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THE IMPROVED COLUMBIAN CLASP No. 7B

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S. F. Call Writer Tells of the Fight Being Waged

By Owens Valley To Protect Homes

Here is the first of a series of dramatic fact stories of the tragedy that has overtaken the Owens River Valley in Inyo County, where almost the entire population is facing an enforced migration due to the loss of their irrigating water, without which the valley must again become a desert:

By C. E. KUNZE

Due east from Fresno ninety miles by section line sunk deeply beyond the granite spires of Whitney and the highest range of the Sierras lies Owens Valley, the scene today of one of those tragic human dramas such as formed the theme in Longfellow's immortal poem of "Evangeline."

For nearly twenty years the valley's residents, numbering not less than 6000 people, have waged a heroic battle against an invading city's population for the water that irrigates their fields. Without the use of a reasonable portion of the water that comes tumbling down into their valley from the snow fields of the Sierras community life in this valley becomes impossible.

This battle for water has been tense and bitter, beyond anything of its kind in the history of California. It has gone steadily against the valley residents, however, and today the entire Owens Valley population, now in its fourth generation, faces that most cruel of all human tragedies, the enforced migration from their ancestral homes.

Naturally, the people are still hopeful that this terrible climax to their struggles still may be averted. They are praying for some miracle to arise that will yet save their valley from utter devastation. But the omens are not favorable. Three hundred miles to the south of them a great city has arisen upon a thinly watered plain. Its population is growing as by some miracle. Dry years have come to remind all Californians how precious is the water which runs from the Sierras' snow fields, and mighty forces that are beyond human control have come to play a part in this gigantic drama.

The Owens Valley people—at least a good many of them, are placing their own interpretation upon recent events, and are preparing for the fate which seems to be in store for them with a calm courage and fortitude which usually marks such historic episodes as an enforced migration. They see clear-eyed the swift march of events and in the last few months have shifted their ground. Now, instead of fighting to save the valley itself they are concerned only with saving themselves and their property interests. They have at last convinced that the odds against them are insurmountable, and each in his own way has adjusted himself to the inexorable fate.

The final signal of their surrender has come in this unusual form. They have offered within the last few weeks to sell what farms, homes and property interests they still have in the valley, that are dependent upon irrigation rights and water diversions, to the city in a wholesale lot at a lump sum of \$8,000,000.

This offer is now under consideration by the city of Los Angeles, and if accepted would speedily write the final chapter of the Owens Valley civilization. Headgates in irrigating canals, the first of which were so laboriously dug by hand labor in the early seventies, would be closed for all time. The water which has reclaimed some 60,000 acres of some of the finest farming in California would course silently southward and out of the valley to Los Angeles; fields and orchards that have been

the gleaming promise of a valley's opulent future would again become barren and a desert waste; farm buildings will crumble into ruin and even the towns, built as they mostly are upon an agrarian foundation, would shrink in size and some at least would share the fate of the ghost cities of the Western mining camps.

This is the inevitable outcome that faces the people of the Owens Valley if Los Angeles continues along its present course of providing no water storage above the Owens Valley, and relying entirely for its rapidly growing population upon the stream flow of the Owens River. Within the last year the city has been making land purchases wholesale in and about the towns of Big Pine, Laws and Bishop. It has dried up upwards of 100 fertile ranches, permitting them to revert to desert. This method the people of the valley have protested against and fought by every means they possessed, but their pleas have fallen on deaf ears and the process of ranch devastation has gone steadily forward.

From the city of Los Angeles to the upper end of the Owens Valley is a distance of about 300 miles. To bring down the water which flows from the eastern watershed of the Sierras into the Owens River, the city has constructed an aqueduct across the forbidding Mojave Desert. The city's investment in this project is now about \$26,000,000.

When the project was started nearly twenty years ago the plans contemplated the creation of a huge storage reservoir in what is known as Long Valley, twenty miles above the Owens Valley.

This reservoir has not been built, and therein lies the reason for the process of ranch devastation now taking place.

In the wet seasons there is a waste of water. The summer flood and the winter rains go to waste at times, while, in dry seasons and drought years, there is a shortage. The normal runoff from the entire watershed is about twice the water that is now being beneficially used by valley farmers and the city, but fully half that amount is lost through lack of storage, and the devastation of one of the most beautiful valleys in California is the price that is being paid.

The Owens Valley people have no storage rights. They were induced to surrender these twenty years ago to the United States government, which contemplated the construction of a great government reclamation project there. These rights the government later turned over to the city, and consequently the hands of the valley people have since been tied.

There appear to be two reasons why the city has provided no storage in the Long Valley reservoir site. One of these is a dispute over some land rights in the Long Valley between the city and one individual; the other reason is a dispute between the city and a power company over power rights.

Between Long Valley and the Owens Valley the Owens River breaks through a gorge hundreds of feet deep and eight miles long. The city owns the storage rights on the river and seven miles of the gorge below the proposed storage dam. The power company owns one mile of the gorge, but in that mile lies one-fourth of the potential water power of the whole river.

Between the city on the one hand and the power company on the other the people of the valley are ground between two millstones. Realizing there is water a-plenty for all concerned,

they are yet prevented from doing the things which would save them and their valley. They see their farms engulfed, their towns injured and helpless neighbors ruined. New schools, financed by bond issues, are left in districts now in the process of depopulation. Their community life has become demoralized. Property values are shrinking where no direct water right attaches to the property, and a friendly people has become divided into factional groups.

Fear, suspicion and bitter hatreds have pitched their black tents in every crossroad. Neighbor no longer trusts neighbor. Rumors of sell-outs or suspected betrayals are the chief topic of conversation. The chief business of the valley has become the signing of land deeds and the searching of titles. Yet for the most part those who sell sign reluctantly, and in many instances men and women have blotted their signatures with tears. To them these deeds are in reality documents of dispossession.

They love their farms and their homes, quite naturally. They love this valley, set, as it is, between two high mountain ranges. It is a beautiful valley, worthy of the name they give—the "Switzerland of America"—but it is a valley in travail, a valley of many broken hearts.

Second Article

Struggle For Water In Owens Valley

Geographically, the Owens Valley is a neighbor of Death Valley, the first lying in the northwestern corner and the other in the south eastern corner of Inyo County. It is, on the whole, a forbidding region, a land of desert, barren mountain ranges, deep depressions, some of them below the sea level, and about the last place an uninformed person would think of going to for a great city's water supply.

Mary Austin, novelist, who spent her young womanhood there, and there wrote the books which first made her famous, called it in one of these books "The Land of Little Rain."

The annual precipitation in Owens Valley is about five inches. But the entire eastern watershed of the Sierras for a length of 150 miles drains down through numerous streams into this valley, all of this water ultimately collecting in the bed of the Owens River.

Originally the Piute Indians were the inhabitants. White settlers following the miners came there in the sixties, and in a decade had made themselves masters over the Indians, but not without many bloody battles and the help of a company of soldiers stationed at Fort Independence. Irrigation developed quite rapidly, and by 1900 practically the entire stream flow of the Owens River and the smaller streams had been appropriated. When the engineers of the United States reclamation service arrived there to make a survey for a prospective project under the Newlands act, passed in 1902, they found 60,000 acres under cultivation.

The arrival of these engineers probably marked the high noon of the Owens Valley development.

The discovery of Tonopah and Goldfield, with their mushroom growth populations, had opened a new and very lucrative market for the Owens Valley farm products, hauled over land 150 miles by freight teams, and in the very hey-day of this new mining hub-hub arrived the government irrigationists with their promise of millions to develop the valley. Untilled desert lands were available and there was water enough, the engineers found, to bring 120,000 acres under cultivation. The town of Bishop, the metropolis of the valley, began to have dreams of becoming a city of twenty or thirty thousand people.

This dream received its first jolt when in the summer of 1905 the news came there would be no reclamation project

financed by government money. The service engineers had been withdrawn from the field, and such rights as the government had acquired in the valley to water and storage had been transferred to the city of Los Angeles.

From the town of Independence, in the southern end of the valley, northward for twenty miles, a man by the name of Fred Eaton, Los Angeles City's agent, had acquired options on thousands of acres of land flanking both sides of the Owens River.

The storm clouds which rose over the entire valley with the breaking of this news have never been dispelled.

The first indignation, naturally, was over the losing of the government reclamation project. This project was to have cost nearly \$3,000,000—a huge sum of money for so isolated a community. It would have meant the doubling of the irrigated areas, and substitution of cement-lined canals for the old sand lined ditches dug by the settlers. It signified new homes, new farm buildings, new machinery, new markets, new people, new hopes!

All this had come down with one crash, and here, instead of a friend, was an enemy at the gate. In fact, the people of the valley felt that the enemy had not only arrived at the gate, but was within their home. Thousands of acres of land bordering the river for twenty miles were already in his hands.

Right or wrong, this feeling has never entirely subsided. It has caused a cleavage between communities, between former friends, even between families in exactly the way that other warfare does. This resentment has blocked Los Angeles' work in the valley, and has fanned up feelings among some of the aqueduct builders which have worked a further harm. This resentment has been the fertile breeder of suspicions that have made agreements and amiable arrangements utterly impossible.

It seemed outrageous enough to the residents of the Owens Valley that a city should come hundreds of miles across the desert to demand from them a share of their precious water for domestic use. One can imagine how intense their resentment became when it was learned that not only did Los Angeles intend to have Owens River water for domestic use, but also intended to carry off a lot more for sale to irrigationists in the San Fernando Valley.

The San Fernando Valley lies just north of Los Angeles. Both the coast line and the valley line of the Southern Pacific Railroad cross it. Twenty years ago the San Fernando Valley was as thinly peopled as was the Owens Valley. The miracle of its growth during the last twelve years—of the magic rise of such towns as Lankershim, San Fernando, Van Nuys and Owensmouth, has been the water from the Owens Valley which the builders of the aqueduct brought down across 200 miles of desert.

To the relinquishment of water for Los Angeles domestic use the people of Owens Valley have long since been reconciled. But to the use of this water for the San Fernando irrigationists they are as little reconciled today as they were when the full scope of the aqueduct project first became known to them.

If one wishes to raise a thunder storm in the Owens Valley, search out a group of irreconcilables and casually state what a beautiful place is the San Fernando Valley. Its beauty does not interest them. They can think only of the price they have had to pay for it, and the means that were adopted to convert that semi-arid valley into the garden-spot it now is.

They will even remind you, if the thought had not occurred to you, that for every acre brought under cultivation about the towns of Owensmouth, San Fernando, Van Nuys and Lankershim, one or more acre have been devastated in the Owens Valley.

Ever since the aqueduct has been built this strange process of farm transmutation has been going on.

What the upper valley has lost the lower valley has gained. So far as the State of California is concerned, the score is

probably even, but so far as individuals are concerned up in the Owens Valley, whether they were farmers forced to sell their ranches to the city, or townsfolk, denied the advantage of a growing community, the transmutation process has had a very uneven result. To the individual, indeed, the San Fernando gain has been an Owens Valley loss. The property values which have run away with the water, while they have enriched a whole valley, have to an even greater degree impoverished another.

One trouble has led to another. Last year was one of sub-normal rainfall—and snowfall. In the summer the aqueduct, carrying its double burden of domestic water for Los Angeles, and irrigation water for the San Fernando farmers, began to run low. The city, alarmed, ordered the irrigation ditches closed. Immediately the San Fernando farmers were up in arms. They demanded water. There was only one place where it could be gotten, and only one way.

The City hurried up into Owens Valley. It spent \$1,100,000 buying water lands. It bought an entire canal, known as the McNally ditch, from Owens Valley farmers. It paid big prices for the land, but it got no water. All the water, to which the McNally ditch owners were entitled, running down the river was diverted before it reached the city's aqueduct.

Below the McNally ditch was the Big Pine ditch, with its intake open. Outwitted, the city's agents hired men with teams and attempted to cut a new channel so that their newly purchased water would not reach the Big Pine ditch. The Big Pine farmers resorted to primitive methods. They armed themselves with guns and drove off the city's workers.

Third Article

Tragedy Stalks Valley of Broken Hearts

The fate which has befallen the town of Big Pine may be taken as a warning of the impending tragedy which overhangs the entire Owens River Valley and may at any moment swoop down with devastating force.

Big Pine, taking its name from the creek that cascades from the great Palisade glacier, 8000 feet above the town, sits upon a sparsely wooded bench of land at the base of the gigantic Sierra range fifteen miles south of Bishop.

To the north and east and south lie ranch lands, some 5000 or 6000 acres, all highly improved, extremely fertile, watered from the creek and a canal, and devoted to the production of alfalfa, fine stock, orchards, grain and small garden and vegetable truck.

The town has only two or three hundred people in it, but the surrounding farming population helps to form a self-supporting community of perhaps a thousand people.

It is a beautiful town and a beautiful country, over looking the valley which sweeps for endless miles to the north and to the south, faced on the east by the White Mountains, and to the west the granite crags of the Palisades, glacier-bound and close to 13,000 feet high.

Until a few months ago the people of Big Pine seemed as securely placed as the great mountain range at their backs, with a future before them as cloudless as an Inyo sky on a summer's day. The conflict for water which had already swept away portions of two other towns, Lone Pine at the extreme southern end of the valley, and Independence, the county seat, some thirty miles to the south, had been to them only the rumble of distant thunder.

They felt so immune, so safe and so prosperous that they had no hesitation to lay out some heavy investments in private and public improvements. A legion hall was built by subscription, and a new school, large enough to serve for all the grades and as a high school, was constructed at a cost of \$100,000.

For this building a bond issue was voted.

Then came the sale of the lands under the McNally ditch to the north of them. Under the pressure of its need for more water, and the goading of the farmers in the San Fernando Valley, whose irrigation water had been shut off, the city of Los Angeles laid out \$1,500,000 in the purchase of the McNally ditch farms. There were between 8000 and 9000 acres of land under this ditch, every acre entitled to an inch of water from the Owens River, and the city purchased 80 per cent of this land.

The headgate of the McNally ditch was closed and the water which would have gone on these ranches came down the river—and into the Big Pine ditch.

Not a drop of it passed the headgate of the Big Pine canal. Not a drop of it reached the aqueduct of the city of Los Angeles. The investment of \$1,500,000 had been a futile gesture, so far as it went toward relieving the situation in the San Fernando Valley. There was a shortage in the Owens River and every farmer both above and below the McNally canal had rights to more water than he was getting. The elimination of the McNally intake merely meant that there would be more for the farmers on the Big Pine canal, and they accepted the boon which this windfall had brought them.

The shotgun episode already mentioned then took place. By cutting a new channel in the river, where it makes a horse-shoe bend, the city engineers, led by George Shuey, hoped to get their McNally water past the Big Pine canal without losing it in the canal. The Big Pine farmers, standing on their well tested water rights, but not having any too great faith in the speed of the courts, resorted to the more primitive methods of adjusting such disputes. They drove off the city workers, and thus brought on the next chapter of the story.

The city began negotiations to buy them out. The farmers, fearing treachery among their own, as they had seen such treachery take place in other districts of the valley, signed a compact to stand together. In December, with another dry year in prospect, the city carried this citadel of opposition and took over all the lands in the Big Pine district for the sum of \$1,100,000.

This spring not an acre of the 4500 acres under the Big Pine Canal is being planted. The orchards are not being irrigated. The headgate of a canal that has been doing duty for forty years or more is closed and that belt of fine farms around the town of Big Pine is lying fallow. There will be no crops this year to gladden the hearts of the farmers, or the townsfolk. There will be this autumn, as there has generally been, no harvest festival in celebration of the bringing in of the bounty of the soil.

Big Pine has received the full blow of the devastation program. Deprived of the support of the ranches, the town is left literally with no visible means of support. It has a debt upon its properties of \$100,000 for the new school, which the people must pay, somehow. In the town are property values of probably near a quarter million dollars. There is a bank, a newspaper, a hotel, garages, a dozen stores—the usual equipment of a community of half a thousand people. What is to become of all this?

When the city of Los Angeles purchased the surrounding farms and the water rights that went with them it made no provision for the town of Big Pine, for which these farms and this water made the economic foundation. With one blow the city destroyed the foundation and thereby left hundreds of people—all of them innocent victims of a program in the making of which they were not consulted—stranded as on a desert isle.

Today, unquestionably, one could buy up the entire town of Big Pine for less than half what its price would have been the day before the big land deal was consummated. More than \$100,000 of property values were wiped out, and the other \$100,000 will mostly evaporate as the summer makes plain what it is that has really happened. For these people this tragedy is

as terrible and destructive to all they possess as though an earthquake, a fire or some other calamity had swept over the town. It is as terrible and far more cruel, for the catastrophe is handmade. It is a link in a chain of circumstances the forgoing of which began in the year 1905, when the first emissary of the city came to the valley and began, unannounced and unidentified, to make his filings along the river from Independence north.

Fourth Article

The fate which has befallen the people of Big Pine now hovers over the town of Bishop, fifteen miles to the north.

Bishop, though not the county seat, is the metropolis of the Owens River Valley. It is the hub of Inyo, the trading center for a region as large as some European kingdoms. The southern half of Mono, to the north, and portions of Nevada, including such mining centers as Tonopah and Goldfield, find in Bishop their most convenient supply depot.

The town is incorporated and has a population of 1500 but its business houses are many of them of a type and size one expects to find only in cities three or four times its size. One hardware store, for instance, carries a stock of goods invoiced at \$100,000—a stock which for quality and variety can hardly be duplicated by any store in San Francisco.

There are two hardware stores, several garages, two newspapers, two banks, whose combined assets are \$3,000,000, two drug stores, markets, clothing emporiums, a new moving picture theatre—the usual business development of a very thriving and prosperous California community.

Legion hall, built of concrete, costing, it seems to me, \$40,000 or \$50,000, is nearing completion. There is a new grammar school that stands the district \$100,000, and a brand new high school which represents an investment of \$250,000. All together, the property values within the town of Bishop will probably aggregate \$2,000,000, and if by any act of man or upheaval of nature the town were wiped out, it would mean the ruination of all the people that live there.

Unlike Big Pine, Bishop has about it a vast expanse of valley lands. It lies in the extreme northern end of the valley, which has here from east to west a spread of nearly thirty miles. On the north the farms make only a fringe of four or five miles, but to the south they follow the fertile river alluviums for ten or fifteen miles to line of the Big Pine district.

Toward the Sierras, southwest, west and northwest, there is a fan-like spread of valley, irregular in shape and depth, that is from six to twenty miles across. It is broken into a number of distinct depressions by fingerlike ridges which the mountains have run out toward the river, but every acre of these depressions and most of the higher lands are taken up by farms, and have been cultivated for the last fifty years.

Here, then, is the main theater of the Owens Valley water battle.

Immediately adjacent to the town of Bishop lie 54,000 acres of irrigated lands. Every acre is held in private ownership by farmers in lots of 40 to 320 acres. Larger ranches than 320 acres are rare, and in recent years the subdivision impulse has been at work and sliced up the holdings into some 5 and 10 acre tracts, given to fruit raising and gardening.

For the irrigation of these lands the valley farmers since the decades of the seventies and eighties have appropriated and used about all the water which the Owens River and its principal tributaries bring down from the mountains during the growing season. The diversions from the river were made by a series of ditches or canals, dug by the farmers mostly during the winter seasons with horses and scrapers and picks and shovels. The Owens River Canal, the Bishop Creek Canal, the McNally Canal, the Rawson Ditch, the Farmers' Ditch, the

Collins Ditch, the Sanger Ditch and the Big Pine Ditch are some of the names given to these local enterprises.

All the larger canals were financed on a co-operative basis, ditch companies were formed and incorporated, the property interests were divided into shares and the shares distributed on a pro rata basis among the farmers. Generally one share of stock in a ditch company carried with it the right for the use of one miner's inch of water from that ditch on the land of the proprietor farmer.

A miner's inch of water is deemed necessary in the valley for the irrigation of one acre of land.

The normal flow of the Owens River where it breaks through its gorge to the upper end of the Owens Valley, about twelve miles northwest of the town of Bishop, is 30,000 miner's inches.

The significance of this fact becomes apparent at once. Even before the city of Los Angeles came into the field seeking for a share of the water every inch in the river during the irrigating season had been appropriated by the farmers in the Bishop district and was being used beneficially. Not only that, but twice the amount of land was already under cultivation as the river would normally water, with the result that the farmers were curtailing the use of the water wherever they could and sharing it with each other.

Los Angeles, however, did not come to Bishop for water when it first came to the valley in 1905. The mouth of the Owens River is sixty-five miles south of Bishop. Between Bishop and Independence, fifty miles south, a number of small creeks flow from the Sierras into the Owens River. Also, in an irrigating district the size of that about Bishop there is considerable seepage water and overflow from the irrigating canals that finds its way back into the river. Also, for seven months of each year the valley farmers were not using any water, and all this created a water surplus, seasonal in character, but considerable in quantity, of which the city took possession.

A less alert and informed people might have paid little attention to this circumstance. At Independence, in fact, where most of the county officials lived and where farming was carried on, there was little, if any, protest. The farmers there sold out to the city, and were glad to, while some of the more prominent business and professional men went quietly, and for the most part secretly, into the employ of Los Angeles. At Bishop, however, a different spirit was shown. There, almost over night, the people organized themselves into a militant fighting force.

Since then this fight has never ceased and the town of Bishop has always been its storm center. There has been the gathering place of the indignant farmers whenever some new move on the part of the invader has called for additional defense measures. The town of Bishop has furnished not only some of the funds spent in this warfare but most of the leadership—which in time has become divided, so that today some of the very ablest men in the valley are directing the strategy of the Los Angeles cause. There is, in fact, no question but that the most damaging blows which have been struck in the last two years against the valley as a whole have been directed by local talent—by valley residents who for profit or other motives have taken up the invader's cause.

This cause has never been stronger and the valley's side never so demoralized as it is today. Bishop is like a town besieged. Almost half the water which belongs to adjacent ranches has come in the last few months into the possession of Los Angeles and the town is benumbed by the shadow that has suddenly fallen across its way. Hardly a home has escaped the chill that is in the air. It is the chill of death which has moved in with the feeling of despair. One senses this even in the street during the busiest part of a busy day where the men gather in little groups to discuss the latest news or merely the rumors which outrun every new event.

Fifth Article

Now and then the mere possession of wealth brings disaster to an innocent people. It was thus with the Incas, who perished because of their treasure of yellow gold; and it is thus with the people of the Owens valley, face to face with a Homeric calamity, because of their ownership of the White Gold of Inyo.

Few people realize the almost fabulous value of water in a semi-arid region as populous as Los Angeles. It is not only the very foundation of the whole community, but it has a commercial value, a price that is realizable in the open market which places it into the class of precious commodities.

For a single miner's inch of water, coursing down through the Los Angeles aqueduct, the city derives a power toll of about \$500 a year. At wholesale rate the city buys this power at \$180 a year, and this income from one inch of water capitalized at 5 per cent gives a property value to it of \$3600.

The same water is then available either for irrigation of San Fernando Valley land, or for domestic use in Los Angeles, the value of which is estimated at \$2500. This would make a combined value for power and water of \$6100 per miner's inch at the lower end of the aqueduct, and for this water the city is now paying Owens Valley ranchers from \$150 to \$300 an inch.

If we take a reduced value of say \$5000 an inch, the entire valley supply of 30,000 inches has a municipal value to Los Angeles of \$150,000,000.

That is its potential commercial value. That is the price the city could pay and recover from its resale to its own inhabitants. The difference between this price and the price the city is paying, constitutes the money prize at stake in the Owens Valley contest.

This was the stake when the city purchased the water in the Big Pine Canal, and it was the stake when John Martin came to Laws less than a year ago and purchased most of the ranches and 80 per cent of the water in the McNally ditch, all tributary to the town of Laws.

Laws is the railroad shipping point for the town of Bishop six miles northeast of Bishop. It came into existence when D. O. Mills, founder of the Bank of California, built the old Carson and Colorado narrow gauge railroad southward from the mining camps of Candelaria and Bellville through the Owens Valley to tap the mineral wealth of Cerro Gordo and other southern Inyo mines.

North of Laws lives Mrs. Mary Deyo, owner of forty acres of land, and a water right in the McNally ditch. Mrs. Deyo is the widow of a Civil War veteran and her life has been a veritable bed of desert cactus. For many years a kind hearted merchant in the town of Bishop has sent her a check monthly with which to keep the wolf from her door, for she was never strong enough to work her little plot of land.

When the McNally purchase was made, John Martin offered her \$4000 for her place. He cared nothing for her land, but she owned twenty-five inches of water in the McNally ditch, which to the city, at the southern end of the aqueduct, has a commercial value of \$5000 an inch—at the very least. As the population in Los Angeles increases this value goes higher and higher.

Mrs. Deyo, unacquainted with water values, and unable to work her own land, asked \$5000 for her property. Martin offered her \$4000, but she wouldn't take that. Five thousand is so little it will not support her, unaccustomed as she is to comfort and schooled as she is in the arts of penury, but she sees her neighbors all selling and she lets her precious white gold go at \$200 an inch.

Now the water runs down the aqueduct, gathering value at every mile.

The mere fact that the water at her farm was 4000 feet above sea level gave it a power value of \$3600 an inch. And at the head of the San Fernando Valley it will have an additional value of \$2500 for the farmers there or for domestic use. Twenty-five inches of water, worth \$5000 an inch—\$125,000 in white gold value—what a windfall that might have meant for Mrs. Deyo, but up at Laws, fighting all her days against want, how could she have known the real worth of her little place?

One of Mrs. Deyo's neighbors is C. A. Peak. He, too, is the owner of forty acres of land under the McNally ditch, with a water right of twenty-five inches.

Peak's wife has been an invalid for many years, leaving to him the sole care of their four children. His farm is under cultivation. In recent years the wife and mother has been taken to a hospital as a state ward. Peak placed a price of \$12,000 on his ranch. Martin, land buyer for the city, offered him \$5000. Peak would not sell, but most of his neighbors did, and through them the city gained its objective, the control of the McNally canal. Now Peak has been punished. He has been classed with an obstreperous minority and the city refuses to pay him any price at all for his property. He is absolutely at the city's mercy, for it controls 80 per cent of the ditch stock, has placed its own people in charge of the property and controls the entire water flow to which the McNally stock has a right.

If the city chooses to do so, it can run the entire McNally stream down the river, and Peak's only recourse will be a suit in law. Under the circumstances, he can neither plant a crop with the assurance that it will mature, nor can he sell his property, for, other than the city, no one would pay him a dollar for it.

These are not isolated cases. There are a dozen people on the McNally ditch in Peak's situation. These cases are being duplicated wherever the city's land buyer moves.

The sale of the McNally lands and water rights has been a savage blow to the townfolk of Laws. Though a railroad shipping point, its commercial life was chiefly dependent upon the surrounding agricultural development. With this development wiped out, town values have shrunk almost to the vanishing point. What has happened there may be illustrated by the case of Julia Rogers.

Like Mrs. Deyo, Mrs. Rogers is a widow. For years she worked hard in managing an eating house at Laws, saved a little money, received some help from kind-hearted townfolks and finally was able to start a small store. The building was donated to her by the Woodman lodge, the lot was virtually a gift from a Bishop firm, and her store has been bringing her an income, enough, with what she earns as postmistress, to make her a living.

She is still postmistress, but the income from her store has evaporated—gone in a day when the McNally canal was sold. The property has lost its selling value as well as its rental value. There was no compensation for the town of Laws when the farming lands about it were wiped out. Mrs. Rogers has been ruined and she is only one of many who have been ruined in this same way. The white gold, whose proximity at Laws had formed the foundation for her support, is a fluid commodity. It runs readily out of the valley now that the aqueduct is built across the Mojave desert. It runs and it picks up value with every mile it makes—hence the tragedy which it is leaving in its wake.

The White Gold of Inyo!

One wonders, after a talk with Mrs. Deyo, Mr. Peak or Mrs. Rogers of the town of Laws, why the people do not guard it with their lives!

Sixth Article

Deeply buried in the opening phases of the Owens Valley water tragedy lies the Hidden Chapter of the United States Reclamation Service.

This service has had an admittedly brilliant history of achievement. It has constructed twenty-eight great reclamation projects, has reclaimed some 6,000,000 acres of arid or semiarid lands in the Western states, has provided homes for thousands of sturdy families, and with the expenditure of \$100,000,000 of government funds, has written a new epoch in the winning of America.

Everywhere the service has been an agency of constructive projects, erecting great dams, impounding flood in huge reservoirs, harnessing streams to man's service. It has been in truth the government's helping hand to the American settler, breaking a path for him through the desert, overcoming obstacles which no single state was strong enough to overcome. This has been its brilliant history everywhere—except in the Owens Valley.

In the Owens Valley the service wrote a chapter of betrayal of a trusting and innocent people that has not its equal in the entire history of the West.

It came as a friend, it came cloaked with the dignity and prestige of the government. It made a thorough investigation of the valley, the lands available for reclamation, of the water that flowed from the mountains. It induced the people there to surrender rights which legally were theirs, to place the entire future of their valley into its hands, and then, without so much as even asking them about it, transferred all these rights to another community hundreds of miles away.

This, in brief outline, is the Hidden Chapter of the Reclamation Service, a chapter of which the service itself is not proud and which, so far as possible, has been permitted to lie buried in the government archives at Washington.

This chapter begins with the arrival, in June, 1903, of J. C. Clausen, a young government engineer, in the Owens Valley for a preliminary survey of the proposed project. Clausen is a native Salinas, a graduate of the University of California, and now one of the leading water and irrigation engineers in America. He came to the valley twenty-one years ago as the field scout of the service sent there by J. B. Lippincott, supervising engineer of the Reclamation Service for California.

Clausen spent the entire summer in Long Valley and the adjacent region, taking stream measurements, surveying the county, selecting a dam site at the head of the Owens River gorge and making his report on the proposed project. He was enthusiastically for the building of the project, and as a result of his report Lippincott recommended the withdrawal of all public lands, both in Long Valley, where the reservoir would be located, and in the lower Owens Valley, where these lands would benefit from the project and become available for new farms.

Under the subheading, "Program for the People," Clausen made the following suggestion to Lippincott:

"In order that the Reclamation Service can insure an efficient irrigating system, it is imperative that it be given control of the total water supply of the valley. The existing private rights must be relinquished, and to accomplish this the people should be required to form an association. This association should carry on negotiations with the separate holdings formulate a plan of consolidation whereby the private rights pass into the hands of the government, on acceptable terms, so that the laws of the Reclamation Service may be completely unhampered by any existing claims."

This suggestion was in line with a fixed policy of the service. Wherever a project has been constructed, the federal engineers have insisted upon an adjustment of all water rights within the proposed project area, and complete control over storage. Some of the valley residents had filed on storage sites among the numerous mountain lakes within this watershed, and on most of the creeks, including all the larger ones, such as Bishop Creek, Rock Creek, Convict Creek and Pine Creek. In the summer of 1904 Clausen, on a second trip to the valley, secured the relinquishment of all these filings, given up voluntarily by the men who held them in order that the reclamation project might not be delayed.

In this agreement made with the government engineers, the valley residents and land owners were induced to surrender every right they possessed to further stream diversion, or to storage. They disarmed themselves completely, giving up their claims to any surplus water that might be subsequently developed, and trusting implicitly in the good intentions of the Reclamation Service to put these waters upon unused valley lands.

In that same summer Lippincott himself paid the valley his first visit, and the project was further favored by the report of Thomas H. Means, who passed on soils, climate and other circumstances that enter into reclamation engineering. In his report Means said:

"Owens Valley seems to have many peculiar merits to favor it as an irrigation project. Among these may be mentioned abundance of water power, fertile soil, genial climate, nearby markets for all agricultural products, in Tonopah and Goldfield, and a possible outlet to Los Angeles in the near future. . . . Agriculture methods in the valley compare favorably with those in average California. . . ."

The structural features of the proposed project were to consist of a dam 140 feet high at the head of the river gorge in Long Valley, to cost \$750,000; the flooding of some 12,000 acres of land in Long Valley with the stored water, and the building of three cement-lined canals in Owens Valley at a cost of \$208,000. A lateral system of canals costing \$400,000 was proposed, a drainage system for \$500,000 and general engineering contingencies to cost \$300,000. The total cost of the project as estimated by Clausen was \$2,282,000, for irrigation of 106,000 acres of land, an acre cost of \$21.58.

Lippincott certainly favored this project after his visit to the valley in 1904, for he said so in a report made by him to the final board of engineers. It was exceedingly economical in its cost per acre of land irrigated, it would build up a highly favored and desirable valley in the great mountain basin, and would unquestionably be a success from the government standpoint. But his report setting forth these things, together with the reports made by Clausen and Means, were not made public. Already, though unsuspected by the people of the Owens Valley, a new hand had appeared in the great game of fate.

Far to the south, hundreds of miles across the desert, along a route which only an occasional prospector trod, and a burro pack, or a mule team could negotiate, a small but resourceful group of men were incubating an idea that was soon to astonish the world. It certainly did astonish the people of Owens Valley when they first heard of it, and their astonishment has not yet altogether left them. It was a bold idea and one that needed federal aid, but this was already at hand, as we shall see.

Seventh Article

History records that the man in whose mind first germinated the ambitious plan of bringing Owens River water to Los Angeles was not the one who finally built the aqueduct, but Fred Eaton, former mayor of the city.

Eaton was elected mayor of Los Angeles on December 5, 1898. To some of his friends he has confessed that the idea of bringing water to the semi-arid southland from the flusher valleys of the north came to him five years prior to his term in office. That is, in 1893.

This point is important in its bearing upon the justice of the cause of the Owens Valley people. It reveals that from its very inception a municipal water supply was only incidental to the whole aqueduct project, that the basic thought of the Eaton plan was a general development within the whole San Gabriel and San Fernando basins, a development which speedily would be limited unless an additional water supply could be secured.

At the time of Eaton's election Los Angeles had hardly outgrown its country town character. Only 14,000 votes were cast at the municipal election of that year, and the government census, taken at the end of Eaton's term, showed a population of 100,000, and for these people the city had a water supply adequate for three times the number.

It would not be difficult to trace the genesis of Eaton's idea. He was a native of Los Angeles, a civil engineer by training, and for some ten years had been in the city's employ as city engineer. He was, therefore, familiar with every detail of the city's water problem and its water supply, taken from the Los Angeles River.

He also was familiar with the almost fabulous value of water when poured on the sandy soil of the valleys about the city, including the two leading newspaper publishers, Harrison Gray Otis of the Times and E. T. Earl of the Express. Harry Chandler, Otis' son-in-law, and a few others were informed of what was in the wind.

orange and lemon groves second not even to those of Italy.

Fred Eaton had trouble selling his idea to the men about him. He himself is of the adventurous type—a man with a sweeping imagination. Few of those he spoke to had his breadth of vision, or, for that matter, his clear conception of the water problem that the whole south faced. Furthermore, none had ever seen the Owens Valley, for in those days the way into it by rail was a three days' journey through Sacramento, Reno, Carson and along the trail of the mining camps which D. O. Mills had followed with his narrow gauge railroad.

Eaton knew the Owens Valley. As an engineer he knew the feasibility of bringing water across the Mojave Desert. He planned first to have it a private enterprise, an elaborate promotion project standing on three legs of gold—water for the municipalities, water for irrigation of San Fernando lands and hydro-electric energy, just then coming into industrial use and prominence.

This plan was in time discarded for an out and out municipal project, which had two advantages over the private scheme. As a municipal project the financing would be taken care of by a bond issue voted by the city, and the more difficult problem of getting a water supply in a distant and probably hostile valley would be simplified through the advancement of the idea of municipal need. In 1904 the idea finally crystalized. Eaton had sold it to William Mulholland, the city's engineering chief, and to a small but important group of "big men" of the city, including the two leading newspaper of the Times and E. T. Earl of the Express. Harry Chandler, Otis' son-in-law, and a few others were informed of what was in the wind.

The public learned of its months afterward, and not until the time came for the making of a bond campaign with which to finance the project. By that time much of the necessary pre-

liminary work had been disposed of, including the taking over of all storage rights and reservoir lands which the reclamation service had secured.

Events now moved very swiftly, as the following brief chronology shows:

1904—Eaton arrives at Long Valley with the first official party of Los Angeles officials. They are brought over the range from the Yosemite Valley by a government pack train provided by J. B. Lippincott, chief government engineer, and are shown over Long Valley, where the reclamation service had proposed to build its storage reservoir. The land involved in this storage site shortly after was taken up by Eaton for the city.

April, 1905—Eaton appears at Independence, Owens Valley, with a letter from Lippincott, makes filings on government lands along the river for forty miles, the valley people believing him to be the government's agent.

June 5, 1905—The Board of Water Commissioners of Los Angeles extends a public vote of thanks to F. H. Newell, director of the reclamation service, for the aid given that city in Owens Valley.

July 28, 1905—Lippincott, by written report and oral argument made before the board of reclamation engineers in San Francisco, urges the abandonment of the Owens Valley reclamation project. The board so votes, one member, L. H. Taylor, the builder of the Carson-Truckee project, opposing this action.

August, 1905—Lippincott appears again in Owens Valley, this time as the engineer of Los Angeles, having resigned from the government service.

The feeling in the valley against Lippincott was intense when the news of his action became known. The previous summer he had served the town of Bishop in an engineering capacity, designing a water system and supervising its construction after the bonds had been voted. He had been paid a commission for this, not much, but the people had believed him their friend. Now, when he passed through the town en route to Long Valley, as engineer for Los Angeles, there was a gathering of hotheads, who proposed to waylay on his return, and ride him out of the valley. The situation became actually so serious that a "cooling off" mass meeting was held on the day of his expected return, and the mob spirit put down by the pressure of good reason and public opinion.

The die was now cast, and it had fallen definitely against the valley. The forest service, under Pinchot, had placed the blanket of that bureau over all public lands within the valley, 200,000 acres, thus preventing any appropriations of homesteads or other land entries, which might have served to check the encroachments of the city.

The reclamation service had declared "thumbs down" on the proposed project, and at the same time had turned over the acquired storage rights and other favorable material to the city.

Lippincott had taken service directly with the city, and in his indignation over the whole situation, Engineer Clausen resigned from the service. In his letter of resignation he pointed out that he considered the action of the service in the valley a betrayal of the people, and to such a betrayal he refused to be a party.

There began now a bombardment of official Washington with petitions signed by groups of valley residents. Various higher-ups in Washington, the secretary of the interior, Congress, even the President, Roosevelt, were appealed to, but without result. The city was in and the day of decline for the valley was at hand.

Eighth Article

The first public announcement of the proposal of the city of Los Angeles to go to the Owens Valley for an additional water supply appeared in the Los Angeles Times. The Express, owned by E. T. Earl, and other papers immediately charged bad faith, declaring there had been an agreement that the news was to have been released to all the city papers at the same time.

Despite this bad beginning all of the newspapers, with the exception of the News, now defunct, supported the bond issue, though the project came under a withering fire of criticism. It was discovered, for instance, that General Otis of the Times, Earl, and a few other wealthy men had availed themselves of the inside information shared by them during the incubating period of the Eaton plan and had acquired rather extensive land holdings in the upper San Fernando Valley, which later were bound to be enhanced in value by the arrival of Owens River water. The chief opposition in Los Angeles to the whole project finally centered on this phase, but the voters took a broad view, and decided to vote themselves the handsome community dividend that the water project would unquestionably bring, regardless of the private profit which would come to the land speculators.

The bond issue was for \$23,000,000, and it carried by a big majority. Construction work on the aqueduct began almost immediately. This was in the year 1908. In four years the job was finished. One of the greatest municipal enterprises ever undertaken had been achieved, and the credit for the achievement now fell almost altogether to William Mulholland, the engineer in charge.

Mulholland, a native of Ireland, had come up through the ranks, first as laborer, then as contract boss and finally as engineer. He had been in the employ of Los Angeles as superintendent of the water system since 1888. His capacity for driving a job through, and his organizing genius stood the city in good service now, for the whole work was efficiently done and in record time.

The project begins at what is known as Charleys Butte, about twelve miles north of the town of Independence, in the Owens Valley, where the depression between the mountains is narrowest. Here the city constructed a low diversion dam in the Owens River, forcing the water into an open canal, wherein it is carried to the extreme southern end of the valley depression. Here, in a shallow gorge, named by the Indians Haiwee, another dam has been built and the water impounded in a reservoir of some 63,000 acre-feet capacity.

This reservoir is the only storage provided by the Mulholland project within Owens Valley. Haiwee serves the double purpose of providing an emergency supply in case a break occurred in the aqueduct above, as one did occur only last year, and of permitting the water to clear itself of soil and humus which it carries with it from the river.

From Haiwee the water is drawn into a cement lined canal or aqueduct which crosses the Mojave desert, a distance of 164 miles. At the southern end of the desert it is carried by steel pipe siphons and tunnels through a low range of mountains and let down over declivitous slopes into the northern end of the San Fernando Valley. From here, a distance of twenty-five miles, the water is carried to Los Angeles in conduits.

From Charleys Butte to Los Angeles is a distance of 250 miles.

There are, I am told, 22 miles of open canal, 164 miles of cement-lined canals, 28 miles of tunnels, 9 miles of steel pipe siphons and 25 miles of valley conduits within the project.

In San Fernando Valley, and the low hills about Chatsworth, are four small reservoirs. One of these is the Fairmont, with a capacity of 7620 acre feet, which serves as a regulator for water used in the city's power plants. The others are the upper San Fernando, the lower San Fernando and the Chatsworth reservoirs. The combined capacity of all these basins in the San Fernando Valley is between 35,000 and 37,000 acre feet.

The present domestic consumption of water in Los Angeles from the Owens Valley supply is in the neighborhood of 400 acre feet per day, if the reservoirs are filled, guarantee a domestic supply for 250 days, even if the river above were to run entirely dry. The city, however, sells about half the water the aqueduct carries to farmers in the San Fernando Valley for irrigating use, and, since duty must be assured in the summer months, one can say that the city's whole storage is ample only for 125 days, or about four months.

Furthermore, the emergency supply held in these reservoirs is considerably reduced by the other uses the reservoirs give. For instance, Haiwee is a setting reservoir even more than a storage pond, and the water in it cannot with safety be drawn too low. If it is, then the incoming river water carries right through it into the aqueduct below, in a condition not intended by the builders. Last year, when a pinch for water came, the San Fernando farmers were cut off, some losing valuable crops, and Haiwee was drawn down to about 8000 acre feet, passing below the danger line.

It was this condition which brought the city's land buyers into the upper end of the Owens Valley, forced the purchase by the city of the McNally ditch with such disastrous results to the people of Laws and vicinity, and later the purchase of the Big Pine ditch, with its ruinous results for the town of Big Pine.

When the construction of the aqueduct began the valley residents assumed, of course, that Mulholland would forthwith provide a real storage reservoir in Long Valley.

Eaton had purchased thousands of acres of land in the valley from T. B. Rickey, a Nevada cattleman, and had secured all the storage rights in Long Valley from the government. A dam site had been selected at the head of the Owens River gorge, and a dam 150 feet high would give, the government engineers had calculated, 200,000 acre-feet of storage. This reservoir could be filled every winter and late autumn after the irrigating season is ended, and would when full alone provide the aqueduct to its full capacity of 400 second feet with a flow of water for 500 days.

In other words, the city would not have to depend on any of the normal stream flow of the river, once the Long Valley reservoir were filled, and could take a chance on weather conditions in the mountains, which would fill the reservoir only every other year. Already owning the site and storage rights there, having an easement on 2000 acres of land and the opportunity of buying the rest from Eaton, who still holds it, this entire development, dam and all, would have cost the city less money than did the purchase of two canals, the McNalley and the Big Pine ditches.

Here, say the valley people, lies the key to the whole water conflict in their valley. The key is in the city's hands, and has been since it persuaded the reclamation service to "shoo" the farmers away back in 1905. The people themselves are helpless, but the city of Los Angeles could, if it would, solve the whole problem in a very short time. It would pay the city handsomely to do so. For in the gorge of the river below the Long Valley dam site for a distance of eight miles are 100,000 horsepower of potential hydro-electric energy now running to waste year after year because no one has taken the trouble to build power plants there to capture this energy.

Ninth Article

The waters of Inyo, pouring down as they do from the great snowbeds of the Sierra range, through the precipitous canyons and in cascading streams, possess a wealth in power that has lured the power hunter as a new field lures the desert prospector. From the very inception of the Los Angeles aqueduct idea, power has been an important phase of it, and the scramble for power between the city and private power companies in these watered canyons has been a further element in the defeat of the cause of the Inyo settlers.

At this very hour, in fact, the key to the valley's possible salvation lies in the hands of the Southern Sierras Co., which if it were in the hands of the city, would make it possible to solve the whole tangled problem in short order. What this key is, and how it fell into the hands of the power company is recent history, and a vital chapter in the valleys' tragic story.

When Fred Eaton purchased the Long Valley reservoir site from Tom Rickey in 1905, he secured for the city not only the right to store water above the Owens River gorge, but also the power rights in the gorge for a distance of seven miles.

One mile of the gorge had been appropriated before the city came, by Edson Adams of Oakland, who organized the Mono Power Company.

Whether Adams had a tip as to what was going to happen, or merely blundered into this valley on a sort of raiding expedition, I do not know, but he did secure the most valuable piece of the gorge, so far as power is concerned, and he held that mile for nearly eighteen years. He made no serious effort to develop the project, doing just enough work there to hold his legal rights, and finally, three years ago, he sold the rights to the Southern Sierras Power Company.

The estimated possible development of this mile gorge is 25,000 horsepower. In itself, it is too little to be commercial, for the distance out of the valley is immense, and a transmission line costly to build. Even in the hands of a rival company, one mile is not overly valuable for the power it can yield; but as a block to the development by the city of its gorge holdings, it is altogether formidable.

The city of Los Angeles has built its own distributing system, and some years ago took over the competing system in the city owned by the Southern California Edison Company. Since then it has been fighting a battle royal not only against the Southern Edison, the power mogul of the Southwest, but also the Southern Sierras, which sees in the city a possible rival in the Colorado River development.

Hence the impasse in the Owens River gorge, a situation which has given the city some justification for not building the Long Valley dam, for any dam if built there would help to equalize the stream flow of the river, and would, by just that much, be water over the turbines of the rival power company.

The city had the opportunity to buy this mile three years ago, but for reasons I do not know let this opportunity pass. Adams, through Eaton, offered the holdings to Los Angeles for \$400,000. When the city refused to buy Adams sold to the power company, which already has other plants farther up in the mountains.

This sale the city attempted to block by court action. A condemnation suit was filed at Bridgeport, Mono County, and the courts rendered a decision for the city. The court fixed a price of \$525,000 for this mile of power. The company appealed and the Supreme Court reversed the ruling. The high court held that a city, engaged in a utility service, cannot condemn property of a private corporation engaged in the same service and selling this service to other municipalities.

The Southern Sierra Company supplies such cities as Riverside, and the entire Imperial Valley with power and light.

Engineers familiar with the power question both in Los Angeles and the Owens Valley, see in Harry Chandler the man who is really strangling the Owens Valley.

From its very inception, Chandler has been the strong man behind the aqueduct project, but his support has been given only to the water issue; the power proposition allied with it he has fought from start to finish.

Chandler, these engineers argue, is anxiously waiting for the day when he can advertise to the world that the city's power enterprise has been a failure. Thus far this hope has been denied him, for the enterprise has been a tremendous success, but if it can be strangled, first through the failure of the people of Los Angeles to support their power bond issues, and secondly by blocking power development along the aqueduct, a turn in the tide might come.

The building of the Long Valley dam and the acquisition of the rest of the gorge would help the city's power system. Rather than permit that he has thrown the influence of his paper, the Times, and of his henchmen in the Legislature behind the blocking program played by the Southern Sierras Company. When the Supreme Court decided against the city, because of the legal interpretation placed upon existing laws, the city attempted to have the law changed so that the condemnation of this mile of power rights would be legal. The Times at Sacramento fought the bill, introduced by Senator Lyons from Los Angeles, in the Legislature, and the bill was defeated.

The fact that such a program in the interests of the power companies is bringing about the devastation of a whole valley does not disturb him. In his own way, and for entirely different reasons, he has been carrying on a similar devastation program in the Imperial Valley. Through his control of a big newspaper he keeps public opinion lined up behind his program, chiefly by not telling the people what his policy is doing to other people, far removed from Los Angeles, and thus the grinding process of the mill stones continues.

If the people of Los Angeles knew what was going on in the Owens Valley, they would hardly approve of it, but, of course, they do not know. They have no way of knowing. Chandler knows, and he is one of the few men who does. He is careful to maintain this state of mind, for it means capital, both for him and his powerful financial friends, interested in maintaining a private monopoly in the power business.

There is a power bond election before the people in Los Angeles at this very moment. The voting takes place next Tuesday. Chandler, as usual is leading the case of the power companies against the welfare of his own city. The people of the Owens Valley have a tremendous stake in this election. If it carries—if the bonds asked for by the city are voted—it may mean the saving of their valley. If it fails, well, their case will be just that much more serious.

Tenth Article

Intrigue and deep laid conspiracies, the threat of violence during an hour of intense feeling, law suits, court injunctions, and on a few occasions the appearance of a gun squad, have marked the nineteen years' warfare over the "white gold" of Inyo.

In all these years the feeling within the valley has never, of course been so intense, and yet so divided as it is right now. On the occasion of the writer's visit to Long Valley only three weeks ago he encountered a squad of armed cattlemen in Long Valley, standing guard, literally, over some small creeks which feed their water into the Owens River.

The cattlemen are in the employ of Fred Eaton, and have been deputized as officers by the sheriff of Mono County. They live at Eaton's ranch establishment on McGee Creek at the foot of a high peak near Convict Lake, doing double duty as cowboys and water guards.

Every traveler on the highway, passing through this valley and near their ranch houses, receives their careful scrutiny. The reason is that Eaton owns the water in McGee and other small creeks, and uses it for irrigating his cattle range. Some months ago someone cut all his dams and let the water run into the Owens River, where the city of Los Angeles captures it miles down.

Individual lawsuits are numerous. One, just brought by the owners of the Eight Mile ranch, midway between Big Pine and Independence, is typical of this kind of warfare. A large land syndicate from Whittier recently bought the Eight Mile ranch, containing about 1000 acres, and planted it to orchard, alfalfa and other crops. There is a small creek on the ranch, but not sufficient to irrigate all the land. The owners bored half a dozen wells and spent upwards of \$100,000 on ranch improvements alone.

It is an isolated proposition, miles from the nearest development, but picturesquely set amidst a quite recent volcanic ashpan and cinder field.

Several weeks ago there arrived, just below the ranch and between it and the river, a number of well drilling outfits owned by the city. These outfits began the sinking of a cordon of wells around the eastern end of the whole ranch, the inevitable effect of which will be to drain the ranch wells and thus ruin the whole development.

The Whittier syndicate happens to be well financed, and it began a court fight to stop the city from these drilling operations.

There has been a good deal of big ranch development in the valley in recent years. One man, a C. W. Leffingwell of Fullerton, where he owns large citrus groves, has spent \$150,000 developing a big pear orchard at Sunland, near Bishop.

Owens Valley, on a test, proved to be a fine apple and pear country, growing fruit superior to any in California or Oregon. Its light snow-fall in the winter frosts flavor this fruit beyond competition. The whole Leffingwell investment now faces the same fate that stares at the rest of the people.

Similarly, wealthy Los Angeles investors bought large ranches in the valley. One of these is the old Jim Butler ranch near Big Pine, for many years the home of the Father of Tonopah. For this ranch Butler received \$150,000 ten or twelve years ago from a London syndicate headed by the Paget twins.

The reason for this large-scale development, which has been going on right up to the last few months, was due to the general feeling that Los Angeles had acquired all the water it wanted in the valley, and that the surplus there had an increasing value for local use. This, and the natural charm of the valley, really its greatest and most enduring asset, and a further probability that some day an overland railroad, connect-

ing Southern California with the Central Pacific in Nevada, will pass through there.

At all events, ever since the aqueduct was completed in 1912 there had been a period of quiescence in the water battle until the new flare-up which began two years ago. During that period the valley had been forgoing ahead. Its productive wealth was so plentiful that the people were able to build new county buildings, including a courthouse and a jail for something like a million dollars without the bother of a bond issue. In Bishop a \$150,000 tourist hotel was started.

What upset this situation were two factors, one growing entirely out of the aqueduct and the other partially out of the same cause. These factors were first, the big development in the San Fernando Valley, built on the use of aqueduct water in that valley, and second, the amazing growth of Los Angeles.

In twelve years time the demand on aqueduct water had grown to the full capacity of that source—400 cubic feet of water for every second of the day. That is the demand during the irrigation season in the San Fernando Valley. Last year when the aqueduct began to drop below that flow and the small storage supply was exhausted the San Fernando farmers were cut off and the trouble started. It was trouble for both the city and the Owens Valley people.

Apparently, in anticipation of such a crisis the city management began work on the Long Valley dam. It was announced that a structure 100 feet high would be built at once, and the needed diversion tunnel was started. Immediately a legal snag was struck. Such a dam, impounding only 44,000 acre feet instead of the 200,000 which the valley will hold, left the farmers in Owens Valley unprotected.

In order to protect themselves, as the law pertaining to a municipality requires, the farmers brought an injunction suit, its purpose being either to compel the city to heighten the dam to 150 feet or else to adjudicate the disputed water rights in the river, which would have amounted to the same thing, namely, enforcing a 150 foot dam.

Rather than adjudicate the water rights in a court, thus fixing the priority of the farmers for all time, the city ceased work on its dam. The injunction suit slumbers in the courts, and two particularly dry years brought on the crisis that all now face.

Eleventh Article

There probably is nothing more characteristic of American community life than its factional bickerings—and nothing more injurious to its normal and proper development. Every town is divided into camps more or less hostile to each other, each determined to do things its own way, and equally determined to prevent the other from doing them a different way. To this normal factional strife the people have adjusted themselves, and its damaging genuinely destructive to basic interests. In the Owens Valley this normal factional strife has been whipped into a passionate and all-consuming flame by the gigantic bellows and terrific forces of self interest that the city of Los Angeles has supplied.

Every town in the valley is divided into a pro-city and an anti-city faction. In some cases the pro-city forces predominate, and moral feelings actually are on its side. There opposition sentiment is under suppression, and one's community standing is best served by championing the city's cause.

In the town of Bishop, however, and generally throughout what is known as the Bishop Basin, in the northern end of the valley, the reverse condition exists. There the proponents of city interests still speak in a wee, small voice, and the city's lieutenants go about quietly and do their work as unobtrusively

as possible. The fear of some public flare-up of feeling, with injurious results to those held disloyal to the valley's interests is very strong.

As the battle progresses, however, and the purchase of ranches by the city proceeds, public opinion is slowly veering around. Every farmer who has sold out, if he is not in his feelings attached to the city's cause, at least ceases to be a militant opponent, and by this process of attrition the city is not only winning in its strategy for the physical possession of the valley, but is also breaking down the moral resistance of the valley people. In the last few months events have moved so rapidly that if the present rate of progress is continued another two years, or possibly even less, the city will be in full undisputed possession.

One can suspect that that is the city's real aim, that it has decided, since the dam work was stopped and the winter drouth has forced it to make such large investments in additional water lands, to put an end to the contest as speedily as possible. This suspicion is borne out by a number of specific episodes.

One of these is a recall election now in progress in the McNally district adjacent to the town of Laws. The city secured possession of the canal through purchase of 80 per cent of the stock, and through this control is attempting to oust the man who represents the McNally district on the Owens Valley Irrigation District. This man is J. L. Gish, an old and respected resident in the Laws neighborhood.

The irrigation district was formed two years ago. It was organized by the farmers of the entire Bishop basin, owning some 54,000 acres of land, in order to protect their water rights in the river. The organization of the district was the answer of the farmers to the refusal of the city to permit court adjudication of the river rights. The McNally land owners voted overwhelmingly to include their lands in the district. But while the legal technicalities encountered in the work of perfecting an irrigation district under the laws of the state were being worked out, the city struck its direct blow by taking options on the McNally canal ranches. It was able to do this only through the aid of local men, who knew every farmer owning land under the canal, knew every farmer's financial condition, the size of his mortgage, when it came due, who held it and what the pressure was upon him. This information, coupled with their understanding of local affairs generally and the valley psychology, made this bold strategy possible, and options were secured on 80 per cent of the land.

Immediately the McNally canal through its own directors recinded the action of the farmers in voting themselves into the irrigation district, but they permitted Gish, an opponent of the city's policies, to remain their representative on the district board.

There are five directors in the irrigation district. One is already a city man, having sold his entire land holdings, located near Big Pine, to the city. If Gish can be ousted and a city man elected in his place the city will have three of the five members of the board. One more such victory and the whole board would be the tool of the city, and the entire landed interests embraced within this district, 54,000 acres, together with the remaining free water rights in the Owens River, would be subject to the city's dictation.

Such a tactical victory might happen any day. The city may be personified as an individual having the strength of a million people in his frame. This giant stalks about the valley as he pleases, already owning the greater portion of it. He carries a huge club in one hand and a huge purse filled with gold in the other. Both of his arguments are persuasive, as recent events there show.

Obviously, one of two things is bound to happen, and it is inconceivable that the climax be long deferred. The city will

either build the Long Valley dam, creating a sufficient water storage to take care of all interests now depending upon this water, or it will purchase practically the whole of what remains of the water rights in the valley. Both proposals are before the city. The choice is up to Los Angeles as to which road it will travel.

The wholesale purchase idea, which, if it goes through, will mean, at least for many years, the destruction of the most of the valley's farming enterprises, is of quite recent origin. It came about in this manner:

Some weeks ago while Mulholland was in Washington giving testimony before the House committee on the Boulder Dam project, the threat of a water shortage became acute. He wired to Los Angeles to turn off the San Fernando irrigating water. There was consternation throughout the San Fernando Valley and a delegation of eight men, representing the consolidated chambers of commerce of that valley, journeyed into the Owens Valley to see for themselves if there was more water to be had.

They were shown two large canals running brimming full. It is the water owned by the irrigation district.

They asked three questions. "Is this water for sale? If so, at what price? If purchased by Los Angeles, how long before it could be delivered to our ditches and San Fernando lands?"

The water was for sale, providing the city purchased the entire district and paid \$750,000 to the people of the town of Bishop in compensation for town values destroyed by such a diversion; the price would be \$8,000,000; if the purchase was made the water could be delivered to San Fernando Valley in 24 hours!

The delegation returned to San Fernando filled with determination. The news of the affair brought Mulholland back from Washington in a great rush. He met with the people of the San Fernando Valley. The offer of the irrigation district was voted down unanimously. Mulholland opposed purchase on a whole-sale basis. He does not recognize any responsibility on the part of Los Angeles to compensate Owens Valley towns in the way that Bishop wished to be compensated. By the present process of retail purchase, he argues, the same holdings can be had for half of \$8,000,000.

Twelveth Article

Has California as a state—have its people as such—an interest, a vital interest in the drama now being enacted in the Owens River Valley?

The question leads at once to the larger phases—to the general social phases of this conflict. Stripped of all its dramatic and encumbering detail, the war for water in this intermountain fastness is the age-old struggle between wide dispersion and narrow concentration of population.

The final social effect of the withdrawing of the Owens River water across the Mojave Desert and into the San Fernando and San Gabriel basins is to eliminate one more valley where future generations of Californians might live, and to concentrate this and other people in the narrower confines of a single municipality.

The valley problem receives this larger aspect almost altogether from the fact already pointed out in previous articles that the question at issue has not been whether or not the city of Los Angeles shall take water from the valley for domestic

uses; the question is whether the surplus water remaining after the domestic supply has been withdrawn shall be used in irrigating Owens Valley lands, or used in irrigating lands in the San Fernando Valley.

Against the withdrawing of water for domestic use in Los Angeles the valley people have never protested. Their opposi-

tion has been directed entirely against two things: the withholding of irrigating water to be used elsewhere for irrigation, and the methods employed by Los Angeles in carrying out its water acquisition program.

The city, of course, could never have acquired a water right in the valley on the basis of using the water for irrigating San Fernando Valley lands. That phase of the project was screened at the outset, and kept screened until the aqueduct was completed. It is screened no longer, but its burdensome character now rests as heavily upon the city as upon the people of the Owens Valley. Had the aqueduct not been burdened with this encumbrance, neither the city nor the people of the Owens Valley would have any cause for worry today. Half the capacity of the present aqueduct has sufficed for twelve years of its operation to carry what water the city of Los Angeles needed for all its teeming multitudes.

The city is now confronted with this alternative: Shall it go on with its original plan and build the Long Valley dam, thus creating a storage supply of water for emergency use, or shall it proceed with its present program of farm devastation?

If the first road is chosen—and it is both the cheapest and the best way out—then the people of the valley will have nothing further to worry about. If the second road is maintained—for the city is already on it—then a second alternative presents itself. If the devastation process is to be followed relentlessly to its bitter end, shall the land and water be purchased by wholesale or retail methods?

The difference in the two methods already has been pointed out. By either method the valley would be devastated, and forced into its primitive desert state. By the wholesale process the local property holders, even those in the town of Bishop, would be fully compensated, while by the continuance of the present retail purchase methods at least half their property values will be destroyed and taken from them without any compensation. The difference in method to the city may be set down in figures at a sum of about \$4,000,000.

In Los Angeles itself public opinion is turning against the present policy of land purchase, and a change of method may be looked for.

An aroused public opinion may even check the entire devastation process and force the aqueduct officials to shift to water storage and conservation methods. That is, of course, what should be done. That is what San Francisco did in Hetch Hetchy, spending upwards of \$7,000,000 in dam construction alone, so that no damage would be done to the valley development built up by Tuolumne River water in the Turlock and Modesto irrigation districts.

At this moment the Owens Valley people seem to favor of all possible solutions of their problem, the wholesale purchase of the remaining water rights—the acceptance by the city of the \$8,000,000 offer made by the directors of the Owens Valley irrigation district. This probably is the counsel of weariness. After a warfare of twenty years peace at any price seems sweet and desirable. If the offer is accepted, what will it mean?

The enforced migration of at least two-thirds of the people of the valley! The driving out, from their ancestral homes, of at least 2000 families! Some, no doubt, would be glad enough to go. The city would pay them a good price for their farms. They would have funds with which to start up in another community. Some might better themselves, but how many?

When one contemplates the spectacle of the actual flight of such a caravan, moving thought it does on rubber tires or railroad trains, the individual cases of the four Stewart brothers present itself. The Stewart brothers—James, Joseph, William and Herbert—are ranchers at Big Pine. When the blow fell on that community last December they were forced, along with the others, to sell their four ranches to the city.

They had not thought of selling out. All their lives they have lived in this valley. All their friends are in this valley. Some have children, married. They had fine ranches and took pride in their possessions, each brother within the last few years having built a new house for his family. Naturally, where ever they go, they will want to go together, but where?

Even before the sale of their ranches was completed the prospect of the enforced migration appalled them. Beyond the great range to the West lies, what is to them California incognita. It is in every respect an alien land—one which they must now tackle almost in the spirit of the pioneer, and they must tackle it, not willingly, as did their pioneer ancestors, but under the whip of compulsion—a whip that stings the harder because of the element of injustice which it carries.

Is it to be wondered at that the oldest brother wept when he signed with his wife the deed that ousted him from the place he loved, and would shortly drive him away from his friends and neighbors, and possibly away from his own kin.

This tragedy of the four brothers multiplied over and over is the tragedy which lurks behind the \$8,000,000 proposal. Under the force of circumstances, under the fear of worse that might befall them, under the goading of a weariness of incessant warfare, it is quite likely that the people of Inyo will sell their white gold in a lump sum. But the sale will not end their tragedy. It will merely wipe out the valley and leave in the wake of a general migration a trail of weeping women and broken hearts.

(THE END)

OWENS VALLEY HERALD

A Home Paper for Home People

Inyo County's Leading Newspaper

Volume 17. Number 12.

Bishop, Inyo County, California, Wednesday, November 19, 1924

The year \$2.50

L. A. AQUEDUCT WATER GOES TO WASTE WHILE RESOLUTE CITIZENS GUARD WORKS

PERMANENT CAMP ESTABLISHED AT AQUEDUCT SPILLWAY

Goaded to desperation through the failure of the Public Service Commission of Los Angeles to come to any understanding with them in regard to the future of Owens Valley, nearly 100 men left Bishop last Sunday morning at 8 o'clock, driving in autos to the Los Angeles aqueduct spillway about ten miles south of Independence, and there took charge of that important part of the water system of the City and since that time have refused to allow these headgates to be closed, with the result that the entire flow of the Aqueduct is now running to waste out on the flats east of there and on down into Owens Lake.

Shortly after the arrival of these men Sheriff Collins appeared on the scene and tried to force the men to leave, but he was met with stolid resistance. Claude Van Norman, in charge of that part of the Aqueduct system, also made an attempt to close the gates, but this was unavailing. H. Leahy, the chief man at the Aqueduct in Owens Valley ap-

the same number. A barbecue is being served today.

The site at the spillway is now assuming the aspect of a permanent camp. Stoves are being put up, tents and beds installed and everything fixed so that those on guard may suffer as little as possible. Large searchlights are being used during the entire night and men are always on patrol. Numerous requests have been made to Gov. Richardson for troops, but as yet he has refused them.

This afternoon District Attorney Hession left for Sacramento to see the Governor personally and ask that troops be sent in immediately, as he realizes that this is the only way the situation can be handled. The arrival of troops will be the signal for the peaceful evacuation of the Aqueduct by those now guarding it, and this seems to be the only solution, as the men and women seem to have their minds made up to stay indefinitely unless some direct results are obtained from their

and their property. Bishop is practically deserted

THE AQUEDUCT CRISIS

A crisis was reached in the Owens River Valley water dispute on Sunday when 100 residents of the valley forcibly opened the Alabama waste gates of the Los Angeles Aqueduct five miles north of Lone Pine and turned practically the entire flow of the Aqueduct into the bed of the Owens River. The loss of water, while not imperiling the city's supply, is serious.

This illegal act was the climax of a conflict that started years ago and in the last twelve months has assumed a more serious aspect. The ranchers of the Owens Valley declare that their farms and homes are being gradually destroyed by the various steps taken by Los Angeles in connection with the maintenance of an adequate water supply for the city. They bitterly resent the manner—to them harsh and confiscatory—in which this end has been attained.

On May 21 of this year the feeling culminated in the first overt protest of violence when the ranchers dynamited a section of the Aqueduct near Lone Pine, apparently not with the intention of inflicting serious damage on the city's property but to call public

A second lawless act, following further legal delays, was the kid-

such pioneers who by settling up the back country laid the foundation for rich and prosperous cities. Many of them were in the valley before the Aqueduct was built. Without water their homes are ruined, their towns must be abandoned, their valley return to the desert. They must move elsewhere and start again. Under such conditions they are hardly to be blamed for seeking as high as possible a price for their lands and for resenting methods of acquisition by the city which, under other circumstances, would be merely businesslike.

The conflict between the city of Los Angeles and the ranchers of the Owens River Valley must be one between right and right, not between might and might. It must be settled on the principle of the greatest good to the greatest number with the proper safeguarding of the poorest as well as the wealthiest contestant. For the city to use its immense power to gain an unfair advantage over the settlers in the Owens River Valley is as intolerable as for the settlers to resort to violence.

If the city of Los Angeles needs all the water that flows from the Owens River, it must compensate the ranchers, even generously, every rancher who

OFFICIALS SAY STATE TROOPS ONLY SOLUTION OF PROBLEM

Los Angeles Times, Nov. 19th.

Inyo county is in a state of anarchy. Guerilla warfare is a possibility, unless Gov. Richardson rushes State troops to the Alabama gates, where a party of ranchers and business men of the Owens Valley have defied all efforts to dislodge them since Sunday morning while three days supply of domestic water for the city of Los Angeles rushes to waste. Appalling loss of lives and property seems certain. The water supply of the city of Los Angeles is in grave danger.

This is the text of statements issued here today by Dist.-Atty. Jess Hession of Inyo county, and Sheriff Chas. Collins, who admit themselves unable to cope with the situation. "I am thoroughly convinced, in the light of the last few days development, that unless State troops intervene in the Owens Valley water controversy there will be a amazing loss of life and destruction of property." It is entirely possible that guerilla warfare may be maintained for miles and miles of the Owens River Valley.

at once."

The town of Bishop, a modern little village of 1200 persons, virtually was deserted yesterday. Nailed to a flag pole of the intersection of the two main streets of the town was a huge sign, which read: "If I am not on the job you can find me at the Aqueduct."

Banks, stores, business houses and offices were closed. One drug store remained open and one doctor remained in town. At noon there were about 250 men, women and children at "the hill," as the stronghold of the insurgent population at Alabama gate heads has been christened. At least 100 men, worn out with their twenty-four hour and sometimes forty-eight hour watches at "the hill" are in bed some place recuperating for the next watch.

The commissary at "the hill" is in charge of the women who are organized and preparing to send their men for an indefinite period. Steaming hot water is being served. It is impossible to adequately picture the word picture of the situation.

'THE INYO REGISTER' AND 'THE OWENS VALLEY HERALD'

(Established 1885)

W. A. CHALFANT, Editor and Owner

SUPPLEMENT NUMBER ONE

(Established 1908)

HARRY A. GLASSCOCK, Editor and Owner

Volume 1.

BISHOP, INYO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY 7, 1925.

No. 1.

GREED OF CITY RUINS THE OWENS VALLEY

STATE-WIDE INTEREST RISES SHE FACES LIFE ALONE; MATE GONE OVER OWENS VALLEY FIGHT

What is Going on in Owens Valley Affects Every Irrigation District in California and the Laws must Define Conflicting Rights

Western history is full of "The Fight at the Water Hole."

From the first day our argonaut forefathers entered the deserts of Nevada, Oregon, and the Southwest with their covered wagons, they have had to fight for the water with which to irrigate their farms.

No community in California has been free from long litigation and few from sanguinary conflicts over the right to use the water from the eternal hills.

In fact all history is filled with water fights. Concentration of all wealth and power in great cities, impoverishment and neglect of the cultivators of the soil, removal of their irrigating water by great cities, ruined Mesopotamia, Egypt, Rome, and, coming closer to modern times, France, Russia and Turkey.

And in our turn California is today rent with dissension over the rights to the waters that flow down in the streams of the Sierra Nevadas.

Every irrigation district in California is fortifying itself against the encroachment of the great cities along the sea shore. State and county, city and irrigation district officials are alike disturbed over the age old question of the measure of the right to use water for domestic and for irrigation purposes.

prived of his property without due process of law."

The Owens Valley fight with the city of Los Angeles has become an acute and state-wide affair. It concerns every farmer, every banker, every merchant and every workman in California and concerns him deeply.

As always in such conflicts, personal animosities and inconsiderate, hasty action and ill-tempered pronouncements cloud the issue.

Though the Owens Valley farmers, who feel they have justice on their side, have frequently offered to submit their cause to arbitration, they have thus far made no headway against the city officials who have the matter of the Los Angeles water supply in hand.

Delay in settlement, refusal of Los Angeles to consider the moral issues involved, has alarmed every water and land owner in every irrigation district in the state of California. He is watching eagerly every move made by

either side to the controversy. The Governor of California has been drawn into the dispute. His properly equipped officials are making an exhaustive study of the matter. The Owens Valley-Los Angeles conflict has delayed practically every municipal and irrigation water project in California.

Investors in irrigation district



This woman's husband, the father of this little family, broke under the strain of the valley's water troubles, facing ruin for himself and associates, committed suicide last August. These children are the third generation of Inyo folks and their mother faces life alone.

Press of Nation Is Filled With Owens Valley Story; Their Fight Is Well Known

By HARRY GLASSCOCK
Editor Owens Valley Herald

The Owens Valley-Los Angeles water controversy has assumed a national importance as is evidenced by the enormous amount of matter that was carried by the different papers of the nation during the recent trouble in Owens Valley.

The leading Eastern papers carried the story as a feature on the front page, with big scare headlines, and magazines such as the Literary Digest gave it much space. In practically all of the papers that handled the matter editorially the sentiment seemed strong in favor of the people of Owens Valley. Most of the papers deplored any lawlessness on the part of the people of that section, but still there was always a thought running through the articles that the people of Owens Valley were morally justified in the course they had taken.

This publicity has hurt Los Angeles, and hurt it terribly. There can be no question about it, for one well knows that a story is liable to grow as it travels, and truth is not always the paramount idea in modern journalism. But be that as it may, there is one outstanding feature in the entire matter, and that is that there must have been some terrible wrong done to the people of Owens Valley or else such a law-abiding American community could not be stirred up to the point where they would take the law into their own hands. And this point seems to be conceded by all of the papers of the country. They may have called the men who guarded the headgates of the Los Angeles aqueduct and allowed the city's water supply to go to waste for four days a "mob," but in many cases it was referred to in the same manner as the Boston Tea Party, and was justified

LOSS OF BUSINESS AND PRESTIGE HAS COME TO CITY'S VERY DOORS

Shortage of Water; Shortage of Power, Useless and Damaging Result of Official Double Dealing

We, the citizens of Owens Valley, believe that we have a common interest with the people of Los Angeles and the State of California.

We believe that the methods employed by your leaders and agents, to which the people of Los Angeles are indirectly party, are actually bringing more ruin, destruction and business depression upon the City of Los Angeles than are being brought to Owens Valley, deep and serious as that is.

The same warning given by Oliver Goldsmith to the people of England many years ago applies to the conditions existing in Southern California today:

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.
Princes and Lords may flourish, or may fade,
A breath can make them, as a breath has made.
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

We, a community of six thousand souls, actual producers of the necessities of life, without which cities cannot exist, have been pictured as a lawless element, a reckless mob. On the contrary we are a home loving people who only ask to live and let

tion for the purpose of fostering and encouraging factories to come to this great city.

About this time, the president of the American Manufacturers' Association, Mr. John Edgerton, visited Los Angeles and was banqueted at the Biltmore Hotel by the Chamber of Commerce. In his wonderful address delivered on that occasion he spoke encouragingly of Los Angeles becoming a great manufacturing and export city.

In the midst of prosperity and plans for future development what happened to your city? You were notified of a great water and power shortage, you were told to reduce the light in your homes, the streets were partially lighted, street car service was greatly hampered, manufacturing and industry was crippled. How could you expect Eastern capital to come to your city, where thousands of men were being thrown out of employment, with insufficient water and power to take care of your own requirements? Thousands of people at this time were leaving Los Angeles and were spreading and exaggerating the news of your bad conditions throughout America.

As there are no coal mines in this section, Los Angeles is dependent on water and electric energy for its very existence. You were being struck in the most vulnerable point possible. The pneumonic plague and the hooch and mouth disease, which your health

Owens Valley Farmers
Seek Legislative Aid
Supporting legislation designed to
give the city of Los Angeles the le-
gal right to repay residents of
Owens Valley for taking their
water, an "Owens Valley Repara-
tion" committee arrived at the
capitol to-day.
Members of the committee which
will work for the passage of a bill
introduced by Senator J. M. Inman,
are: J. S. Eastman, banker; T. G.
Wattersen, merchant; Jess Hession,
district attorney, all of Bishop.
"Los Angeles has always con-
tended she would willingly repay
us for the loss of our water and the
damage caused to our land, but that
she had no legal right to do so,"
Glascock stated. "We are going
to try and obtain that legal right
for them."

A MESSAGE FROM OWENS VALLEY

THE following are paragraphs taken from a statement signed by the Owens Valley irrigation district and addressed "To the people of Los Angeles from the source of their water supply:"

"Do you know that the water measure-ment records for the past 19 years show sufficient snowfall in the Owens Valley-

Sierra watershed to fill the aqueduct with water every day in the year and that it is not necessary to destroy farms surrounding the towns of Big Pine and Bishop?

"Do you know that your employes are acquiring control of these farms with your money and turning them back to desert?

"Do you know that the people of Owens Valley, rather than be longer harassed, have stated that they would sell the water and the lands and let the valuation thereof be fixed by a competent commission?

"Do you realize that, mildly expressed, you are creating a dramatic situation in the Owens Valley?"

L.A. Record July 3-1924

The Real Harm to Los Angeles



Turkeys being raised in orchards in Owens valley. Many thousands of dollars worth of turkeys come from Owens valley to the Los Angeles holiday market. The trees in this orchard are 20 years old. Certain city officials who are responsible for the methods of dealing with Owens valley farmers have claimed that the section is not suited to agriculture and that the so-called farmers are merely land speculators.

The following is part of an editorial from the Fresno Republican:

"We do not know whether there is any court either of law or of effective opinion that hears the cry of the Owens valley people, but if not, and if the sort of raiding that is done there continues, in other parts of this country and of the world, the results will be grievous.

"The particular farmers who lose their homes because water is taken from them, or because the financial values in their community are reduced, because morale is broken up, because local bankers can no longer operate, because merchants can no longer get enough business to serve local

district's interests to that of another.

"But the greater harm in such a change in society as has been taking place in the Owens valley for a number of years is the injury that is done to the districts that are getting the apparent benefit. If, in this instance, the immediate opportunity of Los Angeles, as a city, seems to consist in making a reservoir and nothing else out of the Owens valley, this is only immediate and not ultimate. In the not-too-far hereafter a thousand people left in the Owens valley would be much more valuable to Los Angeles than another ten thousand, or even more, in the city itself. It is the

purchase of
several weeks
the city ap-
to consult with
to report back

Sac. Del
8-3

1924

FEAR SINKS DEEP IN OWENS VALLEY WRATH VICTIMS

**Kidnaped Attorney Refuses To
Prosecute, Though He Knows
Abductors; Aqueduct Build-
er Destroys Death Threats**

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 30.—(P)—Ripples of nervous expectation continued to ruffle the surface of the Owens Valley water rights feud situation to-day, as a result of last Wednesday's new flare up of ill feeling at Bishop, business center of the trouble zone, where L. C. Hall, an attorney and agent of the city of Los Angeles, was kidnaped and forcibly ejected from the community because of the part he played in the acquisition of water-bearing lands to feed the Los Angeles aqueduct.

DEATH THREATS SENT.

Death threats received by William Mulholland, builder of the aqueduct which ranchers say is draining the valley of its limited fund of water and transforming fruitful farms into desert; predictions by responsible representatives of the ranchers that there will be further kidnappings; a statement by Hall that only his membership in a certain fraternal organization saved him from being lynched Wednesday night—these were sources of apprehension here as members of the public service commission prepared to visit the valley for a parley with ranchers and business men next Tuesday.

MEMORIES ALL BAD.

Reports from Bishop, however, described a calm and pastoral quiet reigning where Hall's presence Wednesday night had caused excitement culminating in a mob attack. The sheriff and district attorney from the county seat at Independence, about thirty miles south, came to Bishop yesterday to investigate the kidnaping, but were unable, according to word reaching here last night to find any inhabitant of the town who remembered anything about a kidnaping.

No Prosecutions.

Meanwhile the kidnaped attorney, now at his home in Glendale, near here, gave no indications of an intention to ask for the prosecution of his abductors. Between the lack of witnesses and the absence of a formal complaint, it was therefore not expected that any arrests would follow from yesterday's investigation.

The attorney said that he was granted his liberty, after first having promised never to divulge the names of his abductors, some of whom he recognized.

Mulholland Undisturbed.

Mulholland likewise predicted that the death threats of which he admitted he had received dozens, would not be followed by any actual violence. "I threw 'em in the wastebasket," he said. He will accompany the public service commissioners to Bishop next Tuesday.

SETTLE THE Water Problem!

At the recent meeting of Owens valley residents to consider the present attitude of the officials of Los Angeles, the following offer was made to the city as a means of settlement of the entire difficulty:

"If it is necessary for the city of Los Angeles to acquire the waters of the Owens river now being used for irrigation purposes, the owners of the land and water are willing to leave the question of the value of this property to a valuation commission of not less than five disinterested business men to be mutually agreed upon."

This is a fair and businesslike offer. What excuse can city officials have for not accepting it?

Acceptance means wiping out the feud between the ranchers of Owens Valley and the city of Los Angeles, and this means safety for the city's present water supply.

The people of Owens valley, now being driven from their homes, are asking only for fair treatment—something that Los Angeles should force its officials to grant.

A paragraph of the resolutions passed at the Owens valley meeting, says:

"We request that the fair-minded people of Los Angeles compel their officials to deal with us along honorable lines."

This is a reasonable request from one community to another. Los Angeles officials should realize that this city cannot afford, in dealing with a weaker neighbor, to adopt any means except those that are fair and honorable.

Record 8-4-24

L. A. WINS WATER SUIT SKIRMISH

Bakersfield, Aug. 21.—Los Angeles has won a temporary victory in its legal battle with ranchers of Inyo county, whose farms have dried up through lack of water.

Superior Judge Erwin W. Owen denied J. W. Harvey, Inyo rancher, a temporary injunction to stop Los Angeles from pumping water from Inyo county wells. This water was used to increase the supply in the Los Angeles aqueduct.

"If the court thought that the pumping from the defendants' wells was the direct cause of depriving the plaintiffs of water, the restraining order would be issued," the judge said. "Neither legally nor morally has anyone the right to take water from 10 acres of water at Independence to irrigate 10 acres of alfalfa at San Fernando."

Other suits against the city, alleging improper use of Inyo county water, are pending.

Judge Owen was appointed by Governor Richardson to hear the water rights suits between the ranchers and Los Angeles.

RANCHERS SAY CITY OFFER IS 'TRICK'

Mass Meeting Commends
Record Expose of Water
Mismanagement

The people of Owens valley, at a mass meeting held last night at Bishop high school, adopted unanimously a series of resolutions making these declarations:

1. The resolution recently passed by the Los Angeles public service commission as a basis of negotiation with the ranchers is only another effort to divide, confuse and mislead them, and is entirely unacceptable.

2. The Los Angeles Record is making an able and truthful expose of the mismanagement of the aqueduct and water situation.

The resolutions also pledged the residents of the valley to complete unity of action in the future in dealing with the city or meeting situations brought about by the city's course.

There was not a dissenting vote in the adoption of any of the resolutions.

The meeting was attended by about 1000 land and water owners, residents of the valley.

Text of Resolutions

Regarding the public service commission's proposition, the resolutions say:

"The resolution passed by the Los Angeles public service commission June 28 is only another effort on the part of Mulholland to confuse and becloud the minds of the people of Owens valley."

Regarding The Record, the resolution says:

"Whereas we wish to compliment and commend the Los Angeles Record, its owners and managers, for the able and truthful presentation to the people of Los Angeles through its columns of the situation as it exists between the Los Angeles public service commission and the water and land owners here and,

"Whereas we realize that such presentation is having a

THE ONLY WAY

The Record water articles have made two main points:

(1) The present water supply must be safeguarded.

(2) It must be developed to meet the needs of a much greater Los Angeles.

Both these ends can be gained without sacrificing the Owens ranchers and turning their valley back into desert.



The Record has quoted competent engineering estimates that there is water enough in the Owens valley and Mono basin for a Los Angeles of 5,000,000 people and for a fertile Owens valley.

These engineering opinions are signposts which point out plainly enough the only road to complete settlement.

After the opening articles had outlined The Record's campaign the public service commission passed resolutions purporting to hold out to the ranchers a basis of settlement.

The ranchers claim they have been met with a series of broken promises, and at a mass meeting last night they rejected the city's last proposition as intended only further to becloud and mislead them.

The residents of Owens valley have proposed, as the only program of settlement acceptable to them, a plan which may be summarized as follows:

1—Let the city specify now once and for all what additional lands it wants.

2—Let the city agree to deal collectively with the owners of these lands for their purchase.

3—Let the price be fixed by a committee of disinterested men.

One of the chief perils in the situation is the threat constantly hanging over Los Angeles' head that its water supply will be suddenly cut off, because of the ranchers' desperation.

Therefore the water situation will never be settled until it is settled in fairness to the valley, so that the ranchers are satisfied.

If the city is not quibbling, and jockeying with words, there is not a single thing to prevent it from at once accepting the valley's program and settling on that basis.

Had the representatives of the city of Los Angeles dealt with the Owens valley people in an amicable spirit and with constructive policy there would have been no aqueduct dynamiting.

There would be no power shortage today. There would be no water shortage—nor any fear of one.

The city would not be sitting under a shadow of a calamity—the threat of a sudden cutting off of its water supply.

It would not be necessary for official Los Angeles to plead guilty to the short-sighted policy which Mulholland confessed when he admitted to the house irrigation committee turning back into the desert thousands of acres of land in Owens valley—Los Angeles' back country, the full development of which this city's best interest vitally requires.

The millions this city has spent in wrecking ranchers' holdings would have paid for a constructive program.

Enlargement or duplication of the aqueduct would give the city a supply for several times its present needs and storage at the headwaters would

CRYER IS BACK

Mayor George E. Cryer and his secretary, H. H. Kinney, are in Los Angeles Saturday after a tour of inspection over the Los Angeles aqueduct and the Owens valley.

Regarding the trip Mayor Cryer said:

"I made the trip to get first-hand information regarding the water supply, what is necessary to improve the situation, and find what additional water supply is available.

"I also wanted to get first-hand information concerning the controversy in the Owens valley. I am happy to say I found there is very little feeling against the city of Los Angeles. The bitter feeling that does exist is directed against a few individuals.

"The evidences throughout the valley indicate a general water shortage."

8-26-24

ago. Since that time the city appointed a committee to consult with the valley people and to report back with a plan under which

REPORT ON VALLEY MADE

Chamber Directors Call New Owens Meeting;
Watersons Ask Delay in Pleading

Results of the investigation conducted by a special Chamber of Commerce committee into conditions in the Owens River Valley were placed before the board of directors of the chamber yesterday but were not made public.

Secretary Arnoll of the chamber, however, issued a short statement after the conference announcing that the committee has been instructed to draw up a definite plan whereby "the representatives of the conflicting interests should be able to effect an equitable and speedy settlement of the controversy."

ANOTHER MEETING

This plan will be placed before the directors of the chamber at a special meeting next Tuesday, at which time the findings of the special committee are expected to be made public. Members of the committee have made a personal survey of conditions, both physical and economic, in the valley during the past several days. Their report is expected to do much toward formulating the city's future policy in the valley and the course to be followed in aiding valley residents in the present financial emergency, precipitated by the failure of the five Inyo county banks.

As the members of the special committee met with the directors of the chamber, W. W. and M. Q. Waterson, Inyo county bankers charged with embezzlement of more than \$1,000,000 from some of their five suspended banks and other enterprises, faced Judge Dehy at Independence on forty-four felony counts.

They asked for an extension of time to plead and were given until 11 a.m. next Monday to enter their pleas and to obtain new counsel, their original attorneys having thrown up the case.

DELAY SOUGHT

At the same time Dist. Atty. Hession of Inyo county announced the receipt of a telegram from A. A. Rosenshine, attorney for the State Banking Department, asking Mr. Hession to agree to a postponement of the case for two weeks.

The telegram assigned no reason for the request, but stated the purpose will be made clear in a communication expected to reach Mr. Hession in a day or two.

Mr. Hession stated he will not act toward a further delay in the case until the reason for the request is explained, though he expressed the opinion that a delay would not have been asked except for sufficient causes.

The brothers are charged with forty-four felony counts, forty-three of which cover asserted embezzlement of \$800,000 from the banks, falsification of records and overdrafts and the remaining count charges embezzlement of \$420,000 from the Owens Valley Irrigation District, which they headed. They were represented in court yesterday by Thomas C. Boone, Modesto attorney.

Numerous conferences and stopovers throughout the entire valley have been arranged for the board in order to give the city officials an opportunity to inspect land and discuss with the residents of the valley the policies that should be adopted by the city in settling the water controversy.

The trip is the first official move on the part of the city to get together with the residents of the valley and is the result of an invitation recently sent to the board by an Inyo county citizens' committee.

This, it is stated, will be Mulholland's first trip into the Owens River Valley since the dynamiting of the Los Angeles aqueduct.

Banish Lawyer From Inyo Co.

H. C. Hall, former Bishop attorney and ex-aqueduct lawyer, is reported safe and on his way to Los Angeles following his release by incensed Owens valley farmers, who are reported to have forcibly taken him from a restaurant in Bishop early this morning and ordered him to leave Inyo county.

The forcible ousting of Hall resulted from his refusal to peacefully leave the valley after being ordered to do so by farmers who have been opposed to his actions in behalf of the city in buying certain lands to be used by the city water department.

The attorney is said to have been surprised by "night riders" as he ate in a Bishop restaurant. He is said to have defied an order to leave Bishop within a given number of days.

Several months ago Hall was rescued from an imminent hanging in the streets of Bishop by Sheriff Collins.

It was south of Bishop, in the vicinity towards which the kidnapers spirited Hall, that a heavy charge of dynamite was exploded under the aqueduct spillway two months ago.

Several weeks ago Hall was told to get out of the valley or suffer the consequences. He is reported to have left with the understanding that he would never return. His sudden re-appearance this morning aroused the farmers, who loaded him into a machine and spirited him out of town.

The first word of the farmers' action was contained in a dispatch to President R. F. Del Valle of the public service commission.

The dispatch stated that Hall had been taken into the hills back of Bishop and later released with the understanding that he would leave and stay away.

With great deliberation.

"The whole thing is a teapot tempest," he said. "I see nothing to get excited over."

Not at Capacity

"But we cannot overlook the fact that our aqueduct is not carrying anywhere near its capacity, that we would have to get along for 10 years

the mayor to the board on the

on these same sources before the Colorado River water gets into Los Angeles."

"Thousands and hundreds of thousands will come to live in Los Angeles during this period; we will doubtless annex large areas. All these people will be clamoring for water."

"I do not want to make any personal criticism or criticism of any kind, but I want the board of public service commissioners to seriously investigate and consider the propositions of the Owens Valley farmers."

Rising to his feet in paroxysm of anger as soon as Cryer's letter to the board of public service commissioners had been read at a special meeting of the board Thursday afternoon, Mulholland bitterly attacked the mayor and ended by threatening resignation unless he was brought face to face with Cryer to thresh out the question.

He was endorsed heatedly by R. F. Del Valle, president of the board.

The special paragraph in the mayor's letter which aroused the indignation of Mulholland conceals serious

implications, according to Mulholland. It reads thus:

"The shortage of water resulting from the present and last years' light rainfall makes it apparent to me that immediate and vigorous action should be taken to supplement our present domestic supply."

This paragraph in the mayor's communication was seized upon by

lholland

nd and Del Valle for dire

alle's statements became so that Commissioners Baker and Dygstra and Doctor John R. Haynes suggested that Cryer be called to hear them personally.

Mulholland, with the light of fading battle in his eyes, seconded the suggestion eagerly. "That's right," he said. "I want to meet him face to face when he attacks me and impugns my diligence and judgment."

Mulholland did not present a formal answer, but will make one at a special meeting of the board at 4 p. m. Friday. Members of city council have been invited, especially Ralph L. Criswell, who has warmly supported Mulholland through the present crisis.

Del Valle said that at no time had there been any attempt by the collective Owens valley ranchers to negotiate purchase of their lands by the water department.

"There was a committee of engineers appointed by the chamber of commerce," Del Valle said. "Doesn't the mayor know that we are still waiting for a report of these engineers? He should know it because it is a matter of public record."

Del Valle added that a policy toward Owens valley had been decided upon but that the chamber of commerce's motion to wait for the engineering committee's report rescinded action on the policy.

Mulholland scoffed at the mayor's phrase "the city's dire need" in regard to the water shortage.

"There's no city in better shape on the coast," he shouted. He produced figures to show that 175,000 acre feet of seepage water were available—enough, he claims, to last the city a year.

Keough's Hot Springs this should not be settled for all evening, and there will be a time to come.

Sac. (See)
9-6-24

8

OWENS VALLEY ASKS PURCHASE OF LAND EN BLOC

**Los Angeles Commission Told
That Is Only Satisfactory
Solution Of Water Dispute;
No Decision Yet Announced**

BISHOP (Cal.), Sept. 6.—(AP)—
Further discussion of the Owens
Valley water rights situation was
scheduled to take place at a sup-
plementary meeting here to-day of
the Los Angeles board of public
service commissioners.

For Purchase En Bloc.

At a formal session yesterday the
board received from four Owens
Valley irrigation companies identi-
cal letters describing the distress
caused in the valley by the city's
policy of purchasing, piece by piece,
the water-bearing lands of the dis-
trict, and setting forth the belief
that the only just solution of the
difficulty thus created would be the
purchase en bloc of all remaining
water rights for a price to be fixed
by arbitration.

No Promises Made.

The commissioners did not com-
mit themselves for or against the
bloc purchase proposal but an-
nounced that at to-day's meeting
they would be glad to hear the
views of any resident of the valley
who felt the Owens Valley side of
the question had not yet been made
sufficiently clear.

Some Disappointment.

Expressions of disappointment
were general at the close of the
meeting, many valley residents
feeling that since the commission-
ers had not committed themselves
one way or the other, that nothing
had been gained by the conference.
Others pointed out, however, that
immediate acceptance of such a
proposal could hardly be expected.

Undoubtedly mistakes were made
in the construction of the aque-
duct; mistakes are natural in any
undertaking of such proportions.

The commission, before its de-
parture for Los Angeles yesterday
afternoon, made a fifty-mile in-
spection trip, visiting four irriga-
tion ditches.

he said, but they can and will be
adjusted.

W. W. Watterson, spokesman for
the ranchers and banker of Bish-
op, expressed his entire satisfac-
tion with the tour of the commis-
sion as the Commissioners pre-
pared to depart for Los Angeles.
It gave the ranchers their first op-
portunity to get their case before
the proper authorities, he said, and
to the general public as a whole.
Better feeling has been created,
he said, and the effect of the trip
will not be lost.

FARMERS GET HEARING

The most important thing ac-
complished, he said, was that the
ranchers and farmers in the val-
ley were given an opportunity to
express their feelings and to ex-
plain their position and situation.
The residents of Owens Valley
have no intention of holding up
the city. If the community must
be destroyed, he said, the ranch-
ers and farmers are willing to
have some one else put a price
on it.

9-6-24

RGE PEACE

*mplores Early Settle-
y Commission*

ES

ondent

Owens Valley, work-worn
women, entered the water

ago. Since that time the city ap-
pointed a committee to consult with
the valley people and to report back
with a plan under which

OWENS VALLEY CLUBWOMEN BACK UP HUSBANDS' DEMANDS ON L. A.



Committee of Owens valley women presenting proposals to members of board of public service commissioners. Left to right, Mrs. Walter Best, Mrs. S. A. Winterton, Mrs. Frank Butler, Mrs. Walter H. Walker, Mrs. G. Vonderheide, Commissioners Baker, Whitsett and Del Valle.

In the fight to save their homes from the encroachments of Los Angeles the women of Owens valley have called upon the State Federation of Women's Clubs for assistance.

The request to the parent organization follows an appeal made to the board of public service commissioners by Mrs. G. Vonderheide of Bishop, district chairman of the Federation of Women's Clubs, that the commission announce its policies at once or the women would be forced to support the men in drastic action.

In presenting her plea Mrs. Vonderheide said:

"The time has come when we can no longer stand idly by and see our homes destroyed, our children deprived of their schools and our husbands' business ruined.

Policy Unnecessary

"The ruthless policy that has been adopted was so unnecessary. If the great city of Los Angeles had only carried out its original plans our little valley would still be green and prosperous. Instead of that it is now being turned back to desert. People are being forced away. Houses that once resounded with the happy voices of happy families are now silent and decaying.

"Business too has suffered. Once we were approaching financial independence but now it is a struggle to meet the necessities of life.

"Our children, who by rights are entitled to the gentle influences of a happy home, are made victims of the tense bitterness that has been forced into our lives. They look at us in bewilderment. Their little minds will not permit them to understand, but they do know that something is wrong.

"Even schools where many of them should be are closed. It is a grave injustice that we can no longer tolerate.

Kept Dangers Secret

"Our husbands long ago sensed the danger but carefully kept their knowledge from us. Gradually we too, began to learn, because our husbands were breaking under the strain. Then came the time when we were confronted with the true facts. Ruination and ruin alone was staring us in the face.

"We have always prided ourselves on our patience and our endurance. But the time came when we could restrain our feelings no longer.

"With women crying themselves to sleep at night; children deprived of education; homes for which they fought, struggled and saved being taken from them; and business ruined, is it any wonder that our men have reached the stage of desperation?

"We tried to hold them down and comfort them with statements that conditions may change for the better.

We were wrong. Conditions got worse. Now the time has come when we can no longer control our husbands.

"They are fighting to protect us, to protect their children and their homes, and we must stand solidly behind them.

Ask Only Justice

"All we ask is justice from the city. Our demands are fair. If Los Angeles needs our lands and water then we will give them to her. It is asking a great deal of us to sacrifice our homes but we are willing to do so. But in return we do think we are entitled to fair play and an immediate answer as to what is expected from us. Unless this is done we will be driven to desperation.

"Desperate men sometimes do drastic things. We hope that such will not be necessary in this case. But if the great city of Los Angeles fails to make a sincere attempt to give us justice then our men may find it necessary to secure justice in their own ways.

"If that time comes, whatever our husbands may do, they will find us fighting shoulder to shoulder with them for the protection of our homes."

Stockton, Mrs. Esther Walline, is the mother of one of the old-established families of a valley.

Three small children, grief-stricken by the tragedy which has plunged the entire valley in gloom, a baby too small to know the cause of his mother's tears, are left fatherless by Walline's

vice, 701 Van Nuys Bldg., immediate publication: ranchers and business gates of the Los Angeles waste \$15,000 worth of commercial organizations voices of protest against Americanism."

mob have been fruitless, the Department of Public and grave fear is held that a result of the illegal

of the Commercial Board the state legislature, and issued a scathing denunciation by the mob. His

the controversy is that law valuable property is being

POPULATION

CITY PURCHASES

royed. By taking the law in their own hands and it with force and mob rule, these people make it for negotiations to be undertaken, yet it is that the destruction of property must cease

Mr. Percy Hammon! Jesso! But we did not notice thing denunciation" (?) that you had anything to e damnable tactics of the big city of Los Angeles o Owens Valley, and, without as much as saying, ve," just because it thought it had the law on its away the water from the settlers in that district. ler's tactics at present, possibly may be unlawful, t that instead of shutting off the water, they should atience and await the slow processes of our courts hat they have rights in the premises. 's not the way this republic was founded. er the Boston Tea Party!

ow the Pajaronian is on the side of the folks up in y country. We hope the Los Angeles people will act matter. It is only right that the people in the y should be compensated for their great loss in d of that water—for we look on it as nothing less than obbery, on the part of Los Angeles!

have confidence in the good sense and fairness of geles people. We feel sure that on sober second y will realize that they cannot afford to stand out ican opinion as despoilers of an inoffensive lot of ers, and that they will deal justly with the Owens rs.—Ed. Pajaronian).

The water war of Inyo has come to an end or at least it has reached the armistice stage. The purpose of the farmers was to attract the attention of the public to their causes for complaint and they certainly succeeded. Even Los Angeles was jarred out of its smug complacency and steps will now be taken to adjust the differences with the farmers on a fair basis. The unarmed demonstration proved effective even though beyond the law.—Santa Barbara Press.

cerned, we are perfectly willing to let the bank examiners decide who was responsible. The city has nothing to fear from any impartial investigation. The course the city has pursued should have strengthened rather than weakened these institutions. The city has spent \$12,000,000 buying land in Owens Valley in the last four years and the banks should have got some very nice accounts as a result. The city pay roll in Owens Valley is \$100,000 a month and this also should have contributed to the prosperity of the banks.

"The city has encouraged industrial development of every sort. Besides providing light for the towns, we have sold power to the industrial plants at prices about the same as charged in Los Angeles and these industries employ a large number of the valley residents."

At the local offices of the National Bank Examiners and of the State Banking Department, it was said no information has come yet from the examiners in charge of the closed institutions. John H. McFaul, chief of the southern division of the State Banking Department, said the State examiners are reporting directly to State Superintendent Wood, who arrived in Bishop Thursday, and he is out of touch with the situation.

GAINS CONTROL

The city's purchases of the Longyear and Zombro ranches give it 100 per cent control of the Rawson ditch and increase materially its holdings in the Bishop's Creek and Owens River Canal companies. They are considered among the most important

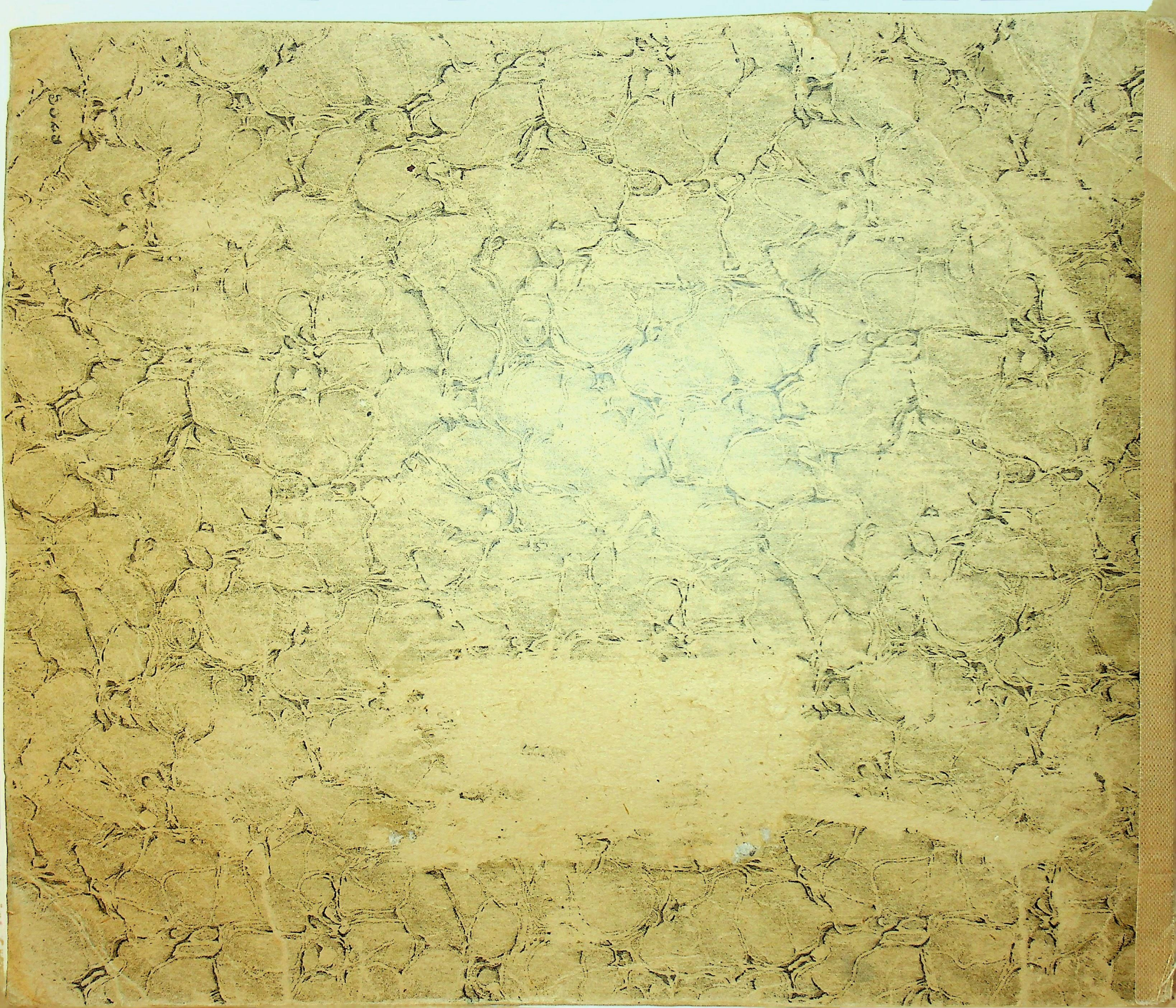
Donna Adams Howard Nov 20 1924

W. A. Baker - Sept 9-24

THE IMPROVED COLUMBIAN CLASP No. 65
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THE UNITED STATES ENVELOPE CO., SPRINGFIELD MASS.

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EXTRA

Los Angeles Record

**CITY
EDITION
TWO CENTS**

Twenty-ninth Year

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Two Cents

TURN VALLEY INTO DESERT

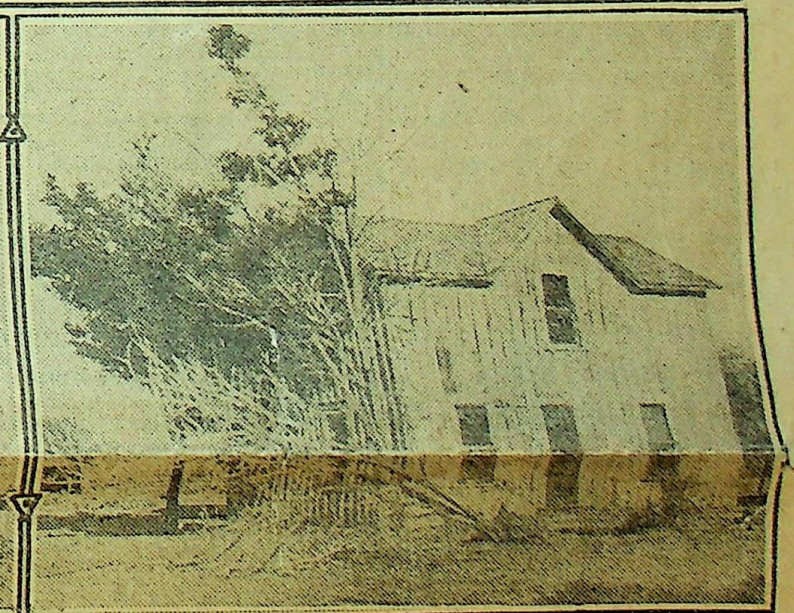
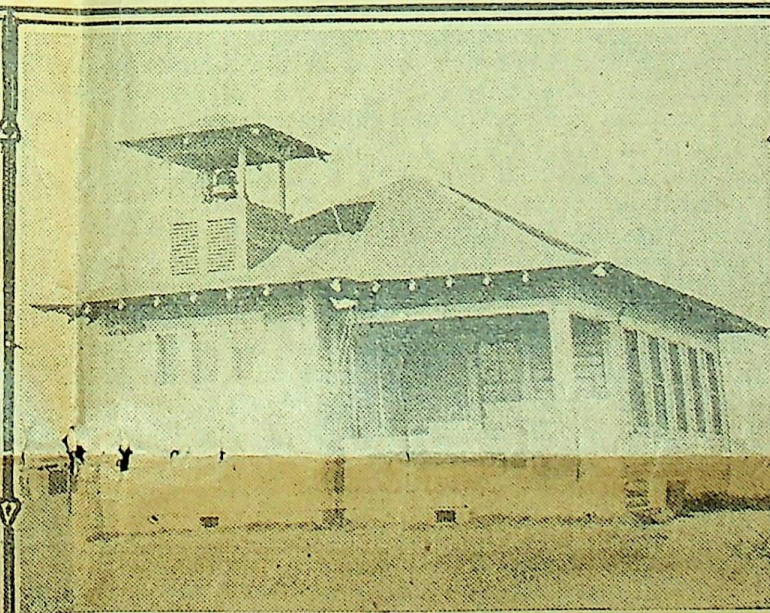
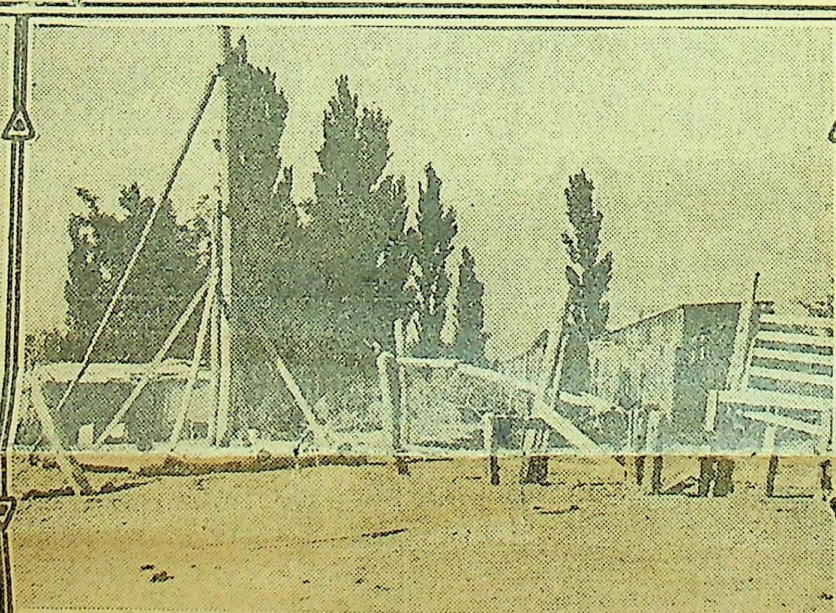
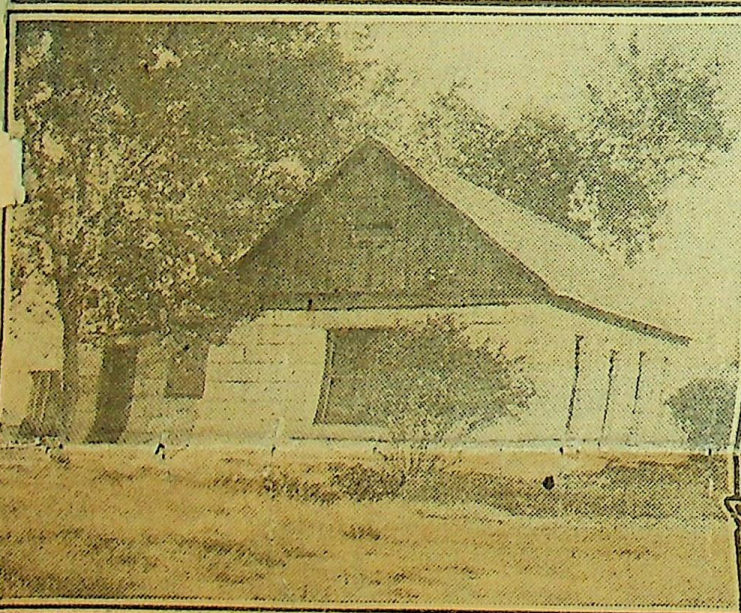
PHOTOS SHOW DECAY IN WAKE OF CITY WATER DEVELOPMENT

Abandoned Home of Henry Elan.

Yard of Abandoned Home of the Widow McCrosky.

North Inyo School, Near Town of Laws. Probably
Will Be Closed for Lack of Pupils.

Abandoned Home of Fred Snorky, Near Laws.



LET'S GET AT THE REAL FACTS

Yesterday The Record told the story of the dynamiting of the Los Angeles aqueduct. The Record wishes to repeat that its motive in this matter is to help Los Angeles procure a safe and adequate water supply. No good can be done this community by covering up or twisting the facts, as has been done in the past. Big interests are fighting a battle for many millions. The people pay for all this. Also, a great section of the state, and a country that Los Angeles needs for its future prosperity, is being destroyed. The Record believes that only by telling the truth that has been suppressed can the people of Los Angeles judge this situation clearly. Today's article tells the story of the people of the Owens valley, where Los Angeles gets its water.

Greek restaurant—that is all. If there is such a thing in this country as an American community, the Owens river valley section is it.

FOUGHT INDIANS FOR LANDS

Fifty or sixty years ago these people fought the Indians for their lands. The Piutes are a fighting race themselves, and there were many battles before the settlers acquired the privilege of living in this valley. Most of the old Indian fighters are dead, but there are some of them left. Many men of the valley are their sons. The fighting spirit of the pioneer type still lies close to

HOW L. A. EMPTIES HOMES

The water officials of Los Angeles have said that the Owens valley people are merely trying to hold up the city for big prices for their ranches. In some individual cases this may be true but in general it is not. The city's water authorities go on this basis: "Well, this is more than any one else will pay you. Take it or leave it. If we ever make you another offer, it will be less."

This has been done time and again. A rancher, if he refuses to sell, sees some of his neighbors sell and get out. The land reverts to sage brush, the water in the irrigating ditch—the ditch that he and his neigh-

DO YOU WONDER THAT SUCH PEOPLE FEEL THEY ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR HOMES AND THEIR EXISTENCE?

Do you wonder at such instances as the following?

In one conference of these people an old man arose. "Gentlemen," he said, "I am an old man, over seventy; I have not very long to live anyway. If there is any real dangerous work to be done at any time, let me do it."

And this from another rancher: "If they serve an injunction on me to prevent me from using my water, they may get my water, but they will have to get me too. I have a pile of rocks picked out where I will stand them off as long as possible. I have a rifle and plenty of ammunition. That pile of rock will be a good place

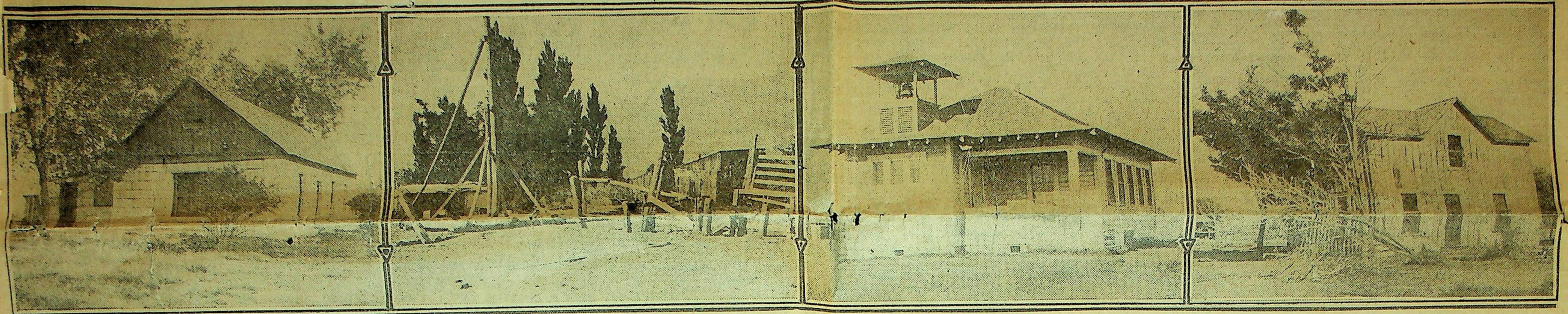
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The plea of the people of Owens valley in Inyo county, through which flows the aqueduct, is that the people of Los Angeles listen to their side of the story. The *Record* today prints that story.

What kind of folks are these people who dynamited the aqueduct? Are they ignorant, vicious, anarchistic, as some Los Angeles officials claim?

Inyo is the second largest county in California in area, San Bernardino being the largest. It has the highest percentage of farms operated by owners, with one exception—Sonoma county. It has been called the Switzerland of America, and some day, with its immense mountain ranges, innumerable lakes and creeks, its hills, its game and fish, it will be the playground of the west.

The entire county of Inyo has about 8,000 population. It sent a very high percentage of its young men to war. It over-subscribed the early Liberty bond issues so far that the promoters of the drive had to stop them for fear they'd have no money left for later ones. They exceeded in each case their Red Cross quotas. The American Legion is very strong in the valley. There are almost no foreign-born persons in the entire section. There are four or five Japanese in Bishop, a Chinese laundry, and a

Greek restaurant—that is all. If there is such a thing in this country as an American community, the Owens river valley section is it.

FOUGHT INDIANS FOR LANDS

Fifty or sixty years ago these people fought the Indians for their lands. The Piutes are a fighting race themselves, and there were many battles before the settlers acquired the privilege of living in this valley. Most of the old Indian fighters are dead, but there are some of them left. Many men of the valley are their sons. The fighting spirit of the pioneer type still lies close to the surface.

These people face an enforced migration. Gradually they are being driven from their homes. There are miles of fields, once fertile, now desolate. Farmhouses, still showing the years of work and care that went into the making of homes, are now abandoned—windows broken, doors swinging in the wind. These are facts that any one caring to travel a little off the main road can see.

Worse than that, from a community where a door was never locked, where a man's word was good and where trickery was the exception, not the rule, it has become a district where people now suspect each other. They never know which neighbor, breaking under the strain, will sell out to the city. They are afraid to speak openly to each other; relative is set against relative.

CITY HIRES SECRET AGENTS

The city of Los Angeles has its supporters in the valley. There are, as in all communities, different factions. The city has hired as secret agents some of the valley people who work on the fears and hopes of others. Along with this work of their agents, the officials who have dictated the city's policy in this matter have filed many lawsuits in the valley. There is a maze of them, pro and con. Obviously the city, rich and powerful, has the advantage in these suits. Most of the ranchers are now too poor to take even this means of protest. They are too dispirited to work their crops as they should. The sole topic of conversation is water.

The policy of the city's representatives and agents, these people say, has been that of a big and ruthless corporation rather than that of a great city. There is no question at all that these agents have resorted to trickery, sharp practice and shrewd bargaining, all legal enough, perhaps, but nevertheless discreditable.

It is this method the city of Los Angeles must change if it wants to protect the water supply it now has, for desperation is something that cannot be reasoned with and these people are nearing desperation.

HOW L. A. EMPTIES HOMES

The water officials of Los Angeles have said that the Owens valley people are merely trying to hold up the city for big prices for their ranches. In some individual cases this may be true but in general it is not. The city's water authorities go on this basis: "Well, this is more than any one else will pay you. Take it or leave it. If we ever make you another offer, it will be less."

This has been done time and again. A rancher, if he refuses to sell, sees some of his neighbors sell and get out. The land reverts to sage brush, the water in the irrigating ditch—the ditch that he and his neighbors built—is diverted. His own supply is carefully watched by the city agents. The land decreases in value because it is community value that builds up farmlands.

He can still stay there and make a living, perhaps, but the threat of the city hangs over him. Something may happen to take away his supply of water—a lawsuit is always just over his daily horizon. He feels it would be better to take what he can get and quit.

And there is no sale except to the city; no one else wants his place. He sells to the city at less than he was first offered. The money he receives is just about enough to pay the money he owed at the bank and the other debts. He packs up his personal belongings, gathers his family and leaves. An American of the best type probably turned into a revolutionist at heart.

MILLIONS GIVEN SPECULATORS

It is indeed a strong-hearted person who can see these abandoned farms, the product of 25, 30, 40 or 50 years' hard labor, with the peculiar home atmosphere found only in pioneer sections, without feeling the tragedy of it.

The accusation of water officials that these people are trying to hold up the city and make money out of their holdings is, on the whole, ridiculous. Most of them did not want to sell at all. These places were their homes. There are associations and work in such communities that make people dislike to leave.

And if they did make a profit, what then? Could not the city be generous enough to pay them one—especially when official Los Angeles freely gave millions to the big land speculators in San Fernando valley who were enriched from the water taken from Owens valley?

DENY THAT IF YOU CAN, GENTLEMEN, YOU WHO TRY TO BEAT DOWN A FARMER, who alone

and single-handed, has cleared eighty acres, planted it to alfalfa and fruit trees, built his share of the irrigating ditch, kept up his home, even to the extent of putting in flowers and a small patch of lawn; paid his taxes, sent his children to school, and now faces ruin!

Do you want to see any such cases? They are there to be seen.

DO YOU WONDER THAT SUCH PEOPLE FEEL THEY ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR HOMES AND THEIR EXISTENCE?

Do you wonder at such instances as the following?

In one conference of these people an old man arose. "Gentlemen," he said, "I am an old man, over seventy; I have not very long to live anyway. If there is any real dangerous work to be done at any time, let me do it."

And this from another rancher: "If they serve an injunction on me to prevent me from using my water, they may get my water, but they will have to get me too. I have a pile of rocks picked out where I will stand them off as long as possible. I have a rifle and plenty of ammunition. That pile of rock will be a good place to cash in."

BANKERS NEVER FORECLOSE

How then, have the ranchers, with land values slipping, with no courage to increase their crops, nearly all owing money, managed to exist?

Most of the business interests of the town of Bishop—the largest town of the valley, with a population of sixteen hundred—are in the same boat with the ranchers, and in the Bishop community they have all stuck pretty well together.

W. W. and Mark Q. Watterson, brothers and rich men, bankers of the community, to whom many owe money, have never foreclosed a single mortgage. Bankers are bankers and, like other business men, are not in business for their health, but there are some human business men and some human bankers. The Wattersons belong to that class.

They collect their interest, undoubtedly, or as much as they can get, but they have not foreclosed although they could have made vastly more money through selling foreclosed lands and water rights to the city.

Like all successful men, they have their enemies, but as a class the ranchers and business men of the section give them most of the credit for keeping the community from financial bankruptcy at a time when no outside money can be raised.

WOMEN BACK INYO RANCHERS

What about the women of this half-strangled country? As a matter of fact, the women are the real force back of the opposition to the city's agents and officials. The Inyo County Federation of Women's clubs brought the matter to the attention of the Los Angeles women's clubs. It may come as a surprise to some to learn that they have women's clubs in that country, but they have, and the intelligence and education of their individuals and their organization is of high type. They

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

BEAUTY AND INDUSTRY WED



Miss Helen McGuinness of Beverly Hills as beauty, the bride, and Loren W. Babcock as industry, the bridegroom, in unique symbolical ceremony at Home of Holsum.

Typifying the successful union of Beauty and Industry in Southern California's program for balanced prosperity, an unique, symbolical wedding was celebrated at Holsum House, Beverly Hills, Wednesday night.

One thousand invited guests attended, including leaders in Southern California's civic, social, industrial and artistic circles.

The ceremony marked the formal opening of the new half-million dollar House of Holsum the Third, which is located on Santa Monica boulevard and Alpine drive, Beverly Hills.

Moonlight and Spotlights

The wedding was held out of doors, with the pale June moonlight lending enchantment to a scene of unusual beauty and interest. Gay lanterns lit the darker corners, while during the service spotlights were advantageously employed.

The bride, Beauty, was attired in a gorgeous silver brocade gown with a beautiful real lace veil. She carried a lovely shower bouquet. The honor of impersonating "Miss Beverly Hills" was conferred by the community on Miss Helen McGuinness, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. McGuinness. The groom, Industry, Holsum III, was Mr. Loren W. Babcock of Los Angeles.

Eighteen Bridesmaids

Miss Esther M. Smith of Hollywood, the maid of honor, wore a lovely frock of orchid chiffon cloth and carried a spray of pink rosebuds and lavender sweet peas.

Each of the 18 community bridesmaids, including Miss Burbank, Miss Chatsworth, Miss Culver City, Miss Glendale, the two Misses Hollywood, Miss Lankershim, Miss Montrose, Miss Owensmouth, Miss Reseda, Miss Sherman, Miss Sawtelle, Miss Santa Monica, Miss San Fernando,

Miss Van Nuys, Miss Venice, Miss Zelzah and Miss Tujunga, carried graceful baskets filled with spring flowers.

Their lovely frocks in attractive pastel shades and tones were well set off by the black suits of the 18 ushers.

"A Dance of Joy," by the Earle Wallace dancers preceded the wedding ceremony. Mr. Gage Christopher played the clergyman. The ceremony was sung, instead of spoken, the words and music having been created for the event. They included vows of greater service to mankind in Southern California.

Inspect Plant

The wedding supper was served following the ceremony, with the bride and groom presiding. Later in the evening guests enjoyed dance music furnished by the well known "Packard Six" orchestra.

The latest methods and equipment known to the baking industry have been installed in the new House of Holsum, and guests found much in these inspection tours to interest them.

'Y' RAISES \$500,000

After department store heads and private individuals had made donations ranging from \$10,000 to \$25,000, the Navy Y. M. C. A. drive total reached a figure slightly under \$500,000, announced the chairman of the drive, R. E. Ballard.

The campaign aims to collect one million dollars.

TEMPERATURE

Weather—Fair, moderately warm weather tonight and Friday. Probably fog or clouds in the morning.
Average—62.
Hottest Spot—Needles, 114.
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HERE'S MORE ABOUT
TURN VALLEY INTO DESERT
STARTS ON PAGE ONE

know what is going on in the outside world; they know their rights and they are willing to fight for them.

Mrs. O. C. Houghton, president of the Inyo County Federation of Women's clubs, called the matter to the attention of the Los Angeles organization, and Mrs. M. C. Lineman was appointed chairman of an investigating committee of the Los Angeles clubs. Mrs. Lineman stated in a letter, in reply to the resolutions sent from the Inyo women to the Los Angeles women, that Mr. Mulholland had informed them that Inyo county was not suitable for agriculture; that the people of that section had found their mistake in buying lands in that section and were desirous of selling out and leaving the country.

Reply was made to this by W. W. Watterson on April 5, 1924.

In his reply, sent to Mrs. Houghton, he said: "This is an old farming community. The first farms were established in the early sixties and land has risen steadily in value.

"Such statements as made by Mr. Mulholland are absolutely false and are intended to mislead his people. He has committed grave engineering mistakes here. He has built an aqueduct at a cost of many million dollars and provided no storage to keep it filled. This is a grave mistake in a country that is subject to drouths as is the western coast.

"HE HAS DESTROYED A WEAKER COMMUNITY WITHOUT JUST COMPENSATION TO ITS PEOPLE and where it was not necessary to do so as THE WATERSHED SUPPLIES AMPLE WATER TO IRRIGATE ALL FARMS IN THE VALLEY AND KEEP THE AQUEDUCT FILLED ALL THE YEAR, IF IT WERE PROPERLY STORED."

The women in their homes, seeing these homes slipping away from them, seeing the schools that their communities fostered gradually going to run through lack of pupils—seeing it become more and more difficult to make both ends meet—these women turn to the men and ask them what they are going to do about it.

HOW BIG PINE WAS RUINED

Just one illustration of wholesale dissolution: The town of Big Pine, overlooking a valley which sweeps for endless miles to the north and south, looked down upon on the east by the great White mountains and on the west by the granite crags of the Palisades is, or was, a peaceful, prosperous and contented community. It too has a Legion hall—a fine new building—and a new school constructed by voting a bond issue of one hundred thousand dollars.

The city bought the land controlling the McNally ditch to the north of them. The headgate of this ditch was closed and the water went into the Owens river—also into the Big Pine ditch which irrigates the farm lands around Big Pine. There was a shortage of water in the river. The Big Pine ranchers took from the Big Pine ditch the amount of water to which they were lawfully entitled. Therefore, Los Angeles did not get this water which it wanted for the San Fernando valley.

Los Angeles engineers tried to get this McNally ditch water past the Big Pine ditch. THE BIG PINE RANCHERS WENT OUT WITH RIFLES AND SHOT-GUNS AND DROVE OFF THE CITY WORKERS.

The city then started to buy them out and finally did so. These farmers seem to have been united. Anyway, the city had to pay one million one hundred thousand dollars for all the lands in the Big Pine district.

Last spring not an acre of the forty-five hundred acres under the Big Pine ditch was planted. There are no crops in that section.

And the town of Big Pine, deprived of the ranches, is left with no means of support, with the debt of one hundred thousand dollars, for its new school, and with its several hundred citizens stranded, except for such little trade they can get from tourists going hunting or fishing in the nearby mountains.

The Eye Behind the Gun



Miss Ruth Slifer is making ready for any possible bandits who might molest her. Here you see her taking aim during a lesson in the rifle class being conducted for girls at Temple university, Philadelphia, Pa.

upon the farming area of Owens valley in order to increase its water supply. However, in 1923 and 1924, the city has been more active than ever in buying lands, acquiring water rights and turning farms into desert.

The first recognition the valley has ever had outside of the city's water officials and agents came recently when a delegation from the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce made a trip to the valley following a conference between the Bishop Chamber of Commerce and members of the Los Angeles organization. These Los Angeles men were J. S. Nickerson, M. Elsassner, John C. Austin, C. S. Whitcomb and W. C. Dormer.

They were entertained and escorted through the valley. The business men of Bishop say they are well satisfied with the evident intention of these men to learn something of the truth and do the square thing. They have hopes that something will come of this investigation by men outside of the water department.

Does This Explain 'Who Stole Dad's?'



"Who stole dad's plaid Sox?" Perhaps Marcella Arnold (left) and Corinne Leonard (right), slyly observed pulling them on at the Biltmore hosiery show, know.

Don't let them "Pull the Wool" Over your Eyes!

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ALL THEY ASK IS FAIR PRICE

What is the answer?

It is this: The people of Owens river valley, as a class, no longer expect or hope to keep their homes and ranches. They are willing to pack up and get out. They realize that the city can beat them in two or three years longer, if its present policy of nibbling, harrassing and lawsuitsing is continued. They won't stand for the water being taken away all at once, as the city recently tried to do when it asked for an injunction to prevent all users of water flowing into Owens river from using this water. THIS INJUNCTION SUIT WAS POSTPONED. IT IS LUCKY IT WAS. IF IT HAD BEEN GRANTED, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN CIVIL WAR.

The case, however, is to be tried on its merits and is still pending and it has cast another cloud over the water rights of the people of that section. They will not stand for having the water taken away from them in this fashion, but they are willing to acknowledge that defeat will come eventually and they are ready to pack up, square their debts and get out.

But they want what they consider a fair price for their lands. They have, in effect, proposed the following to men controlling the city's water situation:

"Stop spying and undermining; take away the secret agents and name the lands you want. Let the price be set by an impartial commission."

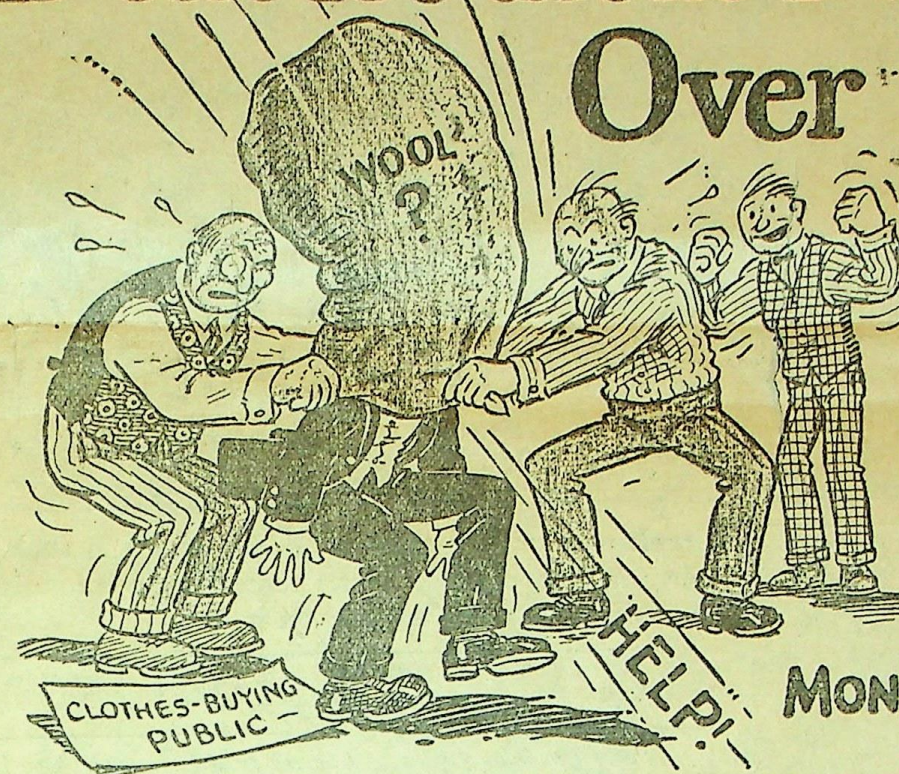
The policy of the city agents at present is to buy ranches and destroy them without respect to the effect on values of other farm property in the community, or without consideration for the loss that falls on the business of the town, due to turning the supporting country into a desert. They propose that the valley be dealt with collectively and that the values be determined by a valuation commission composed of disinterested men.

At different times the people of the valley have been assured that the city would not encroach further

valley. The business men of Bishop say they are well satisfied with the evident intention of these men to learn something of the truth and do the square thing. They have hopes that something will come of this investigation by men outside of the water department.

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EXTRA PANTS FREE and

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Our alleged "competitors" say that we cannot give our customers the Clothes Values we advertise! We know they cannot—but WE not only can—WE DO! That's why we have Thousands of Satisfied Customers in Southern California!

Save half YOUR clothes cost by buying "The Wear of TWO suits for the Price of One." Come and see the largest stock of Snappy New Suitings in the West. All the latest fashionable weaves, in every desirable shade.

Every Suit has Extra Pants F-R-E-E and Our Money-Back Guarantee, and costs you less than most tailors ask for one-pants suits, too.

Our Regular \$35 \$40 \$50 Values
SUITS TAILORED TO-YOUR-INDIVIDUAL-MEASURE.
\$25 \$30 \$35

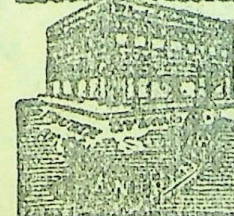
YOUR MONEY-BACK cheerfully IF WE CAN'T FIT YOU



It matters not how you are built! ENGLISH WOOLEN MILLS can tailor your next suit to fit YOU. Don't take chances on getting a "misfit"—let us shoulder that responsibility—WE'LL take all the chances!

Every garment we make is designed by a Master Specialist, from YOUR individual measure, in any style you wish. Expert tailors in our own Daylight Workshops build Style and Character into your clothes, using High-Grade Linings and Trimmings only. Compare the garments WE make with those costing much more—then we'll be "Your Tailor."

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CHARACTER plus EARNING ABILITY
is a proper basis for credit
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WONDER
SENSATION

PAUL BIESE,

AND HIS
CHAMPION

VICTOR RECORDING ORCHESTRA

OPEN
JULY
3RD

SOLOMON'S

BISHOP BANKERS UNDER NEW FIRE

*Friedlander Curbs Permit of
Watterson Enterprise ..*

*Irregularities Declared
Found in Books*

*Inyo County Financiers Up
for Hearing Today*

While Mark and W. W. Watterson, financial powers of Inyo county, were preparing to appear before Justice of Peace Patterson in Bishop today for preliminary hearing on forty-three felony counts, mostly of embezzlement, an order was issued yesterday by State Corporation Commissioner Friedlander suspending the permit of the Coso Hot Springs, Inc., of the Watterson enterprises.

The order suspending the hot springs company's permit was issued by Commissioner Friedlander after receiving a report from Col. B. A. Whittaker, chief auditor of the department, that examination of the books has indicated irregularities. The books of the company were seized last Tuesday.

At the same time the State Corporation Commissioner's office indicated the possibility that the permit of Watterson Bros., Inc., will be suspended today. It was learned that the action suspending the permit was delayed yesterday because certain data in the hands of Arthur E. Johnson, deputy auditor for the department, were not available here. Mr. Johnson reported irregularities in the books of that concern, according to Commissioner Friedlander, and recommended the immediate suspension of the permit. The needed information is expected here today.

LOANS LISTED

Johnson declared in his report, according to a statement from the Corporation Commissioner's office, that his investigation shows the assets of Watterson Brothers, Inc., have been embezzled by the Wattersons, who, he said, had pledged securities belonging to the company for personal loans. These securities, he said, included fifty-two shares of Inyo County Bank stock pledged to the First National Bank of Los Angeles; twenty-five shares of Inyo County Bank stock to Eliza Watterson estate; 300 shares of First National Bank of Bishop to the First National Bank of Los Angeles and 120 shares of First National Bank of Bishop to C. T. Crowell.

All the investments of Watterson Brothers, Inc., are in the hands of W. W. Watterson, according to Johnson's report, and he added that 1250 shares of Southwest Hardware Company stock and one share of Chalfant Co-operative Power Company stock are missing and unaccounted for.

Johnson's investigation also disclosed, according to the Corporation Commissioner's statement, that Watterson Brothers, Inc., had issued 7 per cent interest-bearing notes in the nature of term certificates of deposit amounting to \$1,047,227.22. This action, Johnson reported, places the company in the position of operating as a bank without a permit or a charter from the State Superintendent of Banks. The notes, Johnson reported, constitute evidences of indebtedness, and it was probably incumbent upon the company to obtain a Corporation Commission permit before issuing them. Department records show no such permit, the statement says.

Another charge made by the deputy auditor is that the company issued 1515 of its preferred shares to liquidate liabilities when their permit provided issuances must be for cash.

VIOLATIONS CHARGED

Concerning the suspension of the permit of the Coso Hot Springs, Inc., the report of Chief Auditor Whittaker shows that a partial examination of the company books show that the company has violated the permit by issuing preferred stock to the Wattersons in payment of indebtedness and the issuance of common stock for real estate rather than for good will and trade marks.

While the Corporation Commission was taking its step toward restriction of the Watterson activities, Dist. Atty. Hession of Inyo county was preparing to go before Justice Patterson today ready for preliminary examination although it was rumored in Bishop that the Wattersons will waive that right.

Dist. Atty. Hession declared last night that he has all the facts in hand and that he is prepared to go forward with the prosecution of the charges against the Wattersons regardless of what steps they may take. However, he said that he has heard of their proposed plan to appear before Justice Patterson and waive preliminary examination.

It was learned that the Wattersons will be represented by Attorney F. C. Braucht at the hearing today but

THE OWENS VALLEY CRISIS

Catastrophe has overtaken Owens Valley.

The simultaneous failure of all the valley's five banks, one week ago today, has brought to pass a condition difficult of comprehension to those unfamiliar with the financial situation of isolated communities whose economic life is dependent upon the uninterrupted circulation of a comparatively small sum of money.

The Watterson banks at Bishop, Lone Pine, Big Pine and Independence were in absolute control of the valley's finances. They had deposits aggregating something less than \$2,000,000. Outside of some loose change in individual tills and pockets these deposits represented substantially all the money in the valley. So long as it remained liquid and subject to checking in and out it was ample for the valley's commercial needs.

But when all these banks closed their doors simultaneously, without warning and in the middle of a business day, this money went instantly out of circulation. If cash is the lifeblood of a community, it was as though the valley's heart had suddenly stopped beating.

UP TO LOS ANGELES

When checks are no good and currency cannot be had, credit is short-lived. Within forty-eight hours business houses in the valley towns had begun to close their doors. They were willing enough to extend credit to their old customers as far as they could but they had to have cash to pay their own bills. Their money was in the closed banks and the wholesale houses naturally refused to accept their checks on these banks, the future of which none can foresee. In the face of the bank failures, the credit of these retailers evaporated overnight.

With no money and no credit and with dealers in the necessities of life forced to suspend operations for lack of goods and cash, the pinch of real hardship is upon the valley. Walled in by mountains on all sides, her communities are interdependent and without neighbors on whom to call for help—save Los Angeles.

It is up to Los Angeles.

If Owens Valley had been visited by flood, fire or earthquake whereby had been wrought but a small fraction of the hurt which the failure of her banks has done, there would be such a spontaneous outpouring of sympathy and help from her big sister to the south as would have forever erased any misunderstandings between the communities.

MORTAL WOUNDS

Yet, barring actual loss of life, few natural calamities could have inflicted upon the valley a wound so mortal. That help has not already been forthcoming from Los Angeles means nothing except that we have not understood the need for it.

The means is simple and practicable enough. All that is required is for some responsible organization such as the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce to move immediately to re-establish individual and mercantile credit in the valley so that its business houses may survive the crisis and its residents continue to be supplied with necessities. A small committee of energetic, intelligent men with discretionary powers, co-operating with the substantial men of the valley, could bring order out of the chaotic situation in forty-eight hours.

There are visible assets and bank deposits upon which credits can be based. In spite of the huge embezzlements which wrecked the banks it is believed by investigators that enough Watterson assets will be found so that the ultimate loss to the depositors will be smaller than was first feared. With the situation under competent direction all necessary credit would be guaranteed. If necessary, scrip could be employed as a temporary substitute for currency.

There is no charity about it, nor any mawkish sentimentality. Through no fault of theirs, a large number of innocent people, good and solvent citizens, have been placed in temporary need of help which we can give them with no loss or inconvenience to ourselves. To extend it without mental reservation or ulterior motives is the only decent thing to do. To fail to offer it would not only be discreditable but would be against our own ultimate interests.

JUST MISUNDERSTOOD

It is true that, thanks chiefly to a few wrong heads on both sides, relations between Owens Valley and Los Angeles have been strained. It is true that, in pursuance of a water policy predicated on the needs of a metropolis, the city has taken from the valley vital assets for some of which it has paid generously and for others of which it has not paid at all. It is true that there have been inequities which, unknown to the bulk of the people of Los Angeles, have been magnified to the people of Owens Valley to a point where, in the latter's eyes, the city has become a ruthless octopus, strangling and destroying a helpless community. It is true that, inspired by the incendiary anti-Los Angeles propaganda of the same element which has now admitted wrecking the valley banks, valley outlaws have repeatedly dynamited the Los Angeles Aqueduct.

Between communities, as between nations, the most fruitful source of hostility is misunderstanding. It has been the chief obstacle in the way of an equitable settlement of the differences between Los Angeles and the Owens Valley. Too many valley people look upon Los Angeles as an aggregation of soulless water hogs. Too many Los Angeles people look upon Owens Valley as a community of bandit dynamiters. Both sides are about 95 per cent wrong.

Like the touch of nature, misfortune makes the world kin. Aid offered without strings in an emergency and accepted in the same spirit is a solvent for most misunderstandings. Owens Valley's temporary hard luck is Los Angeles' opportunity to demonstrate the spirit of friendship and neighborly helpfulness that has always characterized this city.

Both Sides Preparing for Divorce Trial

Comedian Silent and Keeps in Background

Settlement Rumors Persist Despite Denials

Charles S. Chaplin continued in semi-seclusion yesterday as his quintet of attorneys from both coasts launched into the final details of the impending court fight with the comedian's girl wife, Lita Grey Chaplin.

The comedian, piloted about in a massive sedan, paid a brief visit to his attorneys assembled in the office of Loyd Wright, his personal legal representative here, and then departed presumably for the beach. Later it was learned he conferred again with Nathan Burkan, who handles his legal affairs in the East.

BLUNT DENIALS

The massing of legal talent, headed by Mr. Wright, Gavin McNab and Nat Schmulowitz of San Francisco and Charles E. Millikan, associate of Mr. Wright in the case, was attended by an announcement that the case was not settled, was not on a verge of settlement, was not even in the process of negotiation, and that the divorce fight will have to be taken to court with all its sensational elements intact.

Mr. McNab stated bluntly that he was not here with Mr. Schmulowitz for any other purpose than to whip the case into shape for trial.

"It is a complicated matter and it requires a great deal of final preparation. We are busy reading over the various legal documents and papers and in doing everything necessary to put the case in shape for trial."

Both Mr. McNab and Mr. Schmulowitz stated they will remain here until the case is called.

REPORTS PERSIST

Edwin T. McMurray, uncle and chief counsel for Mrs. Chaplin, together with his associates in the firm of Lee & Lee, likewise was engrossed in perfecting details of the case. He also envisioned nothing but a public trial on the original issues.

In the face of this, however, reports continued to the effect that the case will be settled out of court and that Mrs. Chaplin will receive a divorce on routine grounds of cruelty if the case actually goes on trial Monday. Otherwise, the fight will have to be postponed, it was indicated.

The comedian, meanwhile, continued to wear the mantle of silence. Not a word was forthcoming from him yesterday and his two-line statement to the effect that he will have nothing to say until the trial has been his only offering since his return to Los Angeles after an absence of eight months.

BISHOP BANKERS UNDER NEW FIRE

(Continued from First Page)

what the counsel's action will be could not be ascertained.

Attention of Owens Valley was centered last night on the legal steps to be taken against the Wattersons this morning. The previous revelations, including the announcement that the amount unaccounted for in the Watterson enterprises was more than \$2,000,000 was lost in the prospects of them reappearing before a court to answer for their asserted peculations.

Divorce Recalls Kennedy Case

Divorce from Paul T. Roman, who figured in the Madalynne Obenchain trial for the murder of J. Belton Kennedy several years ago, yesterday was obtained in Superior Court by Mrs. Irene Goldwater Roman.

Roman, at the time of the Obenchain trial, was a prisoner in the County Jail. Wide publicity was given a series of letters that he was asserted to have written to Mrs. Obenchain. Mrs. Roman filed her divorce action April 7, charging her husband with cruelty.

CONCERT FOR PARK

Orchestra and Juveniles Will Aid Roberts Band

Harold Roberts and his Golden State Band will present a colorful program at Lincoln Park Sunday afternoon. The band program will start promptly at 1:30 p.m.

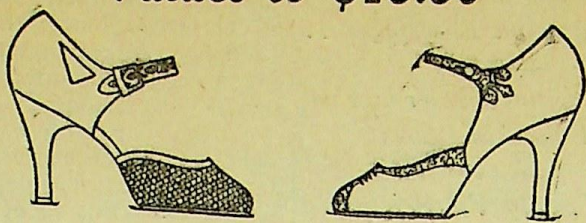
John T. Boudreau and his novelty Los Angeles Service Orchestra of fifteen instrumentalists will be a feature.

A colorful conclusion to both instrumental groups will be added by the Fitzmaurice Kelly Kiddies, a quintet of talented juvenile artists. The complete program follows:

American Victrolous March.....Bagley

FINAL CLEARANCE

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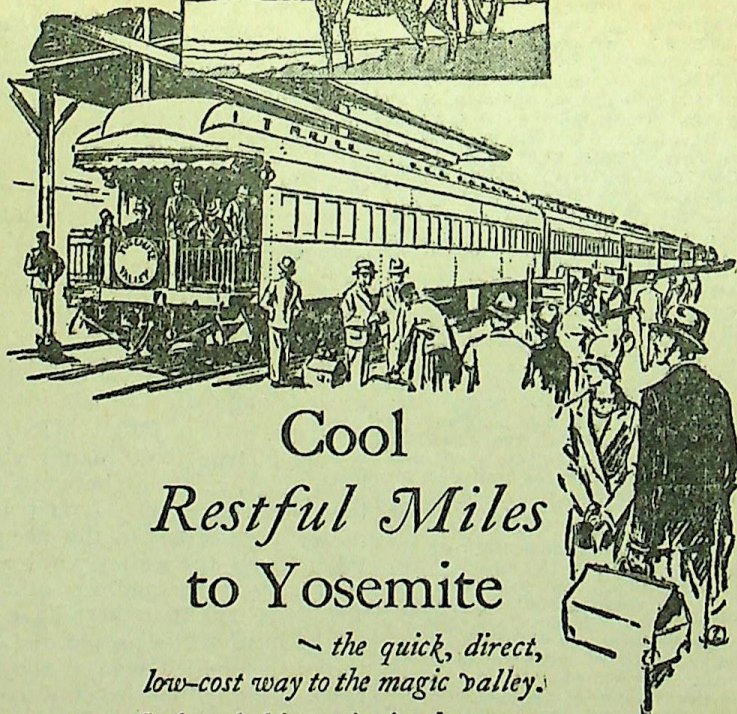
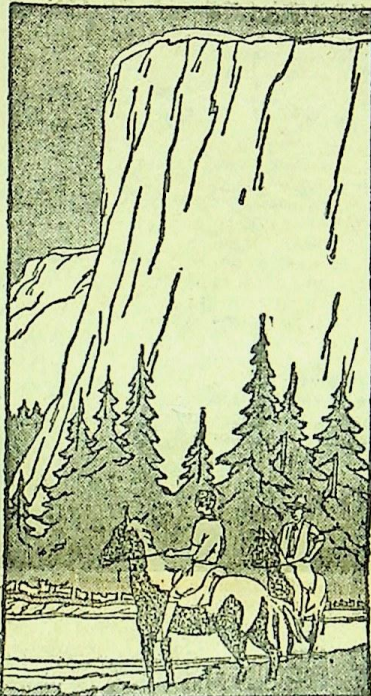
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SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 6, 1929.

VALLEY TOWNS DEAL OUTLINED

*Negotiations for Purchase by
City Advance*

*Owens People Name Ten on
Committee*

*Meeting Wednesday Will
Discuss Prices*

Formulation of a definite plan under which the city of Los Angeles and townspeople of the Owens Valley can begin to talk terms and prices in the proposed purchase by Los Angeles of the valley towns was revealed yesterday by the Board of Water and Power Commissioners.

The city is making the move to buy the valley towns, "lock, stock and barrel," in an effort to end the twenty-year water war that has been waged between the city and the valley over the city's water supply originating there.

First announcement that the city is contemplating the purchase of the towns was made several weeks ago. Since that time the city appointed a committee to consult with the valley people and to report back with a plan under which purchase of the towns might be consummated. The committee consisted of H. A. Van Norman, general manager of the Department of Water and Power, and A. J. Ford and E. A. Porter of the right of way and land division of the department.

PLAN PROPOSED

The recommendation of the committee, adopted by the board yesterday, is that the Owens Valley townspeople select two or three representatives from each town affected to meet with the city committee with a view to establishing property prices to be paid to the individual property owners, if it be the desire of a sufficient number of townspeople to sell out. The city is emphasizing the point that unless all of the people of the towns sell to the city the purpose of the proposed purchase would be defeated, and no purchase would be made.

It is proposed that a group of experts, connected with neither the city nor the valley but acceptable to both, be selected to make a study and establish a base-rate for the purchase of the properties.

With these data at hand, the accredited representatives of the city and the towns, acting as a committee, then would fix the prices to be paid the individual property owners. The owner would be called before the committee and if he could show the committee that an error had been made, the price would be adjusted.

The plan was outlined in detail at a meeting held at Independence, the other night, and attended by twenty-seven representatives of the five interested valley towns. The discussions resulted in the designation of a committee of ten men, two from each town, the selections to be approved by the property owners.

The townspeople are to take whatever action they see fit at a meeting of the Committee of Ten to be held at Big Pine American Legion Hall at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The committee includes: J. L. Gish and Carl Nellen from the town of Laws; C. H. Rhudy and B. E. Johnson, of Bishop; A. J. Barmore and I. D. Joseph of Big Pine; Jess Hession and George W. Naylor of Independence, and Mrs. E. H. Edwards and John C. Morris of Lone Pine. Dist. Atty. Hession was selected as chairman of the committee.

The purchase plan involves only the town lands. Purchase of the remaining farm lands in the valley, some 10,000 acres, has been going on regularly, conferences being held daily and contracts signed.

It is not expected by anyone that the purchase of the towns will mean that they will be wiped out. On the contrary, the city will lease the property back to the original owners if they desire and it is anticipated that many of the owners will continue to live in their homes and do business in their stores.

That the valley people themselves have the spirit of carrying on is indicated by the fact that tonight a big meeting of residents there and prominent men of Los Angeles will be held at Big Pine to organize for the recreational and tourist development of the Owens Valley and its high Sierras. The Board of Water and Power Commissioners will be among those in attendance.

VALLEY WINS ALL CONTESTED POINTS

Los Angeles Application for Tinemaha Site, River Frontage, and "Underground Storage" Lands Denied

A telegram to W. W. Watterson from S. E. Vermilyea stated that this valley had defeated the city of Los Angeles on its storage applications except for the Long Valley reservoir site. A dispatch in the Los Angeles Times dated Washington, May 5th, gives these additional details:

"The General Land Office has denied three applications of the city of Los Angeles to purchase certain public lands in the Owens River Valley and granted one. The Land Office gave out the following statement regarding the decision:

"These applications were filed under the fourth section of the Act of Congress approved June 30, 1906. (34 Statute 801) authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to sell the city, at the rate of \$1.25 per acre, such lands, formerly withdrawn for the Reclamation Service, Owens River project, as might be found necessary for storage, or right of way purposes. Under the first, second and third sections of the act, the city has obtained right of way for an aqueduct from a point on Owens River about twelve miles above the town of Independence, Cal., the upper end of the Fernando Valley in Los Angeles county, where the water will be discharged into distributing reservoirs for municipal use; also for certain storage, regulating and distributing reservoirs. The lands embraced by the applications to purchase were desired to supplement the city's proposed aqueduct system, and are divided into four classes.

"First, those selected for the Long Valley reservoir site at the head of Owens Valley and at the end of the system. This reservoir is intended for storage and right of way purposes.

"Second, the channel lands bordering on the Owens River from the Long Valley reservoir site to the point of intake of the conduit.

"Third, the Tinemaha reservoir site on the Owens River, some distance above the point of intake of the conduit.

"Fourth, river bottom lands bearing water that the city desired in order to augment its water supply.

"From the evidence presented at a hearing held before the district land officer at Independence, the General Land Office found that the vacant public lands embraced by the Long Valley reservoir site, aggregating about 5440 acres, are necessary for storage or right of way purposes, and accordingly recommended the allowance of this supplication, and that the lands embraced by the three other applications are not necessary for storage or right of way purposes, and recommended their rejection. This decision is subject to appeal to the Secretary of the Interior.

"R. Woodland Gates, representing the city here, said an appeal would be taken."

Owens Valley, through attorneys S. E. Vermilyea and W. A. Lamar, representing the Farmers, Rawson, Owens River Canal, McNally, Bishop Creek, and Owens River and Big Pine Canal ditch companies, and Gustave Sanger, has won every contention it made.

The Long Valley reservoir site was not contested in any respect by these representatives of the people of the valley. The brief filed by attorneys Vermilyea and Lamar expressly protests against allowing application for river channel lands, for Tinemaha reservoir site, and for bottom lands claimed as "underground reservoirs," and does not protest against allowance for Long Valley reservoir.

The applications were made by Los Angeles under provision of the act of June 30, 1906, that the city "shall have the preference right to acquire at any time within three years...any lands...necessary for storage or right of way purposes."

In protestants' brief, the attorneys contended:

That protestants had property interests which would be greatly affected by granting the applications.

That the city has already secured all the water it can convey through its aqueduct, without granting the applications for 16,600 acres of additional water-bearing land.

That settlers rightly consider in making locations the future improve-

ment of the locality, and have the right to assume that the Government will dispose of its lands to that end.

That the photographs introduced conveying the impression that Owens Valley is an irreclaimable desert do not fairly represent Owens Valley, and were taken two miles from the lands applied for.

That the applicant is not seeking to acquire storage facilities, but is seeking to acquire land, with the incidental right to extract water therefrom.

That the act contemplates the granting of rights of way and necessary storage only as necessary in connection with suitable canals, dams, and rights to use and divert water.

That the city is attempting to acquire channel lands for what it terms right of way, although it already has a right of way in common with other users of water rights in Owens river.

That the proposed Tinemaha reservoir, embracing 8,640 acres, would not be practicable as a reservoir site.

That what applicant calls bottom lands in Owens Valley are not necessary for storage, and applicant does not contemplate storing water therein.

That all three of the protested applications are for lands not necessary for right of way and storage purposes, and sought for the purpose of acquiring land and water.

That there is no testimony to show that applicant needs the bottom lands, or the lands through which Owens river flows for a right of way, or that the river channel should be enlarged or improved in any manner.

That applicant takes the position that all it desires in the territory covered by the act of June 30, 1906, should be granted to it, while it appears to protestants that the Government has already assisted applicant by giving it a preference right to acquire lands necessary for storage or right of way purposes.

That the aqueduct has the capacity to deliver 900-second feet into Haiwee reservoir, and it is desired to have a flow from that reservoir of 425½ or 430 second feet.

That applicant admits that it now owns 75,000 acres of the floor of Owens Valley and that it wants to acquire additional 16,600 acres from the Government.

That applicant will have the right to extract practically an unlimited quantity of water from its lands—more than the applicant will at any time need to draw therefrom.

That applicant appears to doubt the plausibility of its claim of a future population of 2,630,000, and therefore is driven to the defense that it needs 400 second feet flow in addition to the 71½ second feet it now has in order that it may generate 90,000 horsepower of electric energy.

That applicant's claims would indicate that it seeks to become a great water trust and also a great power trust, provided it can crush all private competitors. If not, what use will applicant have for all this 75,000 acres of water bearing land to which it seeks to add 16,600 additional acres? Wm. Mulholland testifies that he does not believe the underground storage can be depleted below the point where evaporation has its effect, in the short drouths that may occur—that the quantity of water in this valley is so great "it is almost like pumping out of the Atlantic ocean."

That 1,000,000 is a very liberal estimate to make of applicant's population even in 50 years, and that 55 gallons per capita per day is shown by evidence to be an ample water supply; whereas applicant bases its claim for a flow of 400 second feet from San Fernando reservoir on the assumption that it will have a population of 2,630,000, and that 110 gallons per day will be required to the end of any great drouth; in other words, it wishes the Government to aid it in storing such immense quantities of water that it will not be required to curtail the use of water in the least in a great drouth, and it says such drouth may occur once in 25 or 30 years.

That the result of having all the reservoirs would be, during years of normal and excessive water flow, to lose thousands of acre feet unnecessarily except to insure this plenty at the expense of others during periods of

drought. The flow, all reservoirs... the year around; the evaporation would be enormous. If kept full, the proposed Tinemaha reservoir alone would evaporate 45,987.4 acre feet. As shown by the testimony, there is always a good natural flow in Owens river, therefore reservoirs are not needed to the extent that would otherwise be necessary.

That it was not contemplated by the law that applicant should have the use of thousands of acres of land simply because water could be extracted from it.

Wm. Mulholland stated the mean per capita quantity of water used daily by applicant to be 110 gallons, the year round; for the summer, 135 gallons; that the mean per capita in a number of cities is 55 gallons daily; in the larger European cities, 25 or 30 gallons; that 110 gallons per capita per day is more than necessary.

We contend that the estimate of 2,630,000 population is unreasonable; and that the actual consumption per capita will decrease with the city's growth. But assuming the figures to be correct, the city can deliver the desired 400 second feet without using its present 71½ feet and without any of the reservoirs or lands it now applies for.

It appears from the testimony that with the use of the Long Valley reservoir and the flow at the intake, and the flow applicant is entitled to take between the intake and Haiwee, that the surface of the water of Haiwee reservoir will not be lowered except it should be after three or more years of extreme drouth, and then it would not be entirely exhausted.

Applicant now owns 80 per cent of the land between the proposed Tinemaha reservoir and Owens lake from which it is practicable to take underground waters.

The city's engineers during their testimony frequently excused applicant for seeking to have the United States assist applicant in acquiring great and unnecessary quantities of water by saying it was desired as a "factor of safety."

We apprehend the Government will look to the future necessities of the country in general before assisting one city to acquire water of such quantity that there will not be the remotest possibility that it will ever be required, even during a drouth as severe as any known, to economize in the use of water.

A Bill to Defeat

It is stated that the city will appeal to the Secretary of the Interior. This appears to be a merely perfunctory performance, without expectation of a reversal of the decision just made.

To get around the only logical outcome of the hearing, Senator Flint introduced a bill last year which died with the last Congress. Congressman Stephens, of Los Angeles, has now presented the same bill, and it is one which if passed will undo whatever of protection the valley has secured against wholly unnecessary acquisition by the city.

It is known as H. R. 4706, and was introduced April 13th. It grants to the city two years in which to file additional maps and then two additional years in which to make selections of of and for "reservoir and UNDERGROUND STORAGE."

That "underground storage" is the joker. The city has already acquired all the reservoir sites that it can show to be needful for its uses, as is evident from the decision. The only serious result of the bill without that proviso would be to continue the uncertain status of valley lands, by continuing the necessity for referring all application to the city. With "underground storage" permitted, the city is again given an absolutely free hand to claim what and where it will for four years to come. The bill is a menace to all enterprises south of the intake, and against the interests of the entire valley. If effort from here can contribute to its defeat, what may have been gained so far should not be allowed to be thus sacrificed.

The Inyo Register

BISHOP, INYO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1939

BOOSTING

Los Angeles Contributing for More Publicity

Anticipating the opportunity to again remind the 1,500,000 residents of Los Angeles of the numerous scenic and recreational advantages of the High Sierra with a view to interesting more people in the valley's winter sports programs, the Department of Water and Power publicity division this week requested the Inyo-Mono Association to forward photographs and other material suitable for exploitation purposes.

According to Bob Brown, executive-secretary of the association, the photographic art and data sought will be used by the department in an early edition of the "Water and Power Official Bulletin" in which winter sports of the High Sierra will be featured.

A survey of resort guests has shown that 70 percent of them come to Inyo-Mono resorts from Southern California and that half of these are from Los Angeles, where the Department's bulletin reaches every home and business establishment.

The scenic and recreational advantages of this region have been publicized annually by the Department for some time past. This year it cooperated also in the newly developed winter sports season with a photographic and type layout in the February issue of the Bulletin. Commenting on this material, Secretary Brown said in a report to members of the Inyo-Mono Association:

"Evidence of the interest and good-will of the Department of Water and Power can be seen in the bulletin printed by the Department and enclosed with monthly water and power statements in February. Pictures and copy on the two page spread were furnished by your Association. Sincere thanks goes to the publicity bureau of the Department for the direct recreational "plug" and the note on the State ski meet."

In June the Water and Power Bulletin and the Intake, the employee publication of the Department, both featured the summer-time attractions of the eastern slope of the Sierra. This combined publicity was declared to be "the largest single spread this area has had to date."

Watt L. Moreland, president of the Board of Water and Power Commissioners, and executives of the department have expressed their wholehearted support of measures being taken to amplify public knowledge in southern California of the High Sierra vacationland.

In addition to printed publicity the department has cooperated with the Inyo-Mono Association in other ways, such as arranging for the large map used at the last Outing Show sponsored by the Automobile Club of Southern California. The department is a member of the association.

Los Angeles Sued For Flooding Lake It Once Dried Up

BISHOP, Calif.,—More than 20 years ago a soda manufacturing concern with a plant on Owens Lake, Inyo County, sought an injunction to restrain the City of Los Angeles from diverting the water of the Owens River into its 250 mile aqueduct. Now the same concern is seeking an injunction to restrain the city from diverting water from the aqueduct back into the old river bed.

In the original action the soda concern, which claimed riparian rights on Owens Lake, asserted that the diversion of the river from its natural course would dry up the lake and would interfere with the company's process of extracting soda content of the lake water.

The case was settled out of court and the diversion of the river continued until the lake dried up and became a glistening bed of soda crystals, some 60 square miles in extent. The soda concern, having remodeled its plant and altered its process of extraction, has continued to operate.

During the high water of last spring and summer, Los Angeles, it is alleged, diverted water back into the old river channel thereby flooding portions of the lake bed. The soda company asserts that the city in flooding the lake has damaged the company's property and caused a reduction in brine products.