

IN THE LAND OF PROFITABLE OPPORTUNITY.

BY WILLIAM L. LARKIN.

UNCLE SAM never in the history of the nation was more profuse in his provision for the home builder than he is today. The love of the soil is inbred in the race. It is responsible for the pioneering spirit which has ever sent men westward, driven the frontier toward the setting sun, and built up in the Mississippi valley and beyond an empire now just on the eve of its fullest greatness.

This year will be marked in the history of the homeseeker and settler. The government will on June 15 open to settlement under the United States homestead law over 1,000,000 acres of land in the foothills of the Wind river range and on the plains of Wyoming.

Any freeman citizen of our country can secure his quarter section free of cost, for the nominal land office fee and the sum of one dollar and fifty cents an acre in easy payments, and the government land department at Washington is now ready to give information to all inquirers.

The region covered by this reservation is being rapidly brought within easy reach by an extension of the Chicago & Northwestern railway to Lander, in the Lander valley. Here the government land office is situated and the allotment of claims next June will probably be made here and at Shoshoni.

This is one of the finest grazing districts in the west and it is quite probable that the region will with the new railway facilities develop into a cattle and sheep feeding region greater than ever before.

Would Sustain 5,000,000 People.
The state of Wyoming, which has an area of 97,290 miles, has sufficient agricultural and mineral resources to sustain an army of 5,000,000 people, yet the estimated population is only 120,000. Wyoming today has more miles of railroad and more natural advantages to attract population than Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan possessed in 1850. The state is interspersed with fertile valleys and rolling plains covered with nutritious grasses, which furnishes excellent grazing land for stock raising. The climate is healthy, and the medical profession throughout the country is becoming more generally cognizant of this fact every year. The soil is a light sandy loam in the upland, and in the valleys has a dark, rich appearance, which when irrigated produces bountiful crops in cereals and vegetables of all kinds. Wyoming has an area of 48,000,000 acres of land that is subject to entry under the government land laws, and 10,000,000 acres of this is suitable for agricultural purposes when properly irrigated. To the state of Wyoming is largely due the credit for securing the act of Congress which provides for the reclamation of the arid lands of the mountain states. Under this law the revenue derived from the sale of public land goes into a fund for building reservoirs and canals for the storage of water and the irrigation of lands that nature fails to provide for. The government has placed over \$27,000,000 to the credit of this fund, and a large proportion of this amount is now being utilized to irrigate two big projects in the state of Wyoming. The most important one is the Shoshone irrigation proposition, for which the government has appropriated \$2,250,000 to complete. The other irrigating proposition is known as the North Platte project, which is now under construction, and will cost the government \$1,000,000 before the water can be turned into the ditches.

It is conservatively estimated that \$10,000,000 will be spent during the next decade by the federal government in carrying out irrigating projects in the state of Wyoming, which have already been submitted for consideration. The amount of good this great undertaking will do the state and humanity in general cannot be correctly estimated. Thousands of workmen will be given an opportunity to take up land and at the same time secure employment from the government in constructing the big reservoirs and ditches. By this method the workman who ventures into the land of opportunity is guaranteed steady employment and at the same time has a chance to take up a quarter section of land and improve it during the construction of the irrigating ditch. Opportunities of this character never presented themselves in the early history of the Central and Eastern states. The pioneers that built up and developed the country during its primitive state experienced hardships and privations that the homeseeker of today knows nothing about. In those days it was a case of weeks and months of travel, with an ox team and prairie schooner, to find the land of opportunity. Today the Northwestern Line lands the homeseeker at the very door of his claim and the government provides him with a quarter section of land and a position on the irrigating ditch if he desires to work. No more hardships like our fathers and grandfathers experienced during the early history of the Central states. Pioneering on a homestead in the West today is more like an outing or vacation, where you throw off the sweaty garments of toil and become a free man. Here the superior officer does not figure in your daily work, and the automatic timekeeper is blotted out of your memory. The state of Wyoming has an area of 10,000,000 acres of timber land, which offers inducements to the man who

wishes to engage in the lumber business. Five million head of sheep were marketed last year from the state, valued at \$17,500,000, which is another occupation worthy of note. Six million dollars' worth of wool was marketed last year from the herds of sheep that graze on the nutritious grasses in all parts of this great wonderland of resources. Vast iron, coal and precious metal deposits are found in paying quantities and mined cheaply. One of the finest groups of hot mineral springs to be found in the world is located near Thermopolis, at the northeastern corner of the reservation.

If Wyoming were nothing but a barren waste it would still be known to the civilized world through the wonderland of the earth—the Yellowstone national park. The scenic wonders of this great geological enigma are nowhere repeated in nature, which gives the Yellowstone park an individuality that makes it stand out prominently far beyond anything offered elsewhere to the world's army of sight-seers. Its wonderful colorings and shadings are beyond description, and the artist does not live who can truthfully portray on canvas the beauties of this world's wonderland.

Vast Country to be Developed.
A vast territory as rich in mineral deposits and agricultural requisites remains to be explored on its onward march to the Pacific as was found in the early history of Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota. As this article goes to press eighty pound steel rails are being spiked to the cedar ties along the right of way which extends the Wyoming and Northwestern from Casper to Lander, a distance of 145 miles, which links Chicago and the great commercial points along the big Chicago & Northwestern system with another great land proposition. This new extension will land passengers directly on the Shoshone Indian reservation, which the government opens to settlers June 15, 1906.

Shoshone Reservation.

It contains 1,140,000 acres of land, a third of which is adaptable for agricultural purposes and the remainder for grazing, stock and dairy pursuits. It is bounded on the east by the Big Horn river and on the south by the Wind river, which, together with numerous small streams and springs furnishes ample water supply to settlers who will gobble up this valuable tract the moment Uncle Sam gives the signal.

Never in the history of the world has there been such a demand for public land. The great rank and file of Americans who labor with their brains and brawn seem to have suddenly discovered that land is the foundation of all wealth. The serious misunderstanding between capital and labor in the large trade centers has been making converts rapidly for the gospel of free homes, pure air and independence. On account of the industrial depression in the great European trade centers, many home seekers have been attracted across the Atlantic, who, after a thorough investigation of the situation, have crossed in to Uncle Sam's domain, fled on a

sheep country. Thousands of tons of wool and thousands of head of cattle are shipped from Casper to the Eastern markets yearly. The soil is composed of a deep black loam formed upon a subsoil of clay of unusual depth. It is very fertile, easy to cultivate, and with irrigation produces crops of cereals, vegetables and grasses that would actually astonish some of the old time farmers in the East.

Some of the principal streams are the Big Horn river, Wind river, Crow creek, Muddy creek, and numerous other streams of less importance. In the immediate vicinity of Lander, where the government office will be located for the distribution of these lands, small experimental farms have been in operation for a number of years. During this period there has never been an entire crop failure since the first settler erected his sodhouse, broke the first furrow on his new land and planted his first crop.

The region also seems to have all the indications that point out the way to a great storehouse of mineral deposits. The towns of Lewistown, Atlantic City, and South Pass in Fremont county, have produced millions of dol-

lars in gold and silver. Knowing ones claim to know where gold and silver ores are stored in the Owl Creek mountains in the northern part of the reservation.

On the border line of the reserve, in the northeast corner, is the town of Thermopolis. Here the United States government will in all probability erect a soldiers' and sailors' sanitarium on account of the wonderful curative qualities found in the extensive hot springs located here.

Indications that point to a petroleum pool near Lander will no doubt be thoroughly followed up as soon as the railroad is completed. Beds of coal, mica, asphaltum, petroleum, tin, building stone, and iron ore are found in this vicinity, which increase the inducements offered the home seeker, and create possibilities the results of which no one can estimate until the mines are developed. The reservation abounds in fish of all kinds, and big game, such as deer, elk, bear, and antelope.

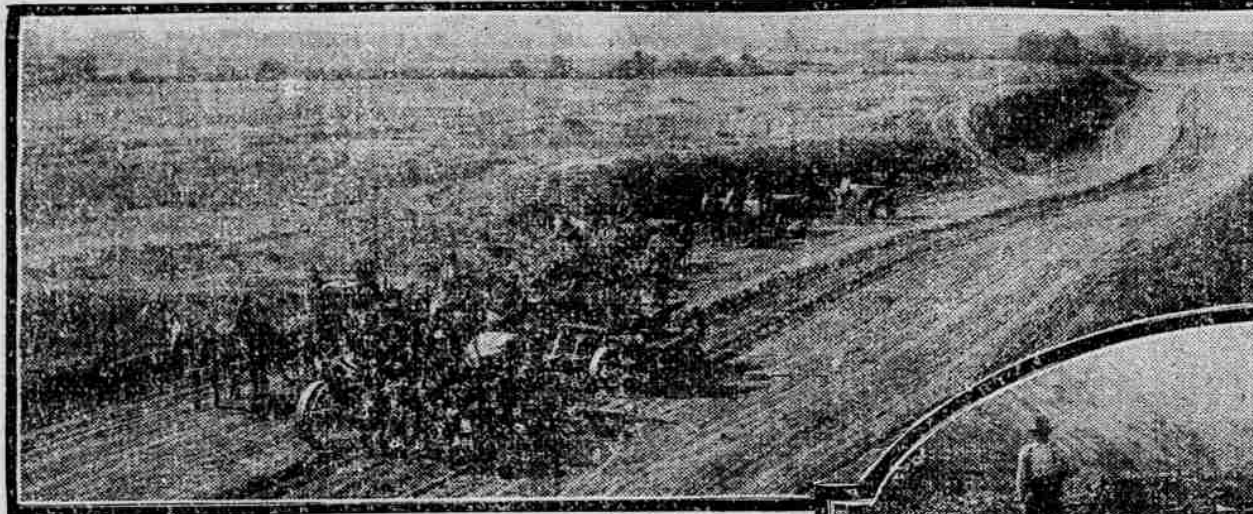
Town lots have been selling rapidly ever since the Northwestern surveyed their line. Golden opportunities await the business, professional and laboring man in twenty of the new town sites now building up between Casper and Lander.

Government Land Irrigation.
In June, 1902, the government passed a law known as the national reclamation act, for the purpose of providing large tracts of Western land with sufficient water supply to trans-

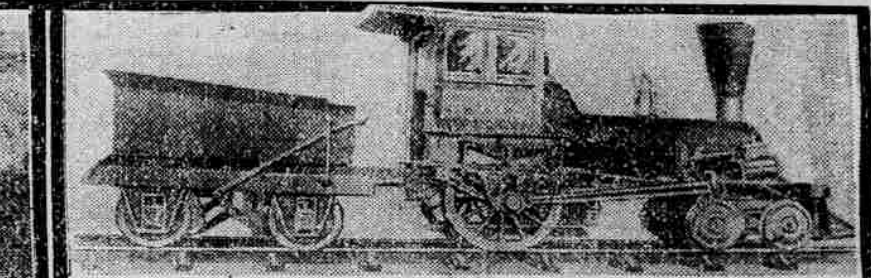
form a desert waste into a garden spot. It is said in California that if you plant gold dollars in the ground and sprinkle it with water they will actually grow, the soil is so rich. Without irrigation California could not produce enough fruit and vegetables to supply the dining car service on the Overland limited, yet California fruit and vegetable lands are the highest priced lands on the face of the earth, all on account of the irrigating ditch.

Two of the most important government irrigating propositions are located on the Chicago & Northwestern. One of 86,000 acres is in the Belle Fourche district of South Dakota, in the Black Hills country; the other is known as the North Platte project, at Alcoa, Wyo., fifty-two miles south of Casper, the present terminus of the Northwestern line, where 350,000 acres of land will be placed under irrigation.

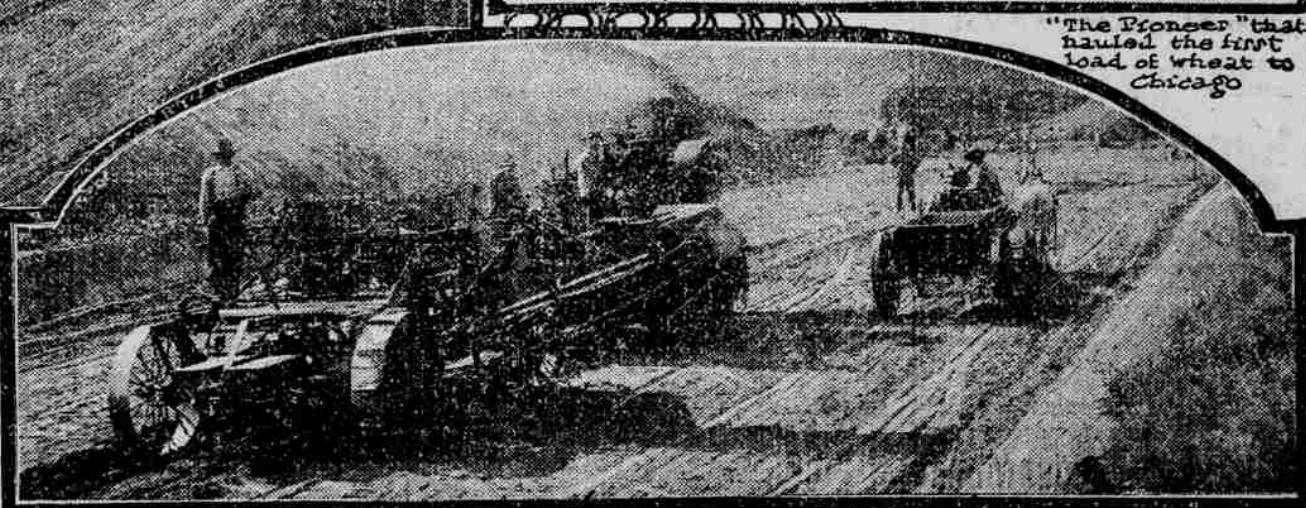
Largest Irrigation Ditch.
Nothing in the history of land development compares with the magnitude of these two great undertakings. It is a proposition where the home seeker barricades himself against the



Grader in Operation on the Main Canal, Belle Fourche Project



"The Pioneer" that hauled the first load of wheat to Chicago



Construction on the Main Canal at Crow Creek Sluiceway—Belle Fourche Project, South Dakota

quarter section of land, and today are as independent as the sovereign who ruled over them during their dark hours of depression. The United States government reports show that nearly as many home seekers pass over the border line at Winnipeg into the United States as come through the port of New York.

Claim Shanty a Castle.
Out on the broad prairies of opportunity the claim shanty is a castle where the home seeker reigns as supreme as a king on his throne. It is a home of your own, where the rent collector never figures in your monthly obligations, where the green grocer, the milkman, and the butcher's weekly statement never reaches your door. It is a new world bubbling over with hope and full of great expectations. Every breath of pure air inhaled into your lungs seems to invigorate your system with renewed ambitions.

The government homestead is a sort of barricade provided by the all-wise Creator where one can get away from life long friends gracefully, have a chance to reflect over the silly mistakes of the past, commune with Nature, make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, and sidestep any objectionable proposition that presents itself.

The Shoshone reservation will be the only public land thrown open to settlement next year, and for that reason the demand for this valuable tract will no doubt make ten applicants for every quarter section. The 1,140,000 acres of the Shoshone reservation contain the cheapest lands expected, the home seeker since the great rush for Dakota lands in 1879. The home seeker who secured a piece of Dakota land at this early date is a rich man today.

The Character of the Soil.
The land in the Shoshone reservation is far superior in many respects to some of our older settled districts. One-third of the land is what might be termed agricultural. The remainder of the land is a perfect cattle and

largest combined population of any commercial center in South Dakota.

These two great mining towns and many smaller communities, including Whitecloud, Rapid City, Sturgis and Hot Springs, are within a few hours' ride by rail of this great irrigating proposition, and will furnish a home market for thousands upon thousands of dollars' worth of farm produce yearly.

Belle Fourche is the largest cattle shipping point in the great Northwest. Thousands of head of range cattle are fattened here for market, and thousands of head are fed in this vicinity in the winter months.

Belle Fourche, the headquarters for this great irrigating undertaking, has been a prosperous community for years, and offers wonderful inducements for business men in all branches of trade.

Pierre to Rapid City.
An important extension of the Chicago & Northwestern railway that will aid materially in developing this irrigating proposition is now being completed between Pierre, the capital of South Dakota, and Rapid City. This new line will not only aid in attracting the homeseeker to the many inducements offered in the irrigating district, but will open up millions of acres of agricultural and grazing land subject to homestead entry in South Dakota west of the Missouri river.

This new line, which extends across the entire western half of South Dakota, will form a junction with the

elements. He need not bother his brain about the barometer and weather bureau. In the winter months, on the proceeds of his sure crop, he can make, thanks to the thermometer, and in summer the question of rainfall does not interest him.

In the Alcoa district the government has set aside \$2,500,000 for the completion of the Pathfinder dam and ditches, which will furnish a storage capacity of 1,000,000 acre feet, capable of reclaiming and irrigating 350,000 acres. The soil is a rich sandy loam, and under government test is found to be capable of producing wonderful crops of small grain and vegetables of all kinds and varieties.

This reservoir will cover thirty miles of territory, and the water supply will be taken from the Sweet Water river by means of a gigantic granite dam six miles below the mouth, 210 feet high, 80 feet long at the base, and 250 feet long at the crest, cemented in a box canyon of granite that centuries of use would not affect.

This canal is the longest system of irrigating ditches in the world.

Belle Fourche Project.
In the Belle Fourche district the government is pushing to completion a \$2,500,000 irrigating ditch and reservoir that will reclaim 86,000 acres. The water for this gigantic undertaking will be secured from the Belle Fourche river, about one mile from the town of Belle Fourche, and transferred by gravitation to a reservoir or lake bed, consisting of fifteen square

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FORGOT JURY WAS SHORT

Judge Moore of Augusta, Mass., was telling his experience with a jury while he was trying cases in Kennebec county some years ago. He appeared as counsel for a man who had been a close friend of his for years, and he decided that the juror, because of past friendship, would stand by him in the case on trial.

Finally the case went to the jury. For hours they fought and argued in the jury room in an effort to agree upon a verdict. They came in for instructions, and were again sent out by the judge, who asked them to agree, if such a thing was possible. All night the jury argued and wrangled, and on the opening of court in the morning reported a disagreement and were dismissed.

Judge Moore hunted up his friend on the jury and asked him why he could not swing the men into line. "Strangest case I ever heard of,"

was ready for him. Harry Lehr, apropos of impertinence, said at a dinner at Newport: "The English love to be impertinent to one another. Indeed, the more aristocratic they are the more, it seems, they shower upon all sides their snubs and insults. "Two very great swells, one a young duke and the other a young viscount,

said the juror: "and we ain't found out yet about it. After we had talked the case over a while we balloted. There were eleven for acquittal, and the twelfth man did not vote. We talked it over for a while, balloted again, and it stood just the same, the twelfth man refusing to vote. We asked every man how he stood on the case, and they all favored acquittal, and I'll be hanged if, when we voted, it wasn't eleven for acquittal, with the confounded twelfth hog refusing to vote. We kept it up all night, but he wouldn't vote, and we finally gave up in disgust."

"For heaven's sake," exclaimed Judge Moore, "don't you remember that we agreed to try that case with eleven jurors, as one member of the panel was taken sick just before court came in?"

"Well, I'll be darned," shouted the juror; "that accounts for the whole business."

brushed against each other one night at the theater. "The duke, anxious to snub the viscount, pretended to take him for an usher and said, holding out his hand: "Have you a program?" "But the viscount, too quick for the duke, smiled and replied: "Yes, thank you, my man. I got one from the other fellow."

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