

BOWERSOCK LEASING BILL

Supposed to be the Best Bill Yet in the Hands of the Lusk Cohorts, and it Hasn't a Ghost of a Chance.

It is expected that the public lands committee of the House will soon take up for consideration the several bills providing for leasing the public ranges of the West. The two most prominent bills now before the committee are the Stephens bill, conveying the Texas idea of what a leasing law should be, and the Bowersock bill, which is said to have been drawn and approved by the National Livestock Association. Inasmuch as the committee declined, during the last Congress, to consider the former measure, it is expected that interest will center around the second proposition.

Briefly stated, the Bowersock bill provides that all vacant public lands west of the 100th meridian shall be leased for stockgrazing purposes, subject to the right of homestead and mineral entry. Leases shall be made at the rate of two cents per acre per annum, payable in advance, and preference for such leases shall be given to owners of cultivated agricultural land for leaseable lands abutting upon their freeholds, in proportion of 10 acres of leasehold to one of freehold. A like proportion of 10 to 1 shall be given to stockgrowers who are also freeholders, but this preference shall apply only to lands within the counties in which their stock habitually range. If in the case of either of these preferences there shall not be sufficient leaseable lands in the county to give each person the maximum portion of 10 to 1, then the lands shall be prorated between the persons entitled to such preference. The bill grants a further preference to lands not leased under the above conditions to stockgrowers who were in actual use and occupancy of the lands during the past calendar year, to be leased by them in proportion to respective interests in and use thereof. Holders of state lands, under lease, shall be beneficiaries of the preference given to stockgrowers who are also freeholders, provided their leaseholds do not cover more than 640 acres in one body. Freehold rights are not to apply to township property, nor to any lands deriving title from Spanish or Mexican grants.

Leases under the Bowersock bill are to run for 10 years, with the privilege of renewal. The revenue derived from these leases, after deducting the expense of administering the law, shall be used as a reclamation fund in providing such water storage and irrigation works in the arid and semi-arid regions as are necessary for preparing the public arid and semi-arid lands for settlement under the homestead act. The secretary of the interior is empowered to cancel leases when holders become ineligible.

A Washington correspondent says there are indications that there will be a prolonged fight on this bill, and the chances are decidedly against any action in its favor. While the departments are more or less in favor of a leasing system, there is a general sentiment among Western settlers and small stock-owners against the system, and, in the face of this opposition, members are not anxious to legislate, even though they believe such legislation is for the best interests of all concerned. The small owners fear that under a leasing system the large stock companies will be able to gain control of the ranges, and thus crowd them out. Those members who favor a leasing system assert very positively that any bill to meet their approval must properly safeguard the small owners and settlers, and undoubtedly any bill they vote for would contain such a provision. Nevertheless, the land laws have been circumvented so many times in the past that there is some ground for the fear on the part of the settlers.

The Examiner predicted early in the season that there would be no action taken during this congress in the proposed lease law, and the prediction will probably turn out right. Members from the West must see in any proposed bill of the character a safeguard for the small stockmen and rancher, or fight it to the death. No such bill has yet been proposed.

A CONGRESSIONAL PLATFORM.

Mr. Stephen Jewell of Grants Pass, Oregon, forwards to the editor a "copy of the new Congressional platform" that he desires to see established. Without further comment than to express a "fear" that Mr. Jewell will never live long enough to see his plans carried out completely, we give below his platform:

Grants Pass, Oregon, January 25, 1902. (To the Editor:—I suggest that the men who represent Oregon in the next Congress be elected on the following platform of principles:

First, Government issue and control of all money without the intervention of national banks, and every dollar to be a full legal tender.

Second, Government ownership and control of public transportation, including passenger, freight and express.

Third, Government ownership and control of the liquor traffic on the South Carolina plan.

Fourth, District legislation, known as the initiative and referendum, and direct election of all officers except those belonging to the Cabinet departments.

Fifth, A law limiting land holdings, and restricting the same to actual occupation by American citizens.

Sixth, A law placing all indigent American citizens on a common equality regardless of military or other service.

Seventh, Taxation and tariff privileges to be equal and uniform throughout the Union, including all territories and possessions.

Eighth, Emigration laws that will exclude all persons who can not become loyal and useful citizens.

Ninth, Official expression of sympathy for the Boers of South Africa.

Tenth, The independence of the Philippine Islands on conditions honorable and satisfactory to both Americans and Filipinos. The incorporation of the foregoing principles into law will be sufficient to check the blighting influences of intemperance, imperialism and monopoly. All reform work should be gradual and strictly in harmony with the Declaration of Independence. There is no reason why the great state of Oregon should not lead the other states to higher planes of morality and justice.

STEPHEN JEWELL.

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J. O. Booth and P. H. Hath have returned to their homes at Grants Pass from Alturas, where they were called as witnesses in the notorious Lookout lynching case now on trial. On being interviewed, these gentlemen state to the Grants Pass Observer that "much of the sensationalism that is going the rounds of the newspapers, regarding Modoc county and its people, is gross exaggeration. They found the city of Alturas to be a quiet and law abiding place, most of the citizens being of culture and refinement. They saw but one or two drunken men during their sojourn there. They predict a great future for the county of Modoc and surrounding territory."

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"And your aunt?"
"She is out on her bicycle."
"And your sister?"
"She is training for the hockey match."
"Then I'll see your father, please."
"He can't come down. He is upstairs giving the baby a bath."



Family cares and duties do not weigh down the well woman, and the children are never in her way. But when the womanly health fails, and there is a constant struggle with weakness and pain, household duties are a burden almost past bearing, and children are a ceaseless annoyance and worry.

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We respectfully solicit a continuance of your patronage, and also wish those who are not yet our patrons may become such. We will serve you to our mutual advantage. Beyond a doubt we can will make it to your advantage to call on us before making purchases in our line.

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