

BAKER CITY WELCOMES GUESTS

Eastern Oregon Metropolis Is Crowded With Visitors and Delegates to State Irrigation Congress—Many Interesting Speeches.

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)
 Baker City, Ore., Dec. 14.—Crisp, exhilarating weather and sunny skies ushered in the second day of the state irrigation congress at this city today. Yesterday's crowds of visitors assured the success of the meeting; today's increased attendance marks it as one of the greatest gatherings in the history of eastern Oregon.

The hall in which the sessions are being held is packed to capacity. The keynote of all the speeches is the conservation of Oregon's resources, especially the water-power in its relation to irrigation. Many interesting talks have been delivered.

The Conservation Movement.
 Judge Stephen A. Lowell of Pendleton addressed the meeting as follows: For forty years this nation has lived under the false and materialistic materialism. It is now awakening to a realization that a splendid patrimony has been lost, natural wealth discarded, resources wasted and to a vivid conception of the truth that its condition requires serious consideration and the application of heroic remedies.

Ultimate history will probably not write large the motto of the multifarious activities of the administration now approaching its close at Washington, but the conservation movement which in its latter days it has instituted will assuredly give it permanent fame, because the movement must take rank with the Monroe doctrine, the federal homestead law, the expansion idea, and the reclamation act, as national policies which reflect the national interest, but national sentiment as well.

This must be coupled with a restoration policy, comprehensive and just, which shall recover for the people the vast array of lands, forests, waters, fuel deposits and other things which have been lost to them through fraud, corruption and contracts unfulfilled. The necessary complement of conservation is restoration. Together they will assure a country for the people under a government of the people.

Progress of Movement.
 A decade ago any declaration that the Creator intended for the common use of the children of men all the essentials of life—land, water, forests and the fuel deposits within the earth, would have been hailed a socialistic dream. Today the declaration is accepted almost universally as axiomatic, and the systems of the past which have permitted these to pass to private control are recognized as the errors of primitive conditions. Upon this truth rests this most momentous movement of the opening century.

The State Conservation commission defines conservation as meaning the bringing into everyday service in the interests of the common people the best light of science and the most effective methods of engineering skill. This definition is correct, but it is too limited and voices but an incident in the broader view of national and state conservation upon which public consideration is concentrated. Men realize that private monopoly in either of the national resources, the essentials I have mentioned, can only result in ultimate want, suffering and oppression, and so far as it can be done with justice they propose to end it. Probably not for this generation. The process will be too slow, but for later people and later years.

Reasonable men never object to the accumulation of wealth in money, houses and chattels. Many believe that there might be devised something better in our industrial life than the present profit system. I am not discussing the merits or demerits of the social propoganda. As a rule the public is benefited, not injured, by the creation of wealth, and the mass of men in recognition of this fact believe that whose brain devises the means of its creation is entitled to a large share of

that wealth. It is because private wealth is now so largely represented in those things upon which existence depends, and in which every man has common interest, that public sentiment is aroused, and a remedy now too long delayed is sought.

Long Standing Difficulty.
 The difficulty goes back to the infancy of the race, when the only law was force, and when the strongest and most alert made the masses his serfs and his associates vassals; when kings and feudal lords parcelled out the earth to their retainers. Centuries have passed, but the conservatism of the race has kept the customs of savagery, occasionally veiling them with the appearance of civilization, hence that basic principle, the survival of the fittest, still holds in its degree, and obtains in the laws of property.

When the nations of the western world were established, advancing civilization and intelligence led them to insist upon the adoption of principles of civil liberty and human freedom, but the idea of applying principles of ordinary prudence in the matter of national resources, and the scheme of government designed by the fathers, that it forgere the very things which could assure equality of prices, and avoid the accursed landlordism of all the past. We now know that with political powers, the people should have reserved to themselves, for lease and not for ownership, the waters, the forests, the natural deposits of coal and oil, and that the ownership of land should have been limited to the actual needs of the individual.

Government Control Imperative.
 The mighty public sentiment now behind this conservation movement is the response of the people to an idea which is not new, but which has been generalizing in the public mind for half a century, and which accepts the conservation propoganda as a concrete expression of reasonable demands. It means that the people desire that the nation and the state shall withhold the remainder of our once almost limitless natural resources from private ownership and exploit the same for the benefit of justice shall be set in motion to correct as far as possible the economic evils which have been inflicted upon all the people that which the few have illegally obtained.

The man who becomes a candidate for governor of Oregon today will require four planks in his platform—preservation of the existing political privileges of the people, the prompt and complete enforcement of all law, the conservation of public resources and the just restoration to the commonwealth of the lands and waters of which it has been despoiled.

We are confronted with problems quite as serious and as difficult of solution, as those which were met by the statesmen of the early and the middle periods of the republic. A solution will be found, not in blind, but in those avenues of human effort which intelligence and justice control. The problem must meet them first.

Another generation will see the air navigated as freely as the ocean is today. It behooves us to begin the solution of these problems by assuring national control of the landing places in order that the pathways of the atmosphere may not be monopolized as are those of the sea by private ownership of docking privileges. The water rights upon those streams yet under control of the state and nation must be reserved forever to the people, as must the remaining coal and oil upon public lands, subject to lease for actual use and scientific operation by individuals for immediate and beneficial purposes.

Protection for Forests.
 The forestry statutes should be enlarged and perfected so that no more private exploitation of timber shall be possible. Under proper regulations the remaining timber areas can minister to the needs of man forever. With a continuance of the system in vogue for the last four decades another half century will witness their denudation, and an era of famines will be ushered in.

To withhold the remainder of a once matchless tree growth from destruction will not be enough. The state must regulate the use and operation of the private forests. In such matters human intelligence recognizes, or will soon recognize, that individual ownership must be exercised in subordination to the wider and higher interests of the whole people, whom the state represents. Modern studies of ancient conditions demonstrate that deforestation means waste and ultimate desolation. To interpose the right of the state to intervene, as it has in the preservation of public health.

The subdivision of these great problems presents features especially complicated, because few of us are ready to recognize the right of the state to adopt a cooperative scheme in soil management. While all men realize the need of land with which the western world is confronted, and know its pall upon the past, it is difficult to see the demand for a system between reasonable private land holdings and monopoly. Certainly there can be no justification for an individual corporation who counts his acres until the aggregate compasses the area of a respectable state. Assuredly public interest cannot brook much longer the holding by public service corporations, or indeed by individuals, of large bodies of land in idleness, which the public needs, and which the state requires for its symmetrical development.

The time is probably ripe for legislation which will retain to state and nation such lands as may remain, until some solution of the grave land problem. No one will be injured by such law, because they will be subject to lease for home building and beneficial use as now. Doubtless it would be wise to repeal temporarily at least all laws providing for the sale or entry of public lands by either state or nation, except in case of the small homesteads under the administration of the reclamation service. The states can well afford to retain their school lands, and the generations of the future would be the gainers.

That the general government must recover the vast areas of lands which fraud has wrested from the public, remain all will admit, and some method, fair and just, must be devised to compel the sale of idle lands to the people, the great corporations and alien owners for exploitation and future profit. The alien ownership law never ought to have had place on the statute books of any state. They ought now to be repealed. American land for American men may be selfish, but it is reason.

Incident to these broader principles of which I speak is the preservation of the fisheries, the development of agriculture, horticulture and the livestock interests, to the end that the earth and the waters hereof may yield for man the most and best. Scientific study will do that, and there should be no stint in the appropriations by congress and legislature for scientific and experimental purposes.

The conservation movement is pregnant with marvelous possibilities for good. It required wise guidance for there must be no injustice, no confiscation of property. It must mark a revolution, but a revolution just and peaceful, to the end that the earth and the waters hereof may yield for man the most and best. Scientific study will do that, and there should be no stint in the appropriations by congress and legislature for scientific and experimental purposes.

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NAMED TO DRAFT WATERWAYS BILL
 Committee Appointed by President Ransdell Includes J. N. Teal.

(United Press Special Wire.)
 Washington, Dec. 15.—President Ransdell of the rivers and harbors congress today appointed the committee to draft bills providing for a bond issue by the government to meet the expense of the enormous comprehensive plan of waterways improvement and also to provide a bill creating a statutory committee to investigate the waterways of this and foreign countries and report to congress.

The committee is composed of Representative Moore of Pennsylvania, J. N. Teal of Portland, Or.; Albert Bettenger of Ohio and Representative Sherry of Kentucky.

Falling Rock Kills Laborer.
 Ely, Nev., Dec. 15.—Tom Popovich, an Austrian working on a steam-roller of the Nevada consolidated company at Copper Flat, was hit today by a falling rock and was instantly killed.

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- 18 Kerma, high grade, about 6 ft. 7 in. by 4 ft. 6 in. \$68.00
- 16 Saruk, high grade, about 6 ft. 8 in. by 4 ft. 3 in. \$74.00
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