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THE LAW AT FAULT

Lien Land Measure Allows Gross Frauds

UPON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Land Commissioner Richards Points Out Its Weak Points—Should Be Repealed.

Washington, D. C.—No one in Washington stands ready to deny the general charge made by Senator Fulton that some officials of the interior department have been giving out advance information to land speculators in Oregon and other states which enabled them to settle upon thousands of acres of public lands which were soon thereafter embodied in great temporary withdrawals made for forest reserve purposes. Unless the senator makes his charges specific, names the men who have made speculative entries, designates the land that has been so entered, or points out the leaks through which speculators have obtained advance information, his allegation will not be given serious consideration by the secretary of the interior. Mr. Hitchcock is away from Washington, but were he here he would not reply to the general statement of the Oregon senator. His subordinates likewise decline to make reply, and say no denial will be entered until specific instances of fraudulent entry, or the improper exposure of departmental secrets, are stated.

Richards Defends His Office.
Land Commissioner Richards is more frank. "I have not a doubt," he said today after reading the recent arraignment of Senator Fulton, "that many speculative entries have been made in Oregon, in localities referred to by the senator. But I do not hesitate to say that no man, in Oregon or any other state, secured from this office any advance information which would enable him to tell what lands were proposed withdrawing. This is some thing we have carefully guarded. There may be leaks in the interior department or elsewhere. I don't undertake to speak for other offices, but there are no leaks here.

Commissioner Richards went on to explain that the temporary withdrawals are made to head off the very abuses of which Senator Fulton complains.

Continuing he said: "They are made to prevent speculative entries. But in the making withdrawals pass

through three different bureaus before action is taken by the secretary of the interior. The original outline of temporary withdrawals is usually prepared by the bureau of forestry, on suggestion of its field representatives. Their recommendations go to the geological survey, and in turn pass through the general land office for recommendation. Before the forestry bureau acts it sends men into the country where it is thought forest reserves should be created, and later representatives of the land office visit these areas."

Field Men May Have Given Tips.
Commissioner Richards says it is quite possible that some of the field representatives of the government may have become tools of land speculators, and for a consideration made known the character of their recommendations, upon which withdrawals were subsequently made. The land speculators, he says, are shrewd, cunning men, and no doubt they, at times, have learned from the field agents the very facts they were after, and never paid a cent for their information.

"But after all," he says, "the fact that many acres of worthless, or other land, entered by speculators, have been brought into a temporary withdrawal, does not change their status; does not give the entryman any privilege of lieu selection. No special rights accrue to him, unless his land is brought within a forest reservation, and you may be very sure that we will go slowly in creating reserves, especially from withdrawals which embody lands which have been entered under suspicious circumstances. Whenever we find, in going over the records, that a bunch of entries have been made in any locality just before a withdrawal has been ordered, we will exercise the utmost care to determine whether those entries were made in good faith. Every suspicious circumstance will be examined into and the government will be given the benefit of a doubt.

Will Weed Out Speculative Entries.
"We are not going to include in any new reserve and lands we think were entered for speculation. There is no hurry about creating new reserves. In Oregon the lands we want are now covered by withdrawals, and further speculative entries cannot be made. We will take our time and weed out all lands that are not valuable for forest reserve purposes, and all lands in private ownership that are not especially desired as a part of a reserve. We are not going to repeat the errors of past years, and create wholesale lieu base, nor give to land-grant railroads and wagon roads an opportunity to make millions of dollars out of new lieu selections. Of course any new reserve that is created will be mostly land that was entered some time before the temporary withdrawals were made."

It was suggested to the commissioner that, according to common report, speculators had settled upon a large strip of land along the outer boundaries of the Blue Mountain withdrawal. "If we find that, to be

so we will draw the reserve line just inside of those entries," was the reply.

Lieu Land Law Is Wrong.
Commissioner Richards recognizes that the lieu land selection law is at the bottom of these forest reserve frauds, and he strongly advocates the modification of that law.

"The lieu land law ought to be remodeled on an equitable plan," said he today. "Indeed, I am almost in favor of its complete repeal, but that would hardly be fair. The law should be so amended as to restrict lieu selections to lands of equal area, and of approximately equal value to those given back to the government in forest reserves. The lieu land law was ostensibly framed for the benefit of bona-fide settlers, whose lands were included within forest reserves, and who were thereby shut off from schools, neighbors, and other advantages. Such settlers should always enjoy the right of equitable exchange, but a study of the map of forest reserves established in the past four or five years leads to the conclusion that they were created primarily in the interest of land grant railroads and wagon-road companies.

CHANCE AT CONSULATE.
Oregon Man Throws Up Job at Baranquilla and Gives It a Black Eye

Grant's Pass, Ore.—There is an opportunity for some one to get a consulate, as G. W. Colvig, of this city, a former consul from the United States to Colombia, has resigned, as he intimated to his friends by letter some time ago he would do so as soon as he reached home. Mr. Colvig has held the post down at Baranquilla for two years and has found it two of the longest and most unpleasant years of his life. For the sake of his own and Mrs. Colvig's health he was obliged to resign. Then there were other bad features, the excessive heat being one.

The continual warfare that is on between the two civil factions keeps the country in a state of agitation and disruption. So much so is this true that the money of the country is worth but little more than the paper it is printed on. The inhabitants of the country are, for the greater part, a dirty, unintelligent, shiftless lot. Mr. Colvig will resume his old business of practicing law in Grant's Pass.

So when the king had banished the three young princes to the top-story back room of the tower, there came an argumentator, who wanted to know the wherefore and the whyfore of it all. "The princes are there," replied the lord high chancellor, "on account of the king's health." "Eliucidate said the argumentator. "Well, the court physician declares that the king needs a change of heir! And so it was, and so it ever shall be, that one of the most ancient puns in the business must go on and on and on. Selah!

CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL LIBEL

A. Wood, of North Yakima, Arrested.

North Yakima.—F. Ashley Wood, of this county, has been arrested on a warrant sworn out by Walter J. Reed, ex-register of the North Yakima land office, charging him with criminal libel. The defendant gave bail in the sum of \$500 and in now at liberty. In the complaint it is alleged that the defendant did unlawfully, wilfully and maliciously make, and cause to be published, an affidavit concerning Walter J. Reed, containing false, scandalous and defamatory matter.

The defendant on August 5, 1903, filed an affidavit in the land office charging Mr. Reed with attempting to defraud the government by accepting a desert land filing while he was register, knowing at the same time that the claimant, George Soltz, had a homestead filing in the same office. It is stated that Mr. Soltz, on August 5, 1902, made this filing.

The defendant, Wood, sought to contest Soltz's claim to the desert land and among the points set up was that collusion existed between Mr. Reed and Mr. Soltz to defraud the government. It is understood that Mr. Wood stated to Mr. Reed's attorney this week that he did not know Mr. Reed and that he did not draw up the affidavit. It is claimed that he said it had been drawn up by others and that when he found it reflected on Mr. Reed he hesitated about signing it.

It is asserted that he was persuaded by the parties who were handling his contest to make the filing. Mr. Reed said that he had met Soltz only when he came to make a filing on a desert claim, and further that it was not his business to ascertain whether Soltz had made a homestead filing.

Mr. Soltz, in his affidavit on the desert claim, swears that he had never exercised his right on taking up claims. Mr. Reed says he will push the case to the fullest extent of the law.

ELECTION IN SERBIA.

Vienna, Sept. 21.—Dispatches from Belgrade say that more than usual interest is manifested in the election of a new skuptsaina being held in Serbia today. With the government in control of the electoral machinery the election of a majority favorable to the present regime is almost certain, though the element of doubt in the result is sufficiently strong to excite widespread interest. With the opposition in control of the national legislative body steps undoubtedly would be recommended immediately for an official probe of the circumstances attending the massacre of the late King Alexander and his consort with a view to ascertaining the connection, if any such existed, between King Peter and the conspiring regicides.

HE SHOT TO KILL.

C. M. King Tries to Murder Mrs. Lulu Deen.

Seattle.—C. M. King, a waiter, who has worked in many of the restaurants in this city during the past two years, attempted to murder Mrs. Lulu Deen, a waitress with whom he was infatuated, in her rooms in the Leland house at 312 First avenue south. He fired four shots at the woman at close range, one of which entered her neck and another inflicted a flesh wound on her left wrist.

Before he could escape from the house he was arrested by Patrolmen Huff and Cameron and sent to the city jail, where he is held without a charge until it is learned how seriously the woman is injured. Jealousy is said to be the cause of the shooting.

A few minutes before the shooting King was standing in the Leland house bar talking with a friend and said he wanted to go upstairs. The friend tried to dissuade him, but King insisted and started to the room of the woman. Bursting open the door he demanded the return of his picture, and while Mrs. Deen turned her back to get it for him he opened fire. King stood near the door while he did the shooting and Mrs. Deen was unable to get out. At the fourth shot she fell to the floor.

and King, thinking he had killed her, started on the run. He was met by the officers, who heard the shots and were on their way up the stairway.

Mrs. Deen was taken to the station and Dr. Snyder called. He found it impossible to locate the bullet in her neck. Another examination will be made today, and if possible it will be extracted. Mrs. Deen, when asked for a statement of the shooting, said:

"He has been jealous of me for some time. I refused to have anything to do with him and this seemed to enrage him. I had no idea when he entered the room he was going to shoot and went to get the picture when he asked for it.

"I don't see why he wanted to shoot me. I have a mother and two children to support."

About a year ago King attempted suicide by taking laudanum in his room on Seventh avenue. A physician was secured before it was too late and his life was saved.

Patient—I seem to be a little better, doctor, but I'm still short of breath. Doctor—Just have patience, sir, and we'll stop that altogether.

"Talk about a man being the lord of creation!" exclaimed Mrs. Ferguson. "What would the Garden of Eden itself have been without Eve? 'What was it after she came?' demanded Mr. Ferguson, in a rasping voice.

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