



Two sketch artists who are appearing at the Scenic this week.



## DEPARTMENT TAKES PART

FAMOUS EUR STORY GAME HAS BEEN EXPOSED

Department of State sends circular to La Grande paper.

Only recently La Grande people have received communications reporting to disclose vast estate belong to the recipients of these letters, and these same people may be interested in the following circular from the State Department at Washington, sent to the Observer for publication.

The Department of State at Washington, has received a report from the American Counsel-general at Barcelona, Spain, in regard to the band of swindlers operating in various cities and towns of Spain who make a practice of writing to persons in the United States respecting the imprisonment of a relative and the guardianship of a child.

The Counsel-general states that the alleged prisoner generally describes himself as a political prisoner from Cuba; he is at the point of death and has but one friend—the prison priest—through whose good offices he is enabled to smuggle an occasional letter out of the prison fort.

The prisoner is rich. He has a fortune on deposit in cash in the United States, but the certificate of deposit is concealed in a secret receptacle of his valise; the valise itself has been taken possession of by the court at Carthagena, which tried and condemned him, and will be held until the prisoner or his representative has satisfied the costs of the trial. The prisoner has an only daughter; dying in prison, his sole thought is of this beloved offspring. He has no friend or relative in Spain to whose care he can commit her. In this emergency his thoughts turn to the distant relative in the United States whom he has never seen and of whom he knows only by hearsay or the family tree. Will the distant relative assume the guardianship of the beloved daughter, and the darling daughter's fortune of about \$30,000? If the distant relative accepts the trust, one-fourth of the prisoner's entire fortune will be the material reward. The good priest will go at once to the United States and take the darling daughter with him. There is but one condition: the ready money which the prisoner brought with him to Spain has been exhausted; the distant relative is therefore requested to send enough to liberate the valise containing the secret receptacle and the certificate of deposit. This money is to be sent to the good priest at an address indicated, and, having received it, the good priest will at once secure the valise and start for America "the land of the free and the home of the brave" with the darling daughter.

The above is generally the first letter of the series. It is quickly followed by another in which the prisoner pathetically states that his strength is rapidly failing and the end is near. He beseeches his dear

distant relative to assume the trust and be a loving father to the darling daughter. The third letter is from the good priest himself, who in brief, touching terms and hopefully bad English, announces the death of the unhappy prisoner; the good priest adds that the darling daughter is under his care. He is ready to put his promise into execution and start for the United States as soon as he shall have the necessary funds from the distant relative. The good priest frequently encloses in his letter a bogus newspaper clipping announcing the death in prison at Barcelona of the famous Cuban patriot (sometimes called Augustin Lafontaine); the newspaper also speaks cunningly of the confiscated valise and the darling daughter.

It is a simple scheme, but presented in such a plausible way that almost any unsuspecting "distant relative" of European extraction would be more or less deceived by the glad prospect of falling heir to the custody of a darling daughter with a big fortune, and one-fourth interest therein as an additional recompense.

Naturally the first impulse of the distant relative is to ask a lawyer or a judge with some authority what course he ought to take in the premises, but as he thinks of doing this his attention is taken by a warning in the prisoner's letter beseeching him not to mention the matter to any living soul lest the secret of his valise and the hidden receptacle be indiscreetly betrayed.

The valise after all with its concealed certificate of deposit, is the key to the situation and possession must be taken of it before anything can be said or done. This (so cunningly set forth by the prisoner) is very evident to the distant relative, and so he frequently preserves the secret intact and instead of consulting a lawyer or writing to the American Counsel-general at Barcelona he quietly sends a draft for the sum demanded by the good priest and awaits results. Of course he waits in vain, and the poor, dead prisoner and the good priest and the darling daughter in the course of time pass out of his life forever, leaving him only an uncomfortable memory of the money he so cheerfully contributed to the confidence game.

For twenty years these knaves have been practicing their swindle, and it is needless to suggest that they are very carefully organized; they have confederates not only in the United States but in most other countries. The confederates in question select a man and find out all they can about him; they get hold of family names, family origin, and family characteristics. This information is transmitted to the rascals in Spain, and the letters are at once written to the prospective victim. The scheme is presented and developed in a plausible way and many of our fellow countrymen have "bitten" promptly and acherfully.

Recently the letters written to the distant relative have varied somewhat from the original; the political prisoner having become a noted Russian banker who absconded, leaving a deficit of some millions of roubles, killed in a quarrel in England another Russian, and finally took refuge in Spain, where he was apprehended and charged with manslaughter.

This change of character, however, is immaterial, and in the future more new characters will probably be introduced by the gang. The scheme is the same, and the public is warned to place no credence in such or similar letters.

Every effort has been made by the Department of State and its representatives in Spain to unmask these scoundrels and bring them to justice, and the Spanish authorities have also been active and several members of the gang have been apprehended and held for trial, but so far no convictions have resulted, owing probably to the peculiarity of the Spanish law.

### DIGNITARIES RETURN.

Apostle and Bishop of the L. D. S. church return to Salt Lake.

Apostle O. F. Whitney and Bishop C. W. Nibley returned last evening to Salt Lake after having attended a two-days conference of the L. D. S. stake at the tabernacle Saturday and Sunday. Apostle Whitney was one of the principal speakers yesterday, when a large number of church members were present. Business transaction of a routine nature were attended to last Saturday afternoon.

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### NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

Department of the Interior. U. S. Land Office at La Grande, Oregon, January 24th, 1910.

Notice is hereby given that Walter E. Pratt, whose postoffice address is Alicel, Oregon, did on the 24th day of June, 1909, file in this office sworn Statement and Application, No. 06723, to purchase the S 1-2 NE 1-4, Section 8, Township 2 South, Range 40 East, Willamette Meridian, and the timber thereon, under the provisions of the act of June 3, 1878, and acts amendatory, known as the "Timber and Stone Law," at such value as might be fixed by appraisal, and that, pursuant to such application, the land and timber thereon have been appraised, \$245.00, the timber estimated 205,000 board feet at \$1.00 per M, and the land \$40.00; that said applicant will offer final proof in support of his application and sworn statement on the 21st day of April, 1910, before the Register and Receiver, United States Land Office, at La Grande, Oregon, test this purchase before entry, or initiate a contest before patent is issued, by filing a corroborated affidavit in this office, alleging facts which would defeat the entry.

F. C. BRAMWELL, Register.

### NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

Department of the Interior. U. S. Land Office at La Grande, Oregon, January 24th, 1910.

Notice is hereby given that Irwin D. Smutz, whose postoffice address is Alicel, Oregon, did, on the 24th day of June, 1909, file in this office Sworn Statement and Application 2 South, Range 40 East, Willamette Meridian and the timber thereon, under the provisions of the act of June 3, 1878, and acts amendatory, known as the "Timber and Stone Law," at such value as might be fixed by appraisal, and that, pursuant to such application, the land and timber have been appraised at \$380.00, the timber estimated at 320,000 board feet, at \$1.00 per M, and the land \$60.00; that said applicant will offer final proof in support of his application and sworn statement on the 21st day of April, 1910, before the Register and Receiver, United States Land Office at La Grande, Oregon.

Any person is at liberty to protest this purchase before entry, or initiate a contest at any time before patent issues, by filing a corroborated affidavit in this office, alleging facts which would defeat the entry.

### Administrator's Notice

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed administrator of the estate of Nick Armoas, deceased, by the County Court of Union County, Oregon, and all having claims against the said estate

are hereby required to present the same to me as administrator at my store on Adams Avenue, La Grande, Oregon, together with proper vouchers, within six months from the date of the first publication hereof. Dated this 26 day of February, 1910.

JAMES G. SNODGRASS, Administrator of the estate of Nick Armoas, deceased. Cochran & Cochran, Attorneys for Administrator. 2-11-4-11.

### SUMMONS.

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Union County. Z. B. Harvey, Plaintiff,

vs. W. J. Harvey, Defendant. To W. J. Harvey, the above named defendant:

In the name of the State of Oregon you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit the first publication of this summons, and in case you fail to so appear and answer, the plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief prayed for in her complaint, to wit, for the dissolution of the bonds of matrimony existing between the plaintiff and defendant, and care and custody of the minor children of the plaintiff and defendant, Sherman Harvey, Elanor Harvey and Lucile Harvey, and for her costs and disbursements.

This summons is published by order of the Hon. J. W. Knowles, Judge of the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Union County, which order was made and entered in said court on the 20th day of January, 1910, requiring this summons to be published once each week for six successive weeks, in the La Grande Weekly Observer. The date of the first publication of this summons is the 21st day of January, 1910.

EUGENE ASHWILL, Attorney for the Plaintiff. J 21-28 F 4-11-18-25 M 4.

### NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

U. S. Land Office at La Grande, Oregon, January 24th, 1910.

Notice is hereby given that Adolph Lauer, of La Grande, Oregon, who, on January 3d, 1905, made Homestead Entry No. 14038, Serial No. 04326, for SE 1-4 NE 1-4, E 1-2 SE 1-4, Sec. 17, NE 1-4 NE 1-4, Section 20, Township 4 South, Range 38 East, Willamette Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final Five Year Proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before the Register and Receiver, United States Land Office, at La Grande, Oregon, on the 15th day of March, 1910.

Claimant names as witnesses: John Shilling, Jr. Henry J. Rehen. James Shilling. Fred Pohrman, all of La Grande, Oregon.

F. C. BRAMWELL, Register.

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