

came. This decision, of course, nullifies the opinion of the Attorney General, and unless it can be reversed by a higher court, all the Chinese exclusion legislation is little more than good for nothing.

A Washington dispatch says that this end of the controversy means much to Canada in the way of revenue, as the Dominion will now become a thoroughfare for Chinamen en route to this country, each of whom pays \$50 head tax to Canada. Four shiploads of Chinamen arrive at Vancouver every month. From Jan. 1 to July 15, 1891, 7900 Chinamen landed, and of these 7000 were en route to the United States. Canada made \$395,000 by this little traffic.

Now that there is practically no restriction to the trade, it is expected that Canada will realize \$1,000,000 annually without any expense, except the salaries of a few customs officers who will receive the cash and turn it over to the Dominion treasury.

OUR LAND QUESTION.

THE New York *Evening Sun* has undertaken to "sit down" on the suggestions made by the late Irrigation Congress. Its main protest is against giving the several States and Territories of the West any special jurisdiction over their arid lands. It quotes the case of the government's ceding of swamps and overflowed lands to certain States for the purpose of reclamation. According to its testimony thenceforth all the available lands in the States so favored became swampy or overflowed, and hundreds of thousands of acres entered upon this basis became very fruitful farms without any reclamation save a three-ply barb fence around them.

While all this might be true of the lands named, when used as a guide to the distribution of the arid lands of the West, it is entirely inapplicable. Taking Utah for an example, if every foot of unclaimed land in the Territory were declared arid without qualification, it would not in any way stretch the popular or technical definition of arid lands. And we believe this rule would apply pretty generally throughout the West.

There are, to be sure, vast tracts of grazing lands which produce a certain kind of desert grass without irrigation. But without irrigation they could not under any circumstances be used for any other purpose than grazing, and would, therefore, be sought after by small holders in no case without the hope of bringing water onto them.

As far as any extensive land grabs are concerned, which alone would

make the soil desirable under its present condition, the plain spirit of the Irrigation Congress was against anything of that sort and it so expressed itself. A clear majority of that body was in favor of limiting all private grants to 320 acres, and we regret that this expression was not embodied in the resolution as finally adopted.

We have not the space to overhaul the *Sun's* various endeavors to justify its position but here is a passage that touches upon the question which is of more than ordinary significance:

"But the second effect of such land laws is not so clearly mischievous. The second effect is that lands really arid are taken over by the State and a part of these will be really irrigated by works of the sort described by the promoters of the grant bills. So far as these works are of genuine utility they are likely to be erected by capitalists and stock companies. They, too, may be likened to railways, not only in magnitude, but in engineering character. Upon the lands they reach they confer an enormous increase in value, and this is none the less in addition to the wealth of the State because it goes into the private pockets of the individuals who put their money into the enterprise."

This "second effect" here described was not in any sense the purpose of the congress. Had it been so, it would have been very decidedly "mischievous." The idea of likening vast schemes of land monopoly to railroad enterprise is the most conspicuous fallacy which the *Sun* has given us on the irrigation question. Monopoly in railroad building, while it has many evils it likewise has its returns of good to the public. Besides this, for the results of railroad monopoly there is a remedy, for monopolized land there is none, save that of revolution. The building of railroads, with a monopoly of transportation as a consequence, is yet one of the great symbols of progress, and is as accurate an index as possible of the advance of civilization. The aggregation of land into enormous private holdings is, on the other hand, as perfect an example of retrogression as these times afford. It is a sure and direct course toward barbarism. The great basis of American civilization is personal independence, and where is that principle so strongly fortified as in the absolute ownership of private landholdings?

On this question we say most emphatically that rather than have this Western Territory plastered over with enormous private grants though it were the only possible means available to bring them under cultivation, they would better lay idle and barren for a hundred years, provided that when they were reclaimed a proper and equitable distribution would result.

There are a great many honest

Americans who might carp at this principle, but it is the only one by which this country can ever obtain the full purpose of its being or its possible greatness and power.

The land is in the true course of nature the people's bulwark against tyranny and enslavement, and when they lose it they are but one step from perpetual bondage.

POLITICS AND PREACHERS.

A NEW YORK preacher last Sunday paid the following tribute to the city government:

"The present ruler of New York is filth. Filth unutterable; filth indescribable; filth supreme; streets piled with rubbish, strewn with disease-infested garbage, heavy with dirt or impassable with mud. The very air is laden with suffocating, malodorous dirt. Whence this reign of filth and carnival of disease? The answer is easy. Filth in the streets means filth in the city hall. All streets lead to the city hall. The fountain of filth at the head of the city is certain to pollute every vein and artery. Filthy streets—filthy politics. The water supply of the city is declared by experts to be unfit for human use. To let this fountain of life become a pool of filth marks the outermost limits of the pendulum of social degradation. Whence this poisoned water? The answer is easy. Poisoned politics. Filth in politics; filth in water."

From this we would judge that politics and sewers in New York are getting as badly mixed up as in this city. But the preachers of New York, like the preachers of Salt Lake, have their spells of being eloquent for the mere entertainment of it, much after the fashion that youthful declaimers in mock debating clubs rave themselves hoarse maybe over the stirring question "Was the civil war a failure?" or something of that sort.

To give an illustration. We have had in this city more or less robust oratory from the region of the churches in a seeming effort to establish a similitude between the figurative sewage in city hall politics and the literal sewage that at that time was its principal fountain of inspiration. How much of earnest business there was in these declamations and how much of the idle passion of certain idle men for being eloquent, was determined last August, when the talkers all came forth to partake of and praise that which they had been reviling.

Returning to the New York preacher, we almost suspect that he is much after the pattern of our Salt Lake preachers. For with such sentiments as he voices carried vigorously into the battle ground of New York politics by a united charge from the churches in general, the conditions he describes would not exist. We know that if all the talk that has been heard