

## Exploration of the Colorado Desert.

Washington, March 8. Senator Jones, of Nevada, has received full reports of the results of a scientific exploration made at the expense of himself and a private citizen of California last summer, for the purpose of ascertaining the practicability of reclaiming or submerging the Great Colorado Desert by turning into it the waters of the Colorado River or the Gulf of California. The report of Mr. J. E. James, the engineer who conducted the expedition, and an elaborate commentary upon it by Mr. R. E. Stretch, an eminent civil engineer of San Francisco, furnish the following very interesting information, much of which is entirely new. The exploration shows that the greater portion of the Colorado Desert and the Mojave Valley, and Death Valley which lie north of it, are from forty to 100 feet below the level of the sea, and that this great desert, stretching from Lower California to Yuma county, in the State of California, and from the Colorado Coast Range Mountains to the Colorado river, comprising an area of about 300 miles long by 150 wide, may be converted into a chain of lakes or irrigated by the method above mentioned; and also that a large portion of this "desert" really consists of extremely fertile soil, being a deep alluvium, susceptible of the highest cultivation. It is further shown that the prevalence of what are known as "sandstorms," and the deserting winds and the deficient rain-fall—the evils suffered by the surrounding country and as far north as the Tuare Valley of California—are directly traceable to the existence of this desert, from which, as from a great furnace, there constantly rises in the winter vast columns of heated air, without appreciable humidity. Thus the moisture of the rain bearing clouds, which are blown from the west during the summer months from the Gulf of California, is dissipated as soon as they reach the borders of this superheated region and prevented from reaching the fertile plains of California beyond. The shells found on the surface of this desert prove that it has been once the bed of a sea and at a subsequent period the bed of a fresh water lake. The shore lines of both sea and lake can still be seen and recognized in many places; and Mr. Stretch expresses the opinion that the Aztec civilization of the adjacent region in Arizona (of which there are many traditions) came to an end in consequence of the climatic changes caused by the evaporation of these vast lakes in Southern California, after the Colorado river had cut down its bed in the Great Canyon so deep that its course was diverted at Calville to a southerly direction. It is suggested whether these desert lands cannot be reclaimed by irrigation, and thus saved, instead of being totally submerged, as it is considered certain that converting them into fertile lands would tend to prevent the evaporation of moisture and at the same time act as a preservative for whatever moisture the atmosphere may carry, or whether both plans might not be combined. Senator Jones expresses the opinion that, although either course would involve large expenditures of money, the matter is of such public interest as to be worthy of investigation by the government, which alone has the necessary resources and appliances at command for a thorough examination of the subject. It is such an examination of the feasibility of the project should be demonstrated, private capital might be found to undertake it. He, however, purports to bring the matter to the attention of Congress, with the view of having a survey made by the government. —*New York Herald.*

## WASHINGTON NOTES.

The veteran correspondent of the Boston Journal, "Perley," says that the license and falsehood which characterize the productions of the correspondents of the so-called "Independent" press, this winter have aroused a feeling of indignation in the hearts of all honest men in Washington, irrespective of party. We are glad to hear it, and hope it is true; although it would be a good deal more satisfactory if the democratic and "reform" members of Congress were to furnish some evidence of their indignation at the foulness and falsity of these political friends of theirs. It is said that in Turkey if a man is caught lying to the detriment of personal character or the public interests his right ear is officially lopped off, while a repetition of the offense entails the amputation of the other. The infliction of a similar penalty on our own column and publishers of malignant mendacity might possibly exert a restraining moral influence upon them—and we therefore forward the matter to the consideration of Congress. —*Boston Commercial.*

The Secretary of State has recently transmitted to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House a bill defining the rights of citizenship of persons who leave the United States to reside in foreign countries. It regulates the question of expatriation, the condition of American women marrying foreigners, and fixes the status of children born in a foreign country of American parents residing more or less permanently abroad. The government has experienced considerable trouble through persons who, leaving the United States, reside long enough in a foreign country to acquire a domicile and to lose their citizenship in the United States, and the object of the bill now before the committee is to fix the status of these individuals so that there may be no trouble in determining when they lose their citizenship and the rights and privileges which citizenship entails. Under existing treaties with several foreign governments it is now provided that the residence of persons in a foreign land without intent to return shall work expatriation.

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