

OREGON CITY COURIER

25th YEAR.

OREGON CITY, OREGON, FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 1908

No 48,

THE SENATE UNDESIRABLES

The Story of the Rise of the Political Understrapper of the Late John H. Mitchell

SENATOR FULTON OF OREGON

Mask Torn From Face of Senior Senator From Oregon—Immoral Guide Post of Public Conscience

(From Collier's Weekly.)

Out of the nest they fouled all the political crooks and thimble-riggers that have dominated Oregon for years have been driven—all but one. He has been pilloried in the stocks of public contempt, but the law is powerless to reach him.

Charles W. Fulton, the present senator from Oregon, has been in politics for a good many years. He was in the State Senate of Oregon for several terms, and was a political understrapper for John H. Mitchell. The success with which he has used cayenne pepper on his shoe-soles, and the boldness of his denials, even when caught red-handed, have in the past lulled the public into a semi-confidence in Fulton's integrity; but his recent vicious attack in Washington upon President Roosevelt's policies, after a hypocritical approval of them for home consumption in Oregon, has served to tear the mask from his face.

There were two organizations of the House of Representatives. One of those recognized Representative Davis of Yamhill County as Speaker. The other, the Mitchell faction, recognized Representative Benson of Douglas County. At the request of the Mitchell faction, Addison Dilly, chief of the Salem police (Salem being the State capital), appointed nine men as special policemen, for the purpose of aiding the Mitchell wing to maintain possession of the House of Representatives by force, if necessary. One of the objects was to prevent Davis from taking the Speaker's chair. When Davis attempted to take the chair, the special policemen got in his way. Rough-house methods were resorted to for the moment. All of these special policemen were armed, some with both clubs and revolvers. A revolver which one of them had in his pocket fell out on the floor in full view of those standing around. Charles W. Fulton, the financial agent of Senator Mitchell, paid these special policemen for their services.

The hold-up legislature lasted fifty days or more. There was no election. The most desperate efforts were made by the Mitchell men to secure the requisite number of votes to organize the House and elect Mitchell, offers of money and official positions being the commonest means employed to accomplish this purpose. Charles W. Fulton was the recognized bribing of Smith by Mitchell and Fulton.

J. S. Smith, from Linn County, was

a Populist member of the House. He was opposed to the Mitchell faction. Rumors of corruption were rife. The Populists were determined that Mitchell should not go to the Senate, if they could prevent it. Smith conferred with the leaders of the anti-Mitchell forces, among whom were Jonathan Bourne, the present junior United States Senator from Oregon; John C. Young of Baker City, State chairman of the Populist Party; Frank Williams of Portland, then a member of the executive committee of the Populist Party; and H. L. Barclay, Republican Representative from Marion County. Smith had a plan of campaign, in view of the rumors of corruption. It was to go to Mitchell and secure some of his money in order, he swears, "to furnish a clear case of the methods Mitchell and Fulton were pursuing to procure the re-election of Mitchell."

Smith's plan did not meet with unanimous approval among the anti-Mitchell members with whom he conferred. He carried it out, however. The opportunity came, as he expected; James Powell of Albany, sought him while he was seated in the chamber of the House, and said that Mitchell desired to see Smith personally at the Mitchell headquarters. Powell accompanied Smith to the Willamette Hotel. "As soon as I entered the room," said Smith, "Mitchell and Fulton invited me into an adjoining room, where they urged upon me that I owed it to my own future career to attend the legislative session and stand with them. Fulton said to me in Mitchell's presence: 'I will give you three thousand dollars, and pay you fifteen hundred of that amount right down now if you will go into the House tomorrow and make a speech explaining that you think there's been enough of this delay and urging that the members take action and vote for Mitchell for United States Senator.' Mitchell added his assurance to that of Fulton.

Smith evidently wanted a corroborative witness. "Well, you have this man Powell," he remarked, "who has already talked with me. You can arrange the paying over of the money with him."

"Mitchell and Fulton acceded to this," says Smith. "I left the headquarters and went downstairs to the lobby of the hotel, where I was joined in a few minutes by James Powell, who took me aside and handed me two packages of greenbacks, one containing \$1000 and the other \$500. I had hardly got through with Powell, when Mitchell, who had followed Powell downstairs, came up to me, took me by the arm, and said: 'We have \$35,000, and the boys who are training with you can have all of it if they will do as you are doing and come in and vote. The cab out here is at your disposal to get them here tonight and see us. We want them to vote right tomorrow morning.'

Smith's refusal to stay "bought." The next morning the roll-call clerk called: "Smith of Linn." Smith was not present to respond. He stood out in the lobby. Charles W. Fulton, the present senior United States Senator from Oregon, he it remembered, rushed out from the House chamber and into the lobby. He approached Smith. "Aren't you going in this morning," he inquired anxiously, "going in where?" asked Smith. "Into the session."

"No, sir," answered Smith. "You give back that money then."

"I will never give back a cent of it," answered Smith. Fulton was too angry to try cajolery. He threatened: "Then look out for yourself personally," he said. Fulton noticed that a crowd was gathering and began a hasty retreat toward the House chamber. Smith followed him up to the door. He proposed that Fulton and he, in order to settle the matter, sign a statement setting forth the actual facts, and publish the statement in the Salem "Journal." Fulton did not, of course, agree to the proposition.

The next scene in this edifying Oregon drama occurred in the office of the present Governor of Oregon, George E. Chamberlain. Governor Chamberlain was considering the appointment of Smith as an officer of the State Penitentiary, Senator Charles W. Fulton called on him and entered a protest against Smith's appointment. Fulton urged, as the only ground why Smith should not be appointed, that he, Fulton, had been present at an interview between United States Senator John H. Mitchell and Smith, during the legislative session of 1897, and that at that interview Smith had been paid \$1000 or thereabouts (or was paid such a sum immediately after that interview.) The sum, said Senator Fulton, was paid with the mutual understanding that Smith should attend the session and break the "hold-up" by helping to make a quorum and declaring himself in favor of Mitchell's re-election.

"The particular point that Senator Fulton, curiously enough, made with me in regard to this transaction," said Governor Chamberlain, "was that Smith was absolutely unreliable because he had agreed to be bought and had refused to stay bought. I told Senator Fulton that it looked to me as though the entire affair reflected very little credit upon any party to it, and that if anything the participation of himself and Mitchell in the deal was considerably more subject to criticism than that of Smith.

"It was Smith's declination to carry out the terms of the corrupt bargain and not the fact that he had entered into it that formed the basis of Senator Fulton's protest against Smith's appointment," added Governor Chamberlain.

There were those who criticized Smith for what he did, even though he sought to expose those who were bedeviling his State and eating out its heart with corruption. But what shall be said of a United States Senator who says he went to Governor Chamberlain, urged by a high sense of duty to his State, to protest against Smith's appointment on the sole ground that he had broken his word in a crooked bargain, and then deplores the "un gentlemanly" conduct of Governor Chamberlain in making the interview public?

"I felt that it was my duty to tell Governor Chamberlain," wrote Senator Fulton over his own signature recently. "Therefore I did go to him and I told him that I knew Smith to be a grafter, and that he had taken money from Mitchell on a promise to go into the House, and assist in breaking the 'hold-up,' and had kept the money, but had, *good* lack on his promise."

"Whatever money was used," says Senator Fulton, in this same statement referring to the "hold-up" Legislature, "was not used to purchase votes, but either to induce men who

IMPROVEMENT CLUB MEETS

MT. PLEASANT IMPROVEMENT CLUB PASSES RESOLUTIONS.

SIDEWALK WILL BE BUILT

Newly Elected President Gives Address—Followed by Others.

The Mount Pleasant Improvement Society held its regular meeting in the Mount Pleasant school house on Tuesday evening, and business of importance was brought up for discussion. There was a good attendance of members, who took an active interest in the proceedings of the meeting. This being the first meeting of the club since the election of the new officers, the newly elected president, A. A. Pease, was introduced by Bert Clark, who in turn gave a talk on "What the Club Should Pursue the Coming Year" and by the interest manifested by the members at the meeting, it is an assured fact that a great deal can be accomplished. Mrs. A. C. Warner read a paper on "The Work of the Club and What It Has Accomplished Since Its Organization," and it was interesting to note what had been accomplished by the faithful workers of Mount Pleasant. S. T. Roman, secretary of the club, talked on "The Civic Improvement Club and its Advantages," and brought out many good points in his address.

The committees on sidewalks made their report, and everything is in readiness for the construction of same, which is to extend from the Mount Pleasant school house to the Taber place, a distance of one and one-fourth miles. The lumber is on the ground, and the work will be taken up immediately by the men, who are to donate the labor.

A resolution was passed favoring the reservation and protection of sidewalk space along the public highway, and along the sidewalks which is to be built at Mount Pleasant it is proposed by many of the residents to have shade trees planted, which will greatly assist in the attractiveness of this suburb of Oregon City.

The club will give an entertainment at the school on Tuesday night, April 14. It will be a "Guess What Social," and an appropriate musical and literary program is being prepared. After the program a supper will be served.

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had been elected to the House to take their oath of office or to refuse to do so." In the very next sentence, almost, Senator Fulton says that Mitchell had enough votes to elect him, if a permanent organization could have been effected, showing on his own word that the money was really paid to elect Mitchell. "Everybody knows," he says, "that Mitchell had sufficient votes to elect him if ever a ballot could be taken, but no ballot could be taken. Hence the fight was on, on the one hand to get forty members to qualify, on the other hand to prevent those members from qualifying. It was a matter of common knowledge that men were being paid large sums of money daily for remaining out and refusing to qualify, in order to prevent the assembling of a quorum in the House, but nothing could be done to prevent it, for it was not a violation of law to pay a man not to accept an office which he had been elected. Even if Mitchell had offered to pay Smith, and did pay him, to qualify and take his seat, so as to make a quorum, even to make a speech for him, it would not have been a violation of law."

Not much is to be expected of the youth of Oregon if this remarkable declaration, either of morality, or of law, laid down by its own United States Senator, is to be a guide-post of the public conscience. Even Chase of Clackamas, a poor, obscure member who died of typhoid fever during the session, refused an offer of \$5,000. The unreachability integrity of this man was the most stinging rebuke to Fulton's shameful logic.

Fulton has some notion of social amenities, however. "I certainly never dreamed," he says, "that he (Chamberlain) would take advantage of it for political purposes. I would only say that it would not be possible for me to do such a thing."

But we need not stop to quarrel with the crooked logic of Senator Fulton, who condemns Smith, who sought to save his State from the effects of corruption by the same methods (if viewed in their worst light) that Fulton had used to undermine and besmirch it.

Fulton says he did not tell Governor Chamberlain that he was present when Smith was bribed. He (Fulton) derived that knowledge, he says, from confidential sources, which, however, he is careful not to give. The honor of a gentleman is at stake again, perhaps.

Not only was Senator Fulton, Mitchell's paymaster and general disbursing agent during his campaign of 1897, but he was notoriously the most prominent member of the Mitchell ring, which carried matters with so high a hand in Oregon that it corrupted dictatorial appointments to subordinate offices in the State and Federal Government. The methods were the methods of criminals. Most of the leaders were afterwards forgers, embezzlers, professional perjurers, and political highlanders. Not in the political history of the United States was there a more unconscionable gang. Some were cleaner linen than others, and these appropriated the larger share of the dividends and honors.

The "Cleanest" Senatorial Election in Oregon.

Senator Fulton says that his own election to the United States Senate was one of the cleanest in Oregon—a doubtful one. There is this circumstantial evidence of bribery in Fulton's election. Up to the last hour of the session, Fulton had but thirty-five votes. It took forty-six to elect. At the last minute—the hands of the clock had, as a matter of fact, been turned back—there was a stampede to the polls. Some of the men who went over to him were: Banks, Stelwer, Dalley, Hobson, Ferrar, Croison, Hahn, Jones, Nottingham, and Webster. Banks was afterwards appointed Assistant United States Attorney for Oregon through Fulton's influence. Stelwer, who was a wealthy merchant and stockholder, was afterwards indicted with United States Attorney John H. Hall for conspiracy in maintaining a fence around 25,000 acres of public land. Hall was lately convicted. He had failed to take criminal action against Stelwer, although constantly threatening others with prosecution for a similar offense. He protected Stelwer from prosecution through the interference and at the request of Senator Fulton. Stelwer pleaded guilty to an indictment later. Fulton, after the land fraud prosecutions in Oregon had warmed up and had begun to smoke out the large game, induced Stelwer to return to him a letter which he had written Stelwer announcing that he had squelched the prosecution against him.

Dalley was appointed Surveyor-General for Oregon. Hobson was promised a deputy surveyorship for a relative. Ferrar was appointed postmaster at Salem. Croison was allowed to dictate some political appointments and made political boss of Marion County. Hahn was appointed postmaster at Astoria, Fulton's home. Jones was mixed up in some fraudulent homestead claims on the Siletz Indian Reservation. Fulton endeavored to get the commissioner of the general land office at Washington and the Secretary of the Interior to allow these homesteads to go to patent. Failing in this, he urged that the question of validity of the homesteads might be held up until Fulton could secure the passage of a special act of Congress curing the fraud. Jones has since been convicted. Nottingham, otherwise incorruptible, was persuaded by a Southern Pacific attorney to vote for Fulton. Webster was promised the office of State Game Warden, but contented himself with the office of Deputy Fish Commissioner.

There were four Congressmen from Oregon—Fulton and Mitchell, the two Senators, and Williamson and Binger Hermann, the two Representatives. Mitchell and Williamson were convicted in Oregon. Hermann was tried in Washington, but acquitted. There are two indictments still pending against him in Oregon. Fulton was active in forming opposition to these prosecutions. He appeared as a character witness for Williamson. He was constantly quoted in the press, East and West, as declaring that the prosecution against Mitchell was without foundation and malicious, even up to the hour when Mitchell's partner took the stand and confessed to having perjured himself to protect Mitchell.

EYE OF EAST ON OREGON

Washington Keenly Interested In Struggle of Bosses to Defeat People's Election of Senators

FULTON'S ELECTION IMPROBABLE

Senator's Line-up with the Interests Caused Break With President Roosevelt

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 3.—(Special Correspondence)—An approaching election in Oregon always excites great interest at the Capital. This is not because of Oregon's particular importance as a political factor among the States of the Union, for her vote in the National convention and in the electoral college is comparatively small, but the Oregon election comes far in advance of elections in Eastern States. Politicians look to this war in western state for some sign to show them the temperance of the people. If, for instance, the issue of tariff revision is raised in Oregon, and the press and the people seem united for revision, this is taken by Eastern politicians as a sign that the people all over the whole country may be thinking along the same line as the voters of Oregon.

But there is additional interest attached to the coming Oregon election. Oregon has come to be known as the state of reform legislation. With her Initiative and Referendum, her Direct Primary and her election of United States Senators by the people, she has attracted the attention of the whole Nation and every State in the Union is waiting to see how these laws will work out.

Washington political circles know that Oregon's popular provision for election of United States Senators by the people as embodied in that part of her primary law commonly known as Statement No. 1, is being subjected to a supreme test at this time. They know that Jonathan Bourne became a senator by operation of the law and that this fact has won him a place very close to President Roosevelt. They know that if the people of Oregon rally to the support of the law and refuse to permit its overthrow the voting population of every other state may demand it and that this may mean the shelving of Senators who have been held in place for years by reason of the great corporations having a complete mastery over State Legislatures. Should Eastern states adopt the method of electing Senators in accordance with the Oregon law or Statement No. 1 it is thought here that the Steel trust and the Sugar trust and the ship building trust and various other trusts might not be able to elect a United States Senator or two. And indeed it is a matter of common remark that the great capitalist organizations are interesting themselves in the fight that is on in Oregon right now. They would gladly contribute a few millions to nip in the bud the first tendency to get away from the old method of Senatorial elections.

President Roosevelt has not gotten along with the corporation owned Senators and when Senator Bourne went to Washington as the first Senator ever elected by popular vote, he at once became one of the President's most intimate friends. This widened the breach between Senator Fulton and the President, for Fulton felt that he, as Senior Senator, should have the first place with the President. But there was already a deep gulf between President Roosevelt and Senator Fulton. Fulton was known to have all ways had the support of the railroad influence in the Oregon Legislature and when he arrived in Washington he was set down as a railroad senator. In addition to this he exerted his utmost effort to place obstacles in the way of the Administration's prosecutions of the perpetrators of the Oregon land frauds. He made a bitter fight to keep Francis J. Heney out of the State. He strive with all his might to keep John Hall, who afterwards was convicted as a party to the land frauds, in the office of District Attorney. And it is no wonder that the President came to look upon Fulton and to treat him as if he were a partner of those land thieves, the Administration was trying so hard to hunt down.

All Washington knowing these things only smiled when the report came back through an Oregon newspaper that Fulton and Roosevelt had buried the axe. Any one who knows Roosevelt at all knows that when he satisfies himself of the unfitness of a man for public office he never buries the axe. The president does not consider it his business to mix in Oregon politics, but neither will he consider it his duty to discuss public affairs with Oregon Senators unless he considers them fit and proper persons to hold places of public trust and confidence. Washington is now waiting to see whether the powerful influences that control the personnel of the United States Senate will be able to secure Senator Fulton's return to whether the people of Oregon have in Statement No. 1, a weapon which they know how to use and a weapon

powerful enough to send to Washington another Senator who will have the ear and confidence of the President. Quite a flurry has recently been made in Congress over the railroad land grants. Senator's Fulton's grand stand plays in this connection and his effort to present himself as an enemy of the railroads has been, to an observer, extremely laughable. Senator Bourne and Congressman Hawley stirred up the opposition to the railroad land grants. It was plain to be seen that their efforts were being supported by the people of Oregon and that there was bound to be a demand that the Attorney General commence suit against the railroads to annul the grants. Fulton got in ahead of Hawley and Bourne and introduced a resolution in the Senate authorizing the Attorney General to bring suit. He had it heralded throughout the press as the Fulton resolution and has succeeded in passing before the people of the State as an anti-railroad man. The laughable feature of the whole thing is the fact that Mr. Fulton had been in the Se. to more than four years and his constituents from Oregon had long complained that the railroads were not entitled to hold these lands, but not until it came time to stand for re-election and not until the Attorney General was to be forced by Hawley and Bourne to take action, did he consider it time to heed the demands of his Oregon constituents.

So, altogether, there is much of interest to Washington going on out in Oregon. The president is interested, his cabinet is interested, political circles are interested. If Oregon comes out good and strong for Statement No. 1, there will be, in a very short time, other States electing Senators in the same manner. If Statement No. 1 fails, the popular election of United States Senators will be put back many years. No wonder the Nation is looking on.

SEVENTH ANNUAL BALL SUCCESS

Knights and Ladies of Security Give Grand Ball at Armory Saturday Night.

The Seventh Annual Grand Ball given at the Armory last Saturday night by the Knights and Ladies of Security, was one of the most successful affairs ever given in Oregon City. Over 1500 merry dancers enjoyed the excellent music furnished by the DeLarzes orchestra, a new musical organization of Portland. This is the first appearance of the DeLarzes orchestra in Oregon City, and from the general satisfaction it gave Saturday night it will not be long before it has established its reputation with the dancing public of this city who attended, and had the pleasure of dancing the 21 dances. M. P. Chapman, Roy Woodard, A. J. Wilson, Colonel Montgomery and Ed Confer, composing the committee in charge, are deserving of great credit in the management of the dancing party in making it such a success.

New Fire Chief is Given Reception.

Charles Burns, Jr., the newly elected chief of the Columbia Hook and Ladder Company, was tendered a reception on Friday night in the headquarters of the fire department. There was a good attendance, nearly all of the fire ladders of Oregon City being present. During the evening musical selections were enjoyed as well as a banquet, with Charles Pope acting as toast master. Mr. Burns has been a member of the Oregon City fire department for several years, and he, like the rest of the volunteer firemen of the city, has always been ready to give a helping hand in the time of need, and is one of the most popular men of the company.

First Presbyterian Church Holds Annual Meeting Monday.

The annual meeting of the First Presbyterian church was held in the church on Monday evening, and Rev. J. R. Landsborough acted as moderator. Reports of the various departments of the church were presented, and by the reports that were read, it was shown that the church was in good standing financially, and the departments are working well.

Among the important matters that were brought up for discussion was of the installing of electric lights in the manse, and other improvements are also to be made upon the building. Officers elected were: trustee, H. A. Rands; deacon, W. G. Thompson; elders, W. E. Barr, George Brown, and A. E. Frost; Sunday school superintendent, A. Robertson; treasurer, C. Schaubel.

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