

THE PLUMB IRRIGATION BILL.

Report of the Minority Members of the Senate Committee.

WIDE DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

The Majority's Statement of Facts Disclosed—Its Recommendations Declared Impracticable—Winning the Arid Wastes.

WASHINGTON, May 14, (Special to THE BEE.)

The minority members of the senate committee on irrigation have submitted the following report on the Plumb irrigation bill: "The undersigned members of the select committee on irrigation and reclamation of arid lands, have considered the matters referred to by the senate, and having made as exhaustive an examination of the general questions relating to irrigation in the arid lands as the time would permit, have reached conclusions which they desire to submit to the senate. While the report of the majority of the committee contains much valuable information, we find ourselves unable to agree with many of its statements of fact and with some of its reasoning, and we wholly disagree with most of its important conclusions and recommend congressional action which is diametrically opposed to that recommended by the majority.

"The following report is arranged in sections, each of which treats of a distinct topic. In them the principal facts relating to the subject under investigation by the committee are arranged in order, so as to lead naturally to the conclusions that are ultimately reached. Then follow, numbered in sections, the recommendations which it is desired to make. And finally, still in numbered sections, the bills and report submitted by the other members of the committee are examined in detail and the reasons set forth for dissenting from the recommendations views therein expressed. An abstract of all the sections is here given, numbered to correspond with the sections themselves.

"1. The arid lands embrace an area of 1,500,000 square miles. Of this amount 1,000,000 acres can be reclaimed for agriculture through the agency of irrigation by using the total supply of the perennial streams.

"2. The water of the arid lands is to be derived from the streams, which are their chief source; from the storage of storm waters, which is the second source in importance; from pump wells, which are the third source of importance, and from artesian wells, which have a slight value for horticulture and stock raising purposes.

"3. The sub-humid region lies between the arid region of the west and the humid region of the east, and embraces an area of about three degrees in width, equal to 500,000 square miles. Disaster has always come to the farmers who have attempted to settle in this region and carry on agriculture without irrigation.

"4. When the system of applying the water is good and the cultivation is thorough, waters used in irrigation are consumed.

"5. It would be a great advantage of the farmers on the irrigable lands if a proper system of measuring the waters with which they are supplied were adopted, and great waste would be avoided.

"6. Experience proves that the arid and sub-humid lands are very fertile when irrigated.

"7. The forest lands are of limited extent and are being rapidly burned, and need protection. These forests are distant from the irrigable lands and are of little value to the farmer. They are dependent upon them for their supply of wood and lumber. They are also dependent upon them for the water for irrigation. Therefore, in the interest of the farmers the forests should be protected.

"8. There are great areas of pasture lands which furnish a seat but valuable supply of food for stock and herd, and the farmers engaged in irrigation can utilize this pasture to the best advantage. But it is also being destroyed and needs protection, and the farmers with permanent homes are the people primarily interested in its protection.

"9. The lands that can be irrigated are narrowly limited in area, so that only a small portion can be redeemed when all the waters are used. The best lands lie at the foot of the mountains and near to them, and should be chosen for this purpose. The mountain lands are not good agricultural lands, and the lands far down the streams can be used only by a great waste of water. The irrigable lands should be carefully selected.

"10. The irrigable lands should be segregated and declared such; and the right to use water on them should be guaranteed. A prohibition should be put to the use of water on all other lands.

"11. The irrigated lands are of great value, varying from \$5 to \$20 per acre.

"12. The size of the homestead should be reduced to thirty acres, and perhaps forty would be better, that the public domain may be distributed among the greatest number of people.

"13. Water rights are often established to impede the development of agriculture and are greatly obstructive.

"14. International conflicts in relation to water rights are impending.

"15. Conflicts in water rights in the United States are being established, and bitter conflicts have already begun. These rights are of great magnitude, involving hundreds of millions of dollars. The general problem, therefore, is a national problem.

"16. Many conflicts are arising between communities in relation to the use of water on land and between individuals in the same community. The waters should be divided by some just method.

"17. Speculative water rights, where work of value has not actually been done and lands irrigated, should be summarily extinguished.

"18. Existing water rights should be maintained, but those that are improvident and obstructive must ultimately be condemned and the owners compensated therefor.

"19. Waters that are to be stored have to be divided among the communities.

"20. In many regions the people are developing agriculture, but the water supply is insufficiently maintained, and the foundations for large claims against the general government are being laid.

"21. Both the waters and the lands of the arid region are rapidly being aggregated in the hands of a few persons or in the possession of great corporations. Thus, the result is being secured unfavorable to the welfare of the great body of people who perform the labor on the farms—the actual farmers themselves.

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AUSTRALIAN MURPHY'S EXPERIENCE

Joe McAuliffe's Ambition—The Brooklyn Handicap and the Yachting Season, Etc.

New York, May 10. (Special Correspondence to THE BEE.)

Shaving widows. A question that is agitating the Barbers of Bombay. Shall the widows be shaved? asks the Belfast Weekly Examiner. This is the great question that is at present causing agitation amongst the barbers of Bombay? To western ears the subject sounds a trifle comic, but in the land of the orient it has a very different meaning. In India it has always been customary to shave the heads of widows immediately on the death of their husbands. Of late murmurs and protests have been heard and the native journals have been calling for reform. The barbers have commenced to coincide with these more enlightened views, and it is expected will refuse to perform the required tonsorial operation.

The Brahmins have threatened that they will use the scissors themselves, but this is believed to be impossible, as it would result in their losing caste—a very important consideration with a religious, self-respecting Brahmin. The country, says an Indian contemporary, the practice of shaving the widow's head is not so persistently enforced as in Bombay. The hair is allowed to grow again, and the widow has only to submit to a renewal of the unwearying operation when she visits a shrine of special sanctity.

In Bombay widows are shaved regularly once a week, and this causes them deep distress. It would really appear as if the widow in India was regarded with the same touching affection and reverential regard as the mother-in-law in lands that lie more in the direction of the setting sun.

In advanced age the declining powers are wonderfully refreshed by Hood's Sarsaparilla. It really does "make the weak strong."

A CONSOLING THOUGHT.

Yan Phon Lee Will Not Contest His Wife's Divorce Suit. Yan Phon Lee asserts, with tears running obliquely down his cheeks, that he is a victim to his wife's mother, says the New York Morning Journal.

Yan Phon Lee came to America in 1873 to study our language and customs. In studying the language he also studied the chief users of the language—our young ladies. He found the occupation a very interesting one, and had advanced to a point where he could conjugate the verb "to love" when he was suddenly interrupted. The emperor of China had learned that his subjects here were learning other things than grammar, and he at once recalled every Chinaman in America. Those in the business of taking in washing or giving out "dope" refused to obey the edict, for they appreciated the blessings of our institutions. But the students, of whom there were a number, packed up their papers, left their native lands, and returned to the flower kingdom. Yan Phon Lee was one of the obedient ones, and Yan displayed so much new knowledge that he surprised the emperor. The latter was particularly pleased with the fluency of Yan's English, which his Americanized subject explained to him. He at once ordered Yan Phon Lee to return to America. Yan obeyed, and entered Yale college. He also entered New Haven society.

The German was rechristened the Chinese, in deference to his nationality, and the favors were always sweet almonds, a poetic allusion to the shape of his eyes.

Among the pretty New Haven maids was Elizabeth Mand Jerome. Yan, who had been a widower, danced with her, loved her, proposed to her and married her. Elizabeth had an \$80,000 marriage portion. Yan thought himself a very lucky man.

Yan says he had reckoned without his host—that is, without his mother-in-law. She began to suspect that one of his eyes was slanted in the direction of Elizabeth's mother and she became uglier than the homeliest dragon that ever adorned the walls of a Joss house. Yan says that she looks so to him.

Bit by bit husband and wife were estranged, and soon they were as far apart as the poles. Yan went to San Francisco to clerk in a bank, but Mrs. Yan was not satisfied there. She insisted on going home to her mamma, and did go. Yan followed her. But mamma Jerome was not pleased with the presence of her son-in-law. She found him once laughing uproariously over a mother-in-law joke in a paper supposed to be funny, and she grew angry.

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