acres, or one quarter section of land. The only further condition required is that the person making the entry shall reside upon the land during the next five years, at which time a patent is issued without further expense. Lands entered under this law are not liable for any debts contracted before the issuing of the patent.

**TENURE OF LANDS.**

All lands are declared alodial or free from all reservation of service, rent, hunting, mining, fishing, or other rights; the last remnant of the old feudal system being entirely abolished and prohibited. Land once purchased of the government is held in the absolute right of the purchaser, his heirs, or assigns. Upon the death of a person his property is equally divided among his children or nearest kin, or may be willed to any person he chooses; the law of primogeniture, by which lands descended to the oldest son only, having no existence here. One payment, of the moderate sum of a dollar and a quarter per acre, extinguishes at once, and forever, all right, title and interest of the government, and of all other parties to the land.

**INCREASE OF VALUE OF PROPERTY.**

It is quite evident, that in a state growing so rapidly in population; where the amount of business of all kinds is constantly on the increase, and where new lands are every day brought under the improving hand of intelligent labor, there must be a constant and steady increase in the value of all real estate, which cannot exist in older and more settled portions of the country. Lands that but a few years since were purchased of the government for a dollar and a quarter an acre, are now worth five, ten, fifty, or perhaps a hundred dollars an acre; and as this increase of population and business has not reached its limit, it is certain that the corresponding increase in the value of property must continue for many years to come. Hence those who purchase now will participate in this gradual growth and increase of wealth, as the country becomes more and more settled and improved.

**GOVERNMENT.**

The state is governed in accordance with a constitution, which is the supreme law of the land, not granted by any sovereign power, but formed and ratified without restraint, by the people themselves, in the year 1848. The legislature consists of a senate of 33 mem-
bers, elected every two years, and an assembly of 100 members, elected every year. The governor and other state officers and members of congress are elected for two years. The judicial power is exercised by a supreme court, consisting of a chief justice and two associates; circuit courts, probate courts, and justices of the peace; all judicial officers are elected by the people. For the purposes of local government the state is divided into 58 counties, which are grouped into assembly, senate, judicial and congressional districts. The counties are again divided into towns, in which the local affairs are mostly directed by the voters assembled in town-meetings.

PERSONAL RIGHTS.

In this state all men are free and equal in the eye of the law; one may express his sentiments on any subject; he is entitled to certain and speedy remedy for all injury to his person, property or character; no distinction is made between resident aliens and citizens in reference to the possession, enjoyment or descent of property; there is no imprisonment for debt, and a large amount of property is exempt from seizure or sale for the payment of debts; the right to worship according to the dictates of his own conscience is secured to every person, and he cannot be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or maintain any ministry against his own consent; no religious tests are required as a qualification for any office; and every man twenty-one years of age who is a citizen of the United States, or who has made a written declaration of his intention to become one, is a qualified voter, at any public election, as soon as he has been a resident of the state for one year. All are thus allowed to take an active part, and to exert their influence in determining who shall be the officers appointed to administer the affairs of the government; and through these officers the voters control the policy of the country, not only in the local matters of the town, county, and state, but also of the affairs of the general government at Washington.

RIGHT TO HOLD OFFICE.

Any person having declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, and having resided in the state one year, has not only the right to vote at any election, but also the right to hold any office under the state government, except those of governor and lieutenant-governor, which he can also hold as soon as he becomes a citizen. Only the office of president of the United States is restricted to native-born citizens. Under this liberal provision of our constitution, persons of foreign birth are every year elected to fill state,