

from immigrants for 20 years or thereabouts, a Chicago paper asserts that they would prize the right more nearly at its true value and exercise it with a fuller realization of the responsibility which citizenship entails if that policy were adopted. But if this were true, then natural born citizens, from whom the right is withheld for 21 years, might be expected to prize it and feel its responsibilities. How many of them do?

OKLAHOMA—HER STATEHOOD AND HER SCHOOL LANDS.

To all appearances the omnibus statehood bill, providing for the admission as States of New Mexico, Arizona and Oklahoma, which passed the House last Spring and is to be acted upon by the Senate at the present session, will be modified so as to admit Oklahoma alone. As Oklahoma's statehood is therefore apparently assured, senators and representatives should be vigilantly upon guard against a gigantic land steal in the new State. It will almost certainly be perpetrated unless the enabling act heads it off.

About one-twelfth in area of the Territory of Oklahoma consists of public lands granted by the Federal government for the support of the local educational system. These lands have been leased by the Territorial government, and the income—amounting for the fiscal year of 1901-02 to \$435,915.85—has been applied to the support of the school system of the Territory. But the lessees have organized a ring to divest the new State of this source of income.

To meet and expose the operations of this ring by showing the people of Oklahoma what they are asked to sacrifice, Prof. Elder, of the University of Oklahoma, has published a pamphlet* which embodies in readable shape, in the course of an able

*"The School Lands of Oklahoma; or, What Are You Going to Do About It? A non-partisan address proposing a permanent policy for the management and disposition of our 2,000,000 acres of public lands, with certain addenda as suggestions to the public, the press, the politicians and the constitutional convention." By Frederick S. Elder, of the University of Oklahoma. By mail, postpaid, fifteen cents a copy. F. S. Elder, Norman, Okla.

argument, an epitome of the history of the public land gifts of Congress in several of the western States that were at one time confronted by the question now about to be dealt with in Oklahoma.

Ohio, having no precedents to guide her in the administration of her school lands, set about making some of the worst imaginable. She adopted a policy of sales and perpetual leases. In consequence her patrimony of school lands, 1,500,000 acres, was soon dissipated; and now instead of deriving an income from them she is actually carrying an interest burden on account of them.

It came about in this way. She sold some of her school lands for trifling considerations and placed others under perpetual lease at from 10 to 25 cents an acre and even less without provisions for revaluation. Some of these lands are now yielding to the owners enormous incomes. But all the State got was something like \$4,250,000. Instead of applying that fund to school purposes the State borrowed it as a perpetual loan and spent the money. She is consequently now raising \$250,000 annually for school purposes by taxation as interest on that perpetual loan. "Though the money thus borrowed by the State," writes a historian whom Prof. Elder approvingly quotes, "may have lessened State taxation in the past, so far as the present and all future generations are concerned the burden is no lighter than it would have been without a grant of land."

Illinois adopted at first the policy of leasing, but soon changed it to one of selling. The change was brought about by the influence of the lessees, the same kind of interest that now seeks to bring about the adoption of the same policy in Oklahoma. This is proved by the testimony of Gov. Ford in his history of Illinois. He says:

I speak what I know when I say that the laws to sell the school lands were passed to please the people who settled on them who wanted to purchase them at the Congress price, while the other inhabitants being divided into little factions and thinking more of success at one election than of the interest of all posterity and acting upon the principle that what is every-

body's business is nobody's business, aided or suffered the mischief to be done.

Under the selling policy, the university lands, amounting to nearly 50,000 acres, were sold for little more than \$1.25 an acre, and the total annual income from that source is now only about \$3,600. Commenting upon this land-steal, Prof. Elder writes:

These lands were specially selected from among the best farming lands of Illinois. If they had not been sold at all but were leasing to-day on long time leases at say a dollar and a half per acre, which is not half what good Illinois farms are leasing at to-day, they would be paying into the university treasury \$69,120 a year, which is a five per cent. income on a fund of nearly \$1,400,000, and \$9,000 more each year than the sale price that originally took them from the State's control. As some one may urge that they are taxable now but were not then I will put a good average assessment figure, say \$15 an acre, against them (minus the improvements) and make a four per cent. levy which will bring \$27,645 taxes. To this add the \$3,600 and there still remains a loss of nearly \$38,000 yearly, forever, because of the sale. This is the price the present and all future generations must pay for the indifference, cupidity, stupidity and criminality of an early generation. A few individuals, say four to a section, or 288 in all, made a neat little profit on this deal and all the taxpayers of after years go down into their pockets to make good the annually recurring loss. Moreover the chances are great that the owners of those sections to-day live in town and that the lands are now occupied by tenants of theirs, paying to the owners a rental of from two to four times what I have estimated as a reasonable rental, yet enjoying none of the securities and advantages that must of necessity belong to occupants of lands belonging to a state.

Of the Illinois school lands, Chicago owned all the area between Madison street and Twelfth, north and south, and State and Halsted, east and west. Here are now most of the very valuable buildings of Chicago. This magnificent patrimony was all sold, except a few miscellaneous lots and the block which comprises the site of the Chicago Tribune building.

The ground rent on the unsold portions is now some \$500,000. The magnitude of this remnant gives some indication of the potential income that was squandered. The Tribune, for instance, pays into the school fund a ground rent of \$30,000

a year for one-fifth of an acre still held for the school fund, while the occupants of the Woman's Temple, which stands on school land that was sold, pay to Marshall Field \$40,000 a year for about the same area. The first site is a comparatively large proportion of the lands retained; the other is comparatively a very small proportion of those sold.

Kansas is another state that dealt improvidently with her school lands; but Nebraska pursued the middle course, selling some and retaining some. The best effect of the Nebraska policy is its demonstration that ground leasing is not only more profitable but financially more safe than selling and investing the proceeds.

The wisdom of the leasing policy has been demonstrated already in Oklahoma, itself. Although a disposition to favor lessees, due to the fact that no permanent policy has been adopted, makes the rentals invariably low, yet the following net incomes have been derived from leasing for the fiscal years respectively since 1890 and down to June 30, 1902.

1891	\$ 4,536.82
1892	21,346.13
1893	19,164.67
1894	46,586.29
1895	88,627.97
1896	71,740.68
1897	98,467.81
1898	173,442.83
1899	133,047.19
1900	177,190.24
1901	213,303.67
1902	435,915.85

In the course of his argument Prof. Elder replies to the most pronounced objections that are applied in Oklahoma to the leasing of these lands. They are the common objections which land grabbers urge, but Prof. Elder has the advantage of being able to quote them authoritatively from the secretary of the school-land board, whose intelligence or good faith, one or the other, as the secretary of such a board, is exposed to reasonable suspicion by his evident anxiety to promote the selling policy.

One of these objections is that tenancy is repugnant to republican government and that the ownership of land is necessary to the best citizenship and the most devoted patriotism.

He is effectively answered by the reminder that under the existing world-wide policy of private ownership of land tenancy is increasing both in actual numbers and in ratio to population. In steadily increasing ratio, the land is becoming, says Prof. Elder, "not owned by the men that use it and not used by the men who own it."

In support of this assertion he quotes from the census returns a class of figures regarding farms that appear to be less familiar to the prosperity touting newspapers and statisticians than the juggled census statistics on farm values. These less familiar farm statistics show a steady trend toward a universal condition of farm tenancy. Thus:

PERCENTAGE OF TENANT FARMS.

	1880.	1890.	1900.
Ohio	19.27	22.88	27.5
Indiana	23.73	25.37	28.6
Illinois	31.38	34.	39.3
Iowa	23.83	28.09	34.9
Kansas	16.35	28.23	35.2
Nebraska	18.02	24.72	36.3
Georgia	44.85	53.54	59.9
Alabama	46.85	48.57	57.7
Mississippi	43.78	52.84	62.4
Louisiana	35.22	44.38	58.
Texas	37.59	41.87	49.7
Entire U. S.	25.56	28.37	35.3

Another objection Prof. Elder encounters is the point that if the Oklahoma school lands were held by their occupants in fee they would yield more through investment of the purchase money and taxation of the lands themselves, than under leasing systems. This is not the experience of the States that have tried it. Things may be different in Oklahoma, but Prof. Elder's careful and extended reply indicates that they are not.

Concerning the familiar and important point that tenants would commit waste, or neglect the lands, thereby diminishing their rental value, Prof. Elder admits that this would be true of lands under short leases, but not under a system of long leases.

Saying that extended experience with the long lease system is convincing that these evils result solely from the feeling of uncertainty and insecurity arising from a short lease term, and not from the leasing system in and of itself, he proceeds:

Give a man assurance of continued

possession and of continued fairness in the matter of rent, and the place becomes to all intents and purposes his individual property where he can build his own home, own his own fireside and be precisely as patriotic, home-loving, liberty-loving a citizen, interested as much in good government and the administration of the State, as the man across the way who holds his lands in fee. Some of the most valuable improvements in the city of Chicago are put on leased land, among them the Woman's Temple, costing \$1,000,000, the Great Northern hotel costing \$1,250,000, the Siegel Cooper store costing \$1,400,000, the Rookery costing \$1,500,000, the Auditorium costing \$3,500,000. The long lease system, say not less than 25 years, is essential to the success of this policy. To those who object to this I would say that it makes absolutely no difference to the State what individuals occupy its lands provided a fair equivalent is continually returned to the state for their use; and such equivalent can be obtained by honest administration and honest reappraisal. In the matter of reappraisal my judgment is this, that for purely agricultural and grazing lands whose rental value will soon reach a maximum the interests of the State will be sufficiently conserved by reappraisal first when the long-time lease is made, then again at the end of the fifth and of the fifteenth years. We will then find contentment and stability prevailing and the thriftless, grab-all, destructive tillage will be a thing of the past. Orchards will be planted, wells dug, homes, barns and fences built.

There is one objection, however, that Prof. Elder regards as meritorious and serious. This is the objection that State ownership of the school lands of Oklahoma would inject the question of the administration of these lands permanently into politics.

But while admitting the seriousness of the objection, he proposes a remedy, or rather a preventive, for the evil feared. He would take the subject out of politics by putting it into the constitution of the new State.

His argument in part we reproduce:

There is no question but that the lessees are strongly organized to-day and are expecting to bring about the sale of these lands to present occupants without permitting any serious feature of competition to enter into the plan of sale. There is no question but that they are relying on the present ignorance and indiffer-

ence of the public on this great question and upon the prevalence of blind party spirit to enable them to work their pleasure, and that there is nothing they more dread or fear than an open discussion of this question on its merits, in the public press or platform. Quiet, caution and secrecy are their watchwords and a "still-hunt" will be on for "suitable" men to be elected to that constitutional convention. There is no question but that politicians, officials and a large percentage of the public press are fully aware of these conditions and are unwilling to assume the responsibility of an attempt to awaken public sentiment. There is no question but that this will be the greatest subject of statecraft with which our constitutional convention will have to deal and that this point will become the chief issue before the public in the election of delegates to that convention. And furthermore there is no question in my mind that the State will have opportunity at this very time and place to settle this question with so great emphasis that the future will in large measure be robbed of its political terrors as to the administration of this trust. Once let the policy of leasing be adopted, and a wise safe plan of administration be made a part of the State constitution where it will be safe from possibility of legislative juggling, and let that constitution or that feature of the constitution be adopted by a thoroughly decisive majority, then these things together with the long lease system and the fair provisions for revaluation will remove the more serious features of this question from the domain of politics and place it on a commercial business basis where it properly belongs.

But Congress ought not to leave this important question to be determined by Oklahoma in the midst of that unreasoning enthusiasm which expectations of statehood and the holding of a constitutional convention are likely to excite among the people of the Territory. They cannot consider it soberly at such a time, and their excitement will be the land ring's opportunity. Nor is there any reason for leaving the matter to be settled under those circumstances. By a very sensible and wise provision in the enabling act, Congress can prevent precipitate and ill-considered action.

Let it insert an amendment forbidding the sale of Oklahoma school lands and forbidding leasing for more than 25 years, until one or the

other shall have been authorized by a constitutional convention to be called for the purpose of acting upon that question and no other, and to convene not earlier than ten years after the admission of the State into the Union.

Such an amendment would certainly be opposed by the lobby of the Oklahoma school-land lessees and probably by senators and representatives not a few in both parties; but by adopting it Congress would establish a precedent of highest value and the members who support it would win a place of honor in the history of the country such as it falls to the lot of few public men to secure.

REED AND NAST.

Both Thomas B. Reed and Thomas Nast are names which were once as familiar as household words. But to the present generation of younger men they are hardly known. The news that they have just died is a reminder of the reputation each had made and which died before him.

Thomas Nast was the originator of modern American political caricature. It was he who displaced the wooden method of making the effect of caricatures hinge upon legends coming from the mouths of characters in the picture, with the method of making the picture speak for itself. Though Nast often underlined his cartoons, the humor or the sting was put in not with the pen of the ready writer, but with the pencil of the facile draftsman.

Yet Nast was unable to hold his own against the caricaturists that have come into fame since his famous—solitarily famous—days as a caricaturist in the 70's.

He caricatured Tweed into jail; he caricatured the Tammany judges off the bench; he caricatured David Dudley Field out of court; he caricatured Horace Greeley on to defeat, for his pencil did more than any one thing to popularize the besotted administration of Grant. Everyone rushed for Harper's Weekly in those days to see what Nast would say in cartoon.

Nor does he seem to have lost his skill with the pencil in his later years.

But he did lose his hold upon the public admiration. He was not equal to the new interests good and bad that came along to engross public thought. His day's work was done when the commonplace knavery of Tweed had been fought and subdued. The politico-industrial parasites that have superseded the awkward Tweed, did not excite his righteous wrath nor inspire his genius for caricature.

So this great cartoonist died a mere petty office holder at a distant consulate.

Thomas B. Reed's political fame is circumscribed by his administration of the speakership. Here he did some good things and at least one bad one.

Among the good things he did was to put an end to the absurd pretense that a member who chose to be silent when his name was called was not present even though the speaker and the clerk were looking him squarely in the face. Mr. Reed decided that if a member were in the House he was present and to be recorded accordingly. This, said Mr. Reed, was the mere statement of an obvious fact. And he was right.

Quite different was Mr. Reed's policy as speaker, under which he destroyed the deliberative functions of the lower House by subjecting its operations to the control of committees of his own appointment. He thereby made the speaker literally a Congressional autocrat.

Mr. Reed's defense of this policy was that it compelled Congress to do its duty of enacting the will of the majority into law and making the majority party responsible to the people. It is due to his memory to say that that purpose is altogether defensible. Congress ought to reflect the will of the majority party and the majority party ought to be responsible to the people.

But the means did not accomplish the end. Instead it compelled Congress to enact, not the will of the majority, but the will of the speaker. For the speaker, having the appointment of committees, held the ambitions of his party associates in his own hands. He could make or mar their public careers. He therefore controlled the party caucuses and