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Current Comment.

Irrigation vs. rainfall.  
Rainfall weakens the fertility of the soil, irrigation strengthens it. Irrigation was resorted to some 3000 years ago in Babylon and Ninevah, when there was a question of how to get bread for the multitude. By accident it was discovered that the yield of the valleys could be doubled by irrigation. Yet today there are thousands of farmers who see their crops perish through lack of moisture. In the Snake river valley, where there is an abundance of water and thorough systems of irrigation there are no failures through drought, there is no decrease in the fertility of the soil, but the longer it is irrigated the more fertile it becomes and the oldest farms we have are the most productive, where drainage has been attended to, being of equal importance with the irrigation. The government recently experimented with the waters of the Colorado river and determined by analysis that the water used to irrigate one acre of ground during the irrigation season contained fertilizers, which, if purchased in the open market, would cost \$7.50 per acre. Think what that means, nature replenishes your soil each season and makes it produce constantly increasing crops. In the rain belt the condition is just the reverse, the rainfall moistens the soil, and tends to gradually decrease the strength of the soil. This is more forcibly illustrated in the quantity of protein harvested from irrigated lands, when compared with the best in the rain belt sections. Corn is their great staple, just as alfalfa is that of the irrigated farm. An eastern farm will produce about one ton of corn to the acre, corn contains about 10.3 per cent protein. The Snake river valley farms produce from seven and one-half to ten tons of alfalfa an acre, and alfalfa contains 14.3 per cent protein. The alfalfa is also produced by much less labor than required for the corn. The eastern man has an annual expense for fertilizers and heavy labor bills, while the western man produces ten times the quantity at less expense. This explains why so many eastern farmers are coming to the great Snake river valley, where lands are cheap and productive and drought failures unknown; with the short, mild winters and the long growing seasons.

The federal land officials in the Roseburg and Portland districts have been asked to resign when their terms of office expire. The people who have dealings with the Burns office are well satisfied with the present officials and sincerely hope that no change will be made. Wm. Farre is thoroughly familiar with the requirements of the office and is courteous and obliging to all having business with the land office.

Many burglaries are reported in the Payette and Boise valleys, indicating a gang has been working west from Boise. So far the thieves have not been working much around Ontario, one recently visited the oil well, helped himself to some lubricating oil and neglected to close the tap, when the employes arrived next morning it looked as though a small sized gusher had been loose. Another of the gentry visited the turkey shed at the Carter house and purloined a few birds. It is a safe plan to keep things locked up

BOND ISSUE GOES FOR NEW DITCHES

RECLAMATION FUND TO BE USED ON OLD PROJECTS.

SETTLERS ASK FOR SPEED

Yakima Valley Clamors for Government to Complete Its Work in Haste.

Washington, Nov. 16.—If congress authorizes a bond issue to facilitate government irrigation work, the money in the reclamation fund will be largely applied to the development of new projects. On the other hand, if there is no bond issue, the reclamation fund, for the next few years, must be utilized almost exclusively for the completion of the existing projects, to the exclusion of virtually all new work. President Taft has gone over the situation with Secretary Ballinger, and it is understood to be his purpose to complete existing projects before turning to something altogether new.

In view of the attitude assumed by the administration, the importance of the bond issue to the entire west can hardly be overestimated.

The predicament which confronts the government is fairly illustrated in the Yakima Valley. The money necessary to build the big storage and distribution works is, or is being put in, and it can not be returned to the reclamation fund until the project is completed and every acre has passed to private ownership and been placed under cultivation. The settlers now in the valley cannot defray the whole cost of the project; it must be apportioned pro rata, according to the acreage. Naturally, the people are clamoring for the early completion of the big Yakima project. And good business management would demand that the project as a whole be rushed to completion, for the sooner it is completed the sooner will the money be returned to be available for use on some other project.

The same situation is true on the Payette-Boise project in Idaho.

MUST PAY FULL VALUE

New Leasing System Puts Reservations on Business Basis.

Washington, Nov. 16.—From this time forward Indian grazing lands leased to stockowners will return to the owners a reasonable annual fee in lieu of the nominal rental heretofore. The entire system of controlling Indian grazing lands is being revised by Commissioner Valentine, in fact, a system is being installed where none heretofore existed. Before Mr. Valentine came into office there was no fixed policy under which Indian range land was leased to stockmen; it was leased more or less as individual Indian agents desired, and in most instances the return to the Indians was hardly worth while.

As fast as old leases expire, Mr. Valentine is placing the Indian range on the market, giving all stockmen an opportunity to bid for its use and awarding the grazing privilege in each instance to the highest bidder. In this way the Indians are always sure of a fair annual income.

Two-Cent Rate Is Asked.

Portland, Or., Nov. 16.—A. G. Graves, of San Francisco, representing the Pacific Commercial Traveler, is in Portland collecting the moral support of the jobbers, shippers and manufacturers of this city in an effort to secure for the commercial men traveling west of Denver better and cheaper mileage from the Transcontinental Passenger Association and to place them upon an equal footing with the commercial men of other associations. The railroads in this territory will be asked to grant a two-cent mileage rate issued to firms without rebate, and interchangeable on all trains, together with a 250-pound baggage allowance.

Send Snakes Through Mail.

New York, Nov. 14.—An ordinary square package postmarked Empire, Or., and addressed to Mrs. M. B. Streeter, 1325 Flushing avenue, Brooklyn, was delivered by the postman. When the wrappings were removed and the box opened, three snakes wriggled to the floor and squirmed about the room. From another compartment a choice collection of boards, tarantulas and other bugs waddled forth.

Lyman Gage Will Marry Widow.

San Francisco, Nov. 15.—Announcement has been made of the approaching marriage of Lyman J. Gage, ex-secretary of the United States treasury under President McKinley, and Mrs. Ada Ballou. Mrs. Ballou is one of the popular members of the San Diego younger social set. Mr. Gage is 73 years old.

CHAMP CLARK WOULD OUST 23 DEMOCRATS

Washington, Nov. 17.—The house democratic organization is planning to read out of the party 23 members of the minority who made it possible for the Cannon forces to re-enact despotic rules. Minority



CHAMP CLARK.

leader Champ Clark's friends are taking steps already to shut the ignominious 23 out of the house caucus which it is proposed to hold at the opening of congress to outline the policy of legislative action, with special reference to campaigns next year and thereafter.

TACOMA MILLIONAIRE WEDS NEW YORK ACTRESS

Reno, Nev., Nov. 15.—Margaret Hllington, the actress, until ten days ago, the wife of Daniel Frohman, the New York theatrical manager, when she secured a legal separation here, was married to Edward J. Bowes, the Tacoma millionaire real estate operator, in this city Sunday evening. The couple left at once for Tacoma.

Jail Gompers, Quit Work.

Philadelphia, Nov. 16.—A novel scheme to show sympathy for the convicted chiefs of the American Federation of Labor in case they shall be imprisoned in the contempt proceedings has been launched here by the Central Labor Union. The proposition is that if Gompers, Morrison and Mitchell actually go to prison, every wage-earner, union and non-union, shall cease work for a period of two weeks.

Will Oppose Aldrich Plans.

Washington, Nov. 16.—While it is not regarded as probable that Senator Aldrich or the monetary commission of which he is chairman will present any definite plan for currency reform at the coming session of congress, progressive Republicans are reading every word that comes from the "boss of the senate" and preparing to oppose any plan calculated to give great power to Wall street, or that would make the proposed central bank a political prize.

RUEF MAY LOSE HIS SIGHT

Operation to Be Performed to Help Prisoner.

San Francisco, Nov. 17.—Abe Ruef, former boss of San Francisco, who was absolute dictator of the city for five years, is threatened with total blindness and deafness. An operation on his eyes was performed today and on the success of this will depend the effort to save his hearing. Ruef attributes his affliction to lack of air.

Canada's Navy Oil.

Ottawa, Ont., Nov. 14.—The reported momentous arrangement between the cabinets of the British and German empires has brightened the prospects of the Canadian navy. News from inside sources is that official information has been received and that an understanding has been reached between England and Germany that may result in a period being set to their rivalry in naval construction.

Thieves Hit Postoffice.

Spokane, Wash., Nov. 15.—For the fourth time in four years the safe at the Medical Lake postoffice was blown open by cracksmen Sunday morning, the robbers escaping with a stolen horse and buggy. Stamps were the only marketable articles stolen.

Nitrogen Plant Proposed.

Casby, Or., Nov. 15.—A plan for the manufacture of nitrogen, to be used in reclaiming worn-out land, will soon be constructed here. This will be the first of its kind in the entire northwest, although one or two have been tried in other parts of the country and declared a success.

Troops to Guard Miners.

Cherry, Ill., Nov. 17.—Troops have been called to prevent any untoward demonstration at the St Paul coal mine, when bodies of the 300 men entombed by Saturday's catastrophe are brought to the surface.

THE MAN THAT CHANGED THE BILL

By A. D. HARRISON.

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I met her on a train. There are more impressions made in traveling. I think, than under any other circumstances. She was about twenty, with light, fluffy hair, baby blue eyes, white teeth, and there was neither too much nor too little of her. She sat looking out of the window with rather a bored expression on her face, as though she longed for something with which to occupy her mind. I longed to occupy her mind myself.

However, my opportunity came when a candy boy came along. She wanted a box of sweets and had only a dollar bill to pay for them. It happened that the boy was out of change and looked around for help. I lifted my hat politely to the girl, took a dollar in silver from my pocket and handed it to her, taking in exchange the bill. It was new and crisp and so folded as to show the dollar in a corner. Even if I had not seen its denomination I would not have thrown a doubt upon the lady's honesty by unfolding it. I showed it in my vest pocket, and she opened the box. I remained where I was, so that she couldn't very well help rewarding me for changing her bill by offering me a bit of candy. She did this with some embarrassment. I sat on the arm of the seat opposite while I thanked her and said some irrelevant things, such as the car was either too hot or too cold, or I hated or liked traveling, or made some other meaningless remark, passing on to another and another, all the while looking more and more uncomfortable on my perch, till at last she cast her eyes on the vacant seat beside me. Construing this as an invitation, I sat down.

When the conductor came along I noticed he punched a Cleveland ticket for her. I was bound for Chicago. She had a suit case in the car with her, in which were the letters E. V. W. I took particular note of these things, for I was delighted with her, and, since I often visited Cleveland, I thought I might wish to continue to fall in her path.

I spent several hours very pleasantly with her. At first she seemed embarrassed at forming an acquaintance in this way, but she soon forgot all about that, and I saw that I was as comfortable to her as she was to me. When we reached Cleveland I tried to hand her out of the car, but she said her brother would be there to meet her, and I saw by a look she gave me that she would not care to have him see her receiving attentions from a stranger. I therefore contented myself with thanking her for rendering my trip enjoyable instead of a bore and told her I hoped that if she ever came to Chicago I might happen to meet her.

The next Sunday morning I got up on Wednesday—I left my baggage quarters and strolled to my club for breakfast, laying a paper by the way. I always read everything in my Sunday paper, and on this occasion I was seized with astonishment as I read:

The gentleman who changed a bill for a lady on a train on the left can communicate with her by addressing E. V. W., Box 1, Cleveland, O.

I was not only astonished; I was disappointed. Since my return my brain had been full of love stories of which E. V. W. was the heroine and I the hero. And, after all, I had struck one who was not above calling me to her through a personal. Then it came to me that there must be some mistake. Surely I knew a lady when I saw one, and the girl I had met was not only a lady, but a very innocent and refined one. Why did she make the identification through the dollar bill I had changed? Because, of course, it was the best and only sure means of identification.

This dollar bill was all I had to remind me of the girl who had given it to me. I had transferred it from my pocket to a box of crinkles on my dresser, folded just as it was when I received it. Something, I know not what—one of those mysterious pointers of the brain perhaps that come to us on occasion—prompted me to go to my room and have a look at the bill. I lost no time in doing so, and when I unfolded the crisp bit of paper my eyes bulged from their sockets in astonishment.

It was a thousand dollar note! Now I saw it all. The wording of the advertisement, instead of indicating that the girl was familiar with methods of identification, showed her innocence or she would not have used it. It was evident she had inferred that I had discovered the denomination of the bill, and she gave me the means of communicating with her to return it.

I took the midnight train for Cleveland and the next morning went to the postoffice, where I learned that box No. 1 belonged to a family named Worthington. Later in the day I called at the address, which I had also received at the postoffice, and sent up my card, on which I had written, "The gentleman who changed the bill."

I soon heard a rattle on the staircase, and E. V. W. came hurrying in, anxiety on every feature, to know if her money was safe. I hastened to reassure her by handing her the note. She had received it from her father in New York, who was at the moment engaged in making a cash payment on a piece of real estate, and had inadvertently given her the wrong bill. Within a year I married her.

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