

HEAP TALK.

There is a duel to the death on between Elwood Mead and George H. Maxwell. It is over irrigation. One is a United States officer, Mr. Mead being chief of irrigation investigations of the Interior Department, while the latter until the last irrigation congress was president of the National Irrigation Association.

Mead asserts that Maxwell acted in bad faith, and accused him of opposing the national irrigation act. He claims that Maxwell is actuated by personal animosity, and attacked the department because possibly of "sour grapes," and both men mix up over land leases and technical things hard for one not acquainted with the facts to understand. As likely one or both of the principals will attend the Oregon Irrigation Convention, it assumes greater interest.

Whatever the points of difference, the following language, expressed by Mr. Mead in an open letter to the delegates, and just issued, is plain enough to be understood. It says:

"Judging from the fervor with which Mr. Maxwell now supports the national irrigation act and attacks those whom he claims opposed it, one would suppose it had, from start to finish, received his unswerving support."

Mr. Mead then quotes Mr. Maxwell as saying, in his paper, about the act, among other things: "The whole movement is a scheme of speculators and landgrabbers to loot the national treasury for selfish, private profit."

"The 17 Western members," continues Mr. Mead, "who framed the national irrigation act can answer for themselves whether 'the whole movement was a scheme of speculators, etc. That is Mr. Maxwell's statement, not mine. If I had said it, I would have expected to be charged with opposing the bill, and would have been chary about charging opposition on the part of others."

"For more than four years Mr. Maxwell has been before the country as the head of the National Irrigation Association. He has maintained expensive offices in Washington, D. C., and Chicago. He has carried on a correspondence bureau from Chicago, and run a press bureau and published a paper in Washington in which he has praised his supporters and abused those whom he dislikes. He has given his entire time to his propaganda. It is fair to ask who has furnished the money for this censorship of Congress and public officials, and what has been the real influence which controls his activities. The San Francisco Chronicle answers these questions editorially as follows:

"George H. Maxwell, of San Francisco, who has been prominent in the National Irrigation Association for years, is the uncompromising foe of the bill, and declares it cannot pass. The organ of the Irrigation Association has published an article against the bill, and this is being used by the Eastern enemies of irrigation to show that the Western people do not agree among themselves. It is quite time that this so-called 'Irrigation' should be unmasked. It is an association of five transcontinental railroad lines, each of which contributes \$6,000 per annum to the concern, and it is nothing else whatever. Its agent is this man Maxwell, who spends money lavishly in Washington and elsewhere, ostensibly for

the 'association,' and we challenge the proof that the association has ever received any income worth mentioning except from the treasury of these railroads. If it is a public association, maintained in the public interest, why does it not issue the financial statement usual in such societies? It does not dare to print such a financial statement, and it cannot be induced to do so. This is no secret. It is well understood at Washington."

"I am informed," continues Mr. Mead, "that substantially the same charges were made before a Congressional committee. Mr. Maxwell has never publicly denied them, and I know that he cannot truthfully deny some of them."

The writer goes on to declare that now, since the irrigation act has received such popular favor, Mr. Maxwell is claiming credit, and represents that he has entire charge of the irrigation work in the West; in fact, is encouraging the belief that he "is a sort of foster-child of Uncle Sam, and whatever he says goes with his gifted parent."

Again Mead says: "This explanation is made because of a belief in the work being done by the Agricultural Department, and that to have it misrepresented and misunderstood would be an injury to the whole country, because of a belief that Mr. Maxwell's present activities are altogether selfish, and that they threaten the working of a beneficent measure. An understanding and investigation of the questions I have raised is desired with myself and all those connected with the irrigation work of the Agricultural Department."

It will be seen from the foregoing that the department is considerably aroused over the attacks of Mr. Maxwell, and just where the controversy will end is problematical. The chances seem favorable toward some of the spirit of the enmity creeping into the Oregon Irrigation Congress soon to be held.

HOW TO KILL SMUT.

There was a fairly large attendance of farmers at the state experiment station last week to witness the experiments conducted by the station staff in treating wheat to kill the smut growth, and deep interest was manifested in the work that means so much to the farming interests of eastern Washington.

For the conducting of the experiments, which were under the supervision of Prof. Beattie, a lot of badly smutted red chaff wheat was purchased from a local warehouse, this being divided into a number of lots, each lot being accorded different treatment, the various lots then being planted under like conditions in plats on the station farm, the soil and location of each plat being identical.

All the wheat was treated by fanning as it is handled by the average farmer, and plat No. 1 was seeded with this wheat untreated for smut. Plat No. 2 was seeded with wheat treated by the hot water method; No. 3 with the formalin in trough; No. 4 with formalin sprinkled; No. 5 with vitriol in trough; No. 6 with vitriol in barrel, and No. 7 with wheat soaked for 12 hours in a weak solution of vitriol.

Experiment No. 5 was conducted by Hon. Lillis F. Smith, in the manner advocated by him, and No. 6 by Mr. Kittzmilller, after his method, each of which has proven successful on the

A Quart Baby.

Now and again there is an item in the newspapers concerning the birth of a puny baby so small that a quart cup holds it comfortably. If the article told all the facts it would probably tell also of a mother who in weakness and misery had looked forward to the baby's advent with shrinking and fear.

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farms of the gentlemen named, and explanation of which has been given in previous articles.

The growth and harvest of these various plants will be watched with deepest interest by everyone in eastern Washington, where the smut problem is of such great importance, for it is hoped that the time is near when some successful remedy will be found for the smut disease which causes the loss of thousands of dollars every year.

The college, in line with experiments already made, recommends the treatment of seed wheat by using the formalin in trough, as in experiment No. 3. In a bulletin just issued, this method is given as follows:

"Make a large tight watering trough. The size will depend upon the amount of grain to be treated at one time. The larger the trough the more quickly and economically the grain can be treated. A trough 12 feet long, two feet wide and two feet deep will treat more than 20 bushels of wheat at one time. Make up the formalin solution at the rate of one pound of formalin to 60 gallons of water. Do not make it stronger than one pound of formalin to 45 gallons of water, or you will kill your wheat. Partly fill the trough with this solution.

"Pour or shovel the wheat slowly from the sacks into the trough, so that the wild oat grains and smut balls will separate out and float. Skim these off. Getting rid of the wild oats is usually worth a cent or two a bushel to the farmer. Add more solution and more wheat until the trough is nearly full. Let the wheat remain



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