

OUR SOIL SURVEY

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soils were most likely deposited in salt or brackish water when this was a part of the sea, we may directly conclude that the major part of the salt came from sea water.

"The floods from the Colorado river brought in other salts, particularly sulphates, and much changed the composition of the salts deposited from the sea."

It is the experience of farmers on lands where irrigation is necessary, that white alkali is much less harmful than black alkali, and that it yields readily to irrigation.

That certainly appears to be the case in Imperial Valley. Of all the lands so far irrigated and farmed there is none that shows any indication of damage by increase in the amount of alkali, and the universal report is that the alkali that showed up on the borders and ditch banks when irrigating was first begun has disappeared. There is none of it shows on the ground anywhere, and that it has all been driven down into the ground by irrigating waters.

It should be born in mind that the soils of this Valley are unlike those of any other part of the country. There does not seem to be any water plane below us, and there is certainly no underdrainage or underflow of water. A well bored in Imperial during January, 1905, was sunk to a depth of 780 feet, and was in the same soil all the way down and did not strike any water.

The irrigating water sinks very slowly and takes the salt down with it. The longer the land is in cultivation and under irrigation, the better it will be; that is the only conclusion we can reach from the observation and experience of our farmers.

As we have shown the area indicated to have too much alkali for any kind of crops, is being reclaimed and growing very profitable crops. We may therefore conclude that we have at least 450,000 acres of good farming lands in this Valley. The soil survey grants us 387,264, and we can reclaim the 63,600 acres given as containing from six-tenths to one per cent of alkali contents, and have 460,864 acres.

We have reclaimed lands containing more than three per cent of alkali according to the soil survey, and are now producing perfect crops of barley and alfalfa on them. We therefore should not doubt our ability to reclaim the lands the alkali men say contains only one third as much. There is much food for thought in the soil survey from which we have quoted, and we believe it to have been carefully and conscientiously made, and to reflect great credit on the Bureau of Soils.

However, it is results that are required to determine things, and the results so far obtained are much more favorable than the soil survey said could be obtained on these lands. This is much better for the farmers than if the recommendations of the soil survey had been too favorable, as it is much better to have our hopes more than realized than it is to have them dashed to the ground and overcome with disappointment. We believe that every one can say that so far as the soil is concerned they have found the farming in this Valley to more than fulfill their most sanguine expectations.

The Yuma Project

The bids for the construction of the Laguna dam were opened at the office of Supervising Engineer J. B. Lippincott in Los Angeles on Wednesday, the 15th inst. They were as follows:

Chicago Engineering and Construction Company, Chicago, \$1,295,413 (informal); Chicago Engineering and Construction Company, Chicago, \$1,356,413 (formal); P. McDonald, Duluth, Minn., \$882,612.50; Andrew Holloway, Pasadena, \$1,294,150; Keltie Contract Company, Joliet, Ill., \$1,933,200; City Street Improvement Company, San Francisco, \$882,750; J. G. White & Company, New York, \$1,196,255; Orman & Crook, Pueblo, Colo., \$835,650; Faris-Kesil Construction Company, Boise, Idaho, \$924,150; Bentley, Tuttle & Pelton Co., San Francisco, \$971,670; Mosier-DeGraff Contracting Company, Buffalo, \$927,852; Block & Laird, Birmingham, Ala., \$1,229,392.50; N. S. Sherman, Oklahoma City, \$1,569,357.50; Griffin & McDermot, Chicago, \$935,069.

The bids have been forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior, by whom the contract will be awarded.

Homer Hamlin, engineer in charge of construction, was present when the bids were opened and telegraphed to the Reclamation office here, and to M. Winsor, president of the Water Users' Association, that the lowest bid was \$835,650 by Orman & Crook of Pueblo, Colo. Though no official statement can be given it is quite evident that this will be accepted. In the case of the Tonto dam each bidders' offer stated the time for completing the work, as well as amount, and naturally it required more time to consider the respective merits of the different proposals than in the case of the Yuma dam, where the time is set by the Reclamation Bureau, and the only items to be considered by the government is the amount of the bid and the responsibility of the bidder. It required twenty-three days to make the award for the Tonto dam and is likely to require less to make the award for that at Laguna.

Orman & Crook are everywhere regarded as responsible. Mr. Orman is an ex-Governor of Colorado and well-known as one of the most energetic business men of the state. The firm is now engaged in building the Denver Northwestern and Pacific railroad and have constructed many other important engineering works.

The lowest bid is within \$8,000 of the engineers' estimate, and the fact that this bid and six others fall within a range of \$40,000, is abundant proof that our engineers are careful, painstaking and thoroughly competent. Yuma valley people may rest assured that the great work of the Yuma project will be well done. J. C. Clauson, assistant engineer in charge of the Yuma project, expresses great satisfaction with the prospects and is eager to begin the work.

The contractor must commence the work promptly after the execution of the contract. The rate of progress of the work shall be such as in the opinion of the engineers is necessary for its completion within the time specified—Yuma Sun.

A closing out sale is going on at H. R. Andre's store—now is the time to buy goods cheap.

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