

Irrigation Congress.

One of the most interesting features of the irrigation discussion was an address by Frederick H. Newell, the Hydrographer of the United States Geological Survey, entitled "Water Storage in the West." Stereopticon views set forth graphically the enormous area and possibilities of development in the arid region. For instance, a map of the United States was thrown upon the canvas with the areas of foreign countries contrasted with those of our own States. Japan, Mr. Newell showed, with her millions of people, is no larger than Montana. Nevada and Utah, together, are as large as Spain, with her 16,000,000 people, and if all their resources were fully developed, could sustain as large a population. Arizona compares in size with France or the Philippine Islands.

Mr. Newell also showed by diagrams the annual flow of many western rivers, the bulk of whose waters goes to waste in the spring, when it could be stored and used for irrigating in the summer. No one could have heard Mr. Newell's address, in which he also showed the importance of forest preservation, without being profoundly impressed with the great possibilities for the development of population and wealth in the West through forest preservation and water storage.

In commenting on the results of the Congress in the Rocky Mountain News as affecting irrigation, George H. Maxwell, of The National Irrigation Association, said:

"All we need to do now to secure the inauguration of the national irrigation policy in the next session of Congress is to organize and work. We must have an organization of every interest that would be benefited, and we must keep tirelessly at work until the desired end is accomplished. This Congress has demonstrated that the West is united. The Trans-Mississippi Commercial Congress represents the West. The National Irrigation Association represents the whole United States. Through the whole country is united. The two organizations are enlisted under the same banner and fighting for the same common object."

"I am convinced more than ever before that the sentiment of the people of the West is overwhelmingly in favor of the national irrigation policy as against any attempt to block it by the interjection of any State scheme. The great commercial interests of the East—merchants, manufacturers, and commercial organizations—are heartily supporting our cause. Nothing can prevent our success. It will come in the next session of Congress if the people of the West will stand by the action of the Trans-Mississippi Commercial Congress."

Mr. Maxwell, who is an attorney, was asked whether any conflict between the State and National Government as to the laws of water were likely to arise if the Government built the main line canals.

"Certainly not," he replied. "There is not the slightest chance of it. So far as existing vested rights to water are concerned, they are recognized and upheld by the act of Congress of 1866, and many decisions of the Federal courts under it, and the Federal law is an anchorage of safety for the owner of every existing water right in the West. The National Government in building reservoirs or main line canals to furnish water for arid public lands would proceed, like any other land owner, in harmony

with the laws of the States. Uncle Sam is the greatest land owner in the West. He can do just what any other great land owner could do—build the reservoirs and main line canals to furnish water to the settlers, and divide his great farm up among the people. Any private land corporation owning a vast area of arid land could do this. No one would question that. Then why can it not be done by a great corporation which includes every human soul in the United States? The public domain belongs to the whole people. They can and will reclaim and settle it for the benefit of the whole people."

"Of course the water must be distributed under the laws of the States. But who makes those laws? Will not the millions of new settlers who will go upon the lands as fast as the main line canals can be built, and take the water out and distribute it and irrigate with it, be citizens of the States? Will they not have a voice in making the State laws? All the National Government wants to accomplish is to promote the growth and prosperity of the States and strengthen the nation by putting a vast population in the arid regions."

"We are on the eve of a mighty development in the West. All that is needed to start it is to conserve the water that now goes to waste and bring it within reach of farmers and settlers. When the National Government stands ready to do this there is not a state in the West whose people will not welcome this national aid with open arms, and see to it that there is the most complete and perfect accord and harmony between both the state the great boon of national aid in the development of its resources, wealth and population."

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Chaplain H. W. Jones of the United States navy, speaking in the Church of the Strangers in New York last Sunday evening, said: Last winter when at Barbadoes, we found the West Indian British fleet there and invited one of the British navy officers of high rank on board of our ship to dine with us. The conversation turned on the powers opposed to us during the war with Spain and the British officer said: Gentlemen, perhaps you knew that England was with you, but you have no idea of what England really did for you. I was on leave when the Spanish-American war broke out, and together with several other officers was immediately ordered back to duty. We had at two points sixty-three of our ships waiting to be ordered out in case of any naval demonstration being made against the United States by the other powers. If any such demonstration had been made we would have headed them off.

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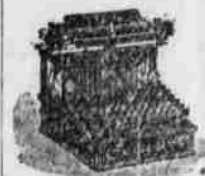
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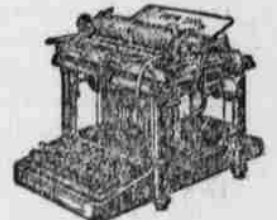
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