

canals is therefore useless, in many cases, unless some provision be made for storing the water which now runs to waste. The building of large storage reservoirs is the remedy proposed, to be placed in the canyons and other places specially adapted for the purpose. I believe no one will question the statement that but little land is left and in but few localities for which water can be obtained without great expense. It seems then, if the growth of the western country is to depend upon the settlement of the public lands, a stationary period has been reached, unless some intelligent and immediate action be taken, looking to the increase of the water supply. There may be some persons inclined to doubt the statement that a stationary period has been reached and who will point to the recent phenomenal growth in certain localities as evidence to the contrary. There has been a rapid growth in places where great commercial activity prevails, caused by the building of railroads, the development of mining industry and from other industrial causes, and which will probably continue for some time to come. In Utah, the federal census will show, that in the purely agricultural counties, with some exceptions, the growth has been very slow. The truth is, that Utah, rich as she is in all that can make a State great and prosperous, has been sending away thousands of her people to the more sparsely settled States and Territories. The hive has been swarming for many years. In the case of the great West, the western ocean has been reached and the tide of immigration has been turned back in search of new fields and these new fields are to be found in the arable lands of the arid region which only wait for water to make them habitable for man. Passing to the question of the support of the public schools, it is hardly necessary for me to remind you that the government under which we live has always taken a deep interest in the education of its people. Its course in this respect has illumined one of the brightest pages of our national history. It has given away more lands in support of the public schools than would equal many empires, in extent. The benign influence of this generous grant has been felt by every State admitted to the Union since the passage of the ordinance of 1787. Under the provisions of this great ordinance and of later laws sections 16 and 36 of every section of land in the great tract of territory north and west of the Ohio, was reserved for the schools of the States to be thereafter formed out of said Territory. In what is known, geographically, as the Western States the arbitrary selection of the lands by law did not affect their value, but as to the States and Territories of the arid region, it has rendered them practically valueless, because of natural conditions which cannot be changed or removed. A statement of the case of Utah will serve to bring this fact out more clearly. In this Territory the tillable lands are found in the valleys and form but a small proportion of the whole. The majority of the school sections are found on the mountain tops and sides and in places where they cannot be cultivated. Where they are found in the valleys the title has mostly passed to settlers. The land office was not opened in Utah until

March, 1869, and the lands in the valleys had been largely taken up by the settlers before that time. The few reserved school sections remaining in the valleys are, with but two or three exceptions, of nominal value. Consequently, so far as Utah is concerned, and this is probably true in a greater or less degree of all of the States and Territories in the arid region, the endowment which it was intended by the government to be given to the public schools is lost. Such action, then, should be taken by the general government as will place the States and Territories of the arid region on an equality with the other States and Territories that have been able to realize more fully from the bounty of the government. We believe our claim for aid in this respect is just and our action in presenting it, patriotic.

In speaking of the cause of the public schools I desire to be understood as referring more especially to Utah. The situation of the States and Territories in the arid region differ materially with respect to the size of the streams, the extent of the land which can be irrigated, under improved methods for saving and using the water, and the provisions made or attainable for their school systems. Consequently the relative importance of the purposes for which the lands may be donated, differ materially and what might be a suitable donation for one State or Territory, may require considerable modification in another, in order to adapt it to the greatest needs and confer the greatest benefits upon the people. It is for this reason, that the call suggests that the matter be so handled as to give each State and Territory a voice in deciding to what purposes such donations shall be applied. The call indicates there may be other purposes to which a part of the proceeds derived from the sale of the public lands may be applied. I will not attempt to mention them here nor to present their claims. I will remark, incidentally however, that in the mountain regions, the settlements are found in valleys which are often remote from each other. The highways connecting these settlements often run over mountain tops and are difficult and costly to construct and maintain. Some of these public roads stretch out for hundreds of miles and reach into the adjacent States and Territories. In the early years of the government public lands were donated in aid of such enterprises. The public spirited and energetic men who force their way over rugged mountain tops and make paths which are used by those who follow after them, should be as much entitled to aid as were the men who built highways in other sections under more favorable conditions. I will also remark, that the question of preserving the great grazing ranges, which now furnish nutritious food for hundred of thousands of cattle and sheep, is one of transcendent importance. The people of all of the country are interested in preserving this important source of food supply.

Under the present conditions, these lands are rapidly depreciating in value. If these lands could be sold in tracts of limited area under carefully guarded provisions of law, their value would be greatly increased and they would become, as they ought to be now, a source of revenue to the States and Territories

in which they are situated. There is another view of the proposition to cede the public lands, which is worthy of consideration. From all that I can learn, accepting the reports made to the committee on statistics appointed by the Utah delegation in this congress the total area of land that can be brought under cultivation in Utah, will not exceed 2,304,000 acres, or about four per cent. of the total area of 52,601,600. About fifty million acres can never be used except a portion suitable for grazing purposes only. The total area of land which can now be watered is in round numbers about 720,000 acres and the settlers upon these cultivated lands have to bear the burden of supporting the Territorial government. The fifty million bear no part of the burden. I am aware that this has been the experience of all the States when in a Territorial condition, but there is this important fact to be considered, that in the case of the majority of the States, it was only a question of time when relief would come from the rapid settlement of the lands; but in the arid region where, in the very nature of things, the number of settlements will always be limited, the title to nearly all of the lands will remain in the government unless there be a complete change in the land laws and policy of the government. The question of ceding the lands to the States is not a new one. In 1837 a measure was introduced in Congress to cede the public lands to the new States. In the rich valley of the Mississippi and other sections of the country the question of the swamp lands was solved by the action of Congress in ceding them to the States. These lands are granted for the purpose of reclamation and because their condition was such that it would entail an unusual expense to bring them under cultivation. This is the condition of the arid lands today, only the problem is much more difficult and the expense so much greater, that if a proposition were made to have it met by the general government, the great body of Congress, unfamiliar with irrigation, would recoil before it.

There are several ways in which the water supply can be developed. In many places artesian wells may be developed; in other places storage reservoirs built, and in others the construction of large works, will bring out upon the land water from rivers, such as the Green and Grand in Utah and the Snake in Idaho. The area of the land of unsurpassed fertility that could, by this means, be rendered available, would furnish comfortable and happy homes for a mighty population. There are few places more inviting than the well cultivated valleys of the west and the government can render its people no greater service than to assist in a material way in reclaiming every acre possible. The policy of the government has been, not to regard the lands as a source of profit, but as lands held in trust for the common good. It has pursued the generous policy of aiding in the settlement of the lands and has regarded the question of revenue to be derived from the sale as a minor consideration. I believe the message, which the people of the arid region desire to send to the Congress of the United States is, give