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dustry extends over all or part of seventeen States and Territories. In ten of these, not more than two per cent. of the land is under cultivation, and the population averages less than three to the square mile.

On the grazing lands, from twenty to thirty acres of pasturage are required for the support of a single cow. Wherever irrigation is practicable, the same amount of land, watered and planted with alfalfa, will support ten times as many cattle. But wherever the same lands can be planted in fruit-trees, cereals and vegetables, each farm of forty acres will support a family of from three to five persons. In many districts in the West the statement might be made much stronger without exaggeration. There are hundreds of ten-acre patches of irrigated land in the Salt River valley of Arizona, on the Grand River of Colorado, on the San Bernardino of California, and in many other regions, that yield a better and surer livelihood for a family of the average size than do the ordinary farms of from one hundred to one hundred and sixty acres anywhere east of the Mississippi River. If the unoccupied public lands to which water can never be taken by irrigation ditches, could be made as productive as ordinary Western land under the ditch, they alone would easily support a farming population of 35,000,000 souls. This is more than the entire present farming population of the country. That irrigation alone can never furnish a satisfactory solution of the problem presented by the arid and semi-arid lands of the West is proved by the fact that were every inch of the annual rainfall west of the one-hundredth meridian conserved in storage reservoirs and distributed to the best possible advantage, an area equal to one fifth of the total land surface of the country would remain unsupplied.

Contrary to commonly accepted ideas as the statement may be, it is, nevertheless, an amply demonstrated fact that wherever in this great arid empire the annual rainfall averages as high as twelve inches, as good crop can be raised without irrigation as with it. This means that almost every acre of the great plains between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains, and most of the inter-mountains, parks and plateaus between the Rockies and the Pacific, will produce as abundantly as will the rich prairie-lands of Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois, and much more abundantly than the richest of the lands in any of the older States along the Atlantic seaboard; that there is enough land now utilized, if at all,

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only for grazing to make possible the trebling or quadrupling of the present farming population of the United States; that, outside of comparatively small areas in western Texas and in portions of Utah, Nevada, Arizona, Idaho, Wyoming, South Dakota, and southern California, there is little arable land in the great West that may not be divided into forty-acre farms, each one of which will be capable of supporting an average-sized family.

Probably there is no exaggeration in the statement made by one writer that the region between the foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains, bounded on the south by the Rio Grande and on the north by the Canadian border, is capable of producing fruits, cereals, vegetables, and live stock sufficient for the support of the entire present population of the globe. This vast area of fertile, and as yet almost unutilized, land is the foundation upon which the American people must build for the continuance of their prosperity for at least a century to come. Properly utilized, it may solve many perplexing problems. It will relieve the congestion of the cities, provide an outlet for superabundant capital, and afford opportunities for the enterprising and discontented for decades. It contains the richest mineral deposits, the greatest forest resources, the most fertile soil, and the most genial and salubrious climate, on this continent. What its development and exploitation would mean to the transportation, manufacturing, merchantile, financial, and labor interests of the nation cannot be even dimly foreshadowed. It would furnish a stimulus that would be felt not merely in the great centers of population and industry, out in the remotest hamlet and on the most isolated farm in the republic.

The United States Department of Agriculture, the governments of the various States in which vacant public lands are located, and the great trans-continental railroads owning land grants have awakened to a realization of the importance of "dry farming" or scientific soil culture, which means more to the people of the United States than do all of the costly irrigation projects now under way or projected for the future.

Estimates of the amount of land that can be reclaimed by irrigation vary all the way from 50,000,000 acres up to 125,000,000 acres, with the weight of authoritative opinion decidedly favoring the lower figure. Yet if

(Continued next week.)

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