of honor.

MAKING OF MANHOOD AIM OF EDUCATION

Address By Dr. Babcock at Dedication of Heber Institute.

President of Arizona University Ad- vises Against Trying to Cover Whole Field of Practical Science and Urges Attention to Problems Peculiar to the Imperial Valley.

Dr. Kendrick C. Babcock, president of the University of Arizona, delivered the address of the evening at Heber College Institute last Wednesday night. The occasion was the formal dedication of the Administration Building, the first permanent structure of the institution.

In the course of his talk, the theme of which was "Educational Investments by the Community," Dr. Babcock pointed out that the fact that the people of the United States have \$50 million dollars to aid and maintain their schools, is but an index to the trend of progress. "Material investment is but a sign and symbol of the age. Back of it are sound sentiment and idealism. Heber College Institute will not be a success unless the people of this community invest their boys and girls in the broader life of the community—which is the end to be sought in sending them to the institution.

"There is danger of neglecting two factors, in the investment in education. The first of these is time. I have recently seen an advertisement of an engineering school which proposes to make a thoroughly equipped engineer out of a man inside of two years. Save us from the tolerably good engineer! Save us from the tolerably good farmer! The world has no more use for tolerably good men than for tolerably good eggs. It takes time to make the men and women the world wants. The second factor is what might be called force, purpose, or will—the determination to make of oneself a good man or woman, and to build upon that the making of a good engineer, a good farmer, a good housewife. The investment of time and energy as well as money by the people of the Imperial Valley will be necessary to make Heber Institute a success.

"It would not be wise to attempt too much in an institution situated as this one is. Do not attempt to teach electrical engineering, unless some way is developed for getting electricity from the sun or the winds or the waters of the valley. Do not teach marine engineering unless you become sure that the Salton Sea will be ever with you and is to be connected with the ocean by canal. Do not attempt other branches of so-called practical education which have no bearing on the life of this valley. But set yourself definite problems—problems whose solution will mean much for the advancement of the community in which you are located. Ever aim first to make men—then upon this foundation build engineers or farmers.

"A feature which much be developed and emphasized is the principle of co-operation. Men are now becoming necessarily more and more welded together. It is not hard for you here to realize that you have interests in common with farmers living higher up the Colorado River; that they have a responsibility to you. With this as one of its ideals, the Institute will develop men and women with the sense of service—the type of men and women demanded by the modern world.

"We dedicate this building because there is need of it in this community and in the world. May it ever be a place devoted to the inspiration and guidance.

Other speakers during the evening were Professor Mott H. Arnold, Principal of the Imperial Union High School whose theme was "The Harmonious Development of Imperial Valley Schools;" Miss Emily McCord, representing the student body of the institute; Dr. M. B. Campbell, who formally turned over the building to the faculty; and Dean Chas. J. Booth, who in the name of the faculty accepted the building. Miss Irene Wade sang two selections, and Mrs. E. M. Rogers of Imperial, played two piano solos. There were present between 150 and 200 representative citizens