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THE LABOR LAWS

Commissioner Hoff Will Enforce the Statutes.

Work in Other States Being Examined and a Plan of Operation Deduced.

Labor Commissioner O. P. Hoff was in the city yesterday and in his office at the State House. On account of illness in his family Mr. Hoff does not visit Salem but once or twice a week, but he is kept quite busy attending to the many little details of his office with which he has not become thoroughly acquainted as yet, but is fast "getting on to the ropes," as the slang saying goes, and will be ready to begin active operations in the course of a few weeks. At present and, in fact ever since he was appointed to the office, he has kept himself busied in studying the reports of commissioners of other states, of which he has received a large stack, and comparing the labor laws of the other states, reducing his conclusions to writing, all of which will be compiled into his report to the next Legislature. Everything is new to him and he is devoting himself to the study of the methods of operations of other labor commissioners so that he may have a thorough knowledge of the power vested in him by the law and be prepared to offer suggestions and recommendations for needed legislation at the next session of the Legislature. He is also paying close attention to the collection of labor statistics and his report, when issued, will no doubt be a very valuable and interesting work.

Only upon one occasion since he has attained the office has he been called upon to exercise his official power and that was in the case of a factory in Portland, on the East Side, which was reported as being engaged in the employment of child labor in violation of the act passed by the last Legislature. In this case it was only necessary to call the employer's attention to the law and the conditions, and the matter was settled without having to resort to the courts. In regard to the child labor law, its provisions being that no child under 14 years of age shall be allowed to work in any factory under any consideration, the object being that when thus employed the child was deprived of the privilege of securing an education during the school season. Mr. Hoff says that the Child Labor Commission, of which Dr. Wise, of Portland, is the chairman, the father of the child labor law, has made an order modifying the provisions of the act to the effect that children of a certain age may be allowed employment during the vacation months, but they must first obtain a written permit from the commission. Mr. Hoff says that while the commission has no legal power to modify the act in any particular, at the same time the law is only an experimental one, no doubt being far from perfect and his movement is only made as an experiment in order to be prepared to improve upon the new law when the time comes. Mr. Hoff will ask the commission to advise him of the number of permits issued, and a report of the conclusions arrived at as a result of the experiment in order that he may incorporate it in his report to the Legislature and make such recommendations for modifications as he may deem necessary to cover up or remedy any defect.

He is also receiving a considerable amount of data from the different industrial institutions of the state, which the law requires shall be furnished him and also important information from the employees of many institutions, such as private complaints of many irregularities and defects in the management or equipment and from these he is able to secure a thorough insight into the inner workings of all of the institutions, but he is bound by law to hold these matters in strict confidence and, therefore, will not divulge them to the public. He has been called to his attention and has come to his own conclusions through his own personal observations, is the quite general neglect of the provisions of the law regulating the employment of female persons, requiring that seats shall be required for the lady clerks while engaged in waiting upon customers. In many of the large establishments and also the lesser ones, the employers have had a rule in force for years which forbids any of its employees to sit down while they are on duty and he feels that he will encounter some difficulty in obviating this rule and enforcing a strict observance of the law. He has accomplished much in this line already in a quiet way, by simply calling the attention of the proprietor to the matter, but he intends to see, as soon as he can get around to it, that this law is observed all over the state.

Mr. Hoff intends to start out on his tour of inspection as soon as he finds it possible to do so and then he hopes to be able to gain some information that would be of interest to the public which he will gladly impart.—Statesman.

RAILROAD MEANS BUSINESS.

With So Much Surveying There Must Be Some Building.

The work of the Southern Pacific Company's surveying crew in this locality is assuming definite form and an idea can be formed of the purposes of the railroad people. It has been known for several months that the company contemplated running of its Wide Side trains into Portland by the East Side in order to avoid the heavy grade on Fourth street out of Portland. This purpose is not only now in evidence, but further work of construction is in view. A permanent line has been surveyed from Beaverton, on the West Side, via Oswego, where a bridge will be constructed across the Willamette river, connecting with the main road at Wilsburg. On the Oregon City side, where the road will cross the river at Oswego, the surveyors have established a line up the Willamette river and through the Gladstone Park grounds, joining the main line just below this city. This line extends be-

tween the company's present roadbed and the river, and will shorten by two miles the distance between Wilsburg and Oregon City, besides dispensing with the heavy grades of the main line. It is assumed that the new line will be used for the transportation of the company's heavy trains, while the old road by way of Clackamas will be continued for local trains.

These changes in the lines of the Southern Pacific Company in this vicinity will probably include the abandonment of the West Side road between South Portland and Oswego. It is believed that this roadbed will then be acquired and utilized by C. D. Latourrette, of this city, who holds the franchise for a motor railway on the West Side, for which the preliminary survey is being completed this summer. While nothing officially can be learned of the intentions of the Southern Pacific Company in this relation, the operations of its surveying crews justify the deductions that are outlined in the foregoing.

WILL BE TWO-THIRDS OF CROP.

Willamette Fruit Company Strengthens Trees by Fertilizing Process.

"From our 110-acre prune orchard we expect to cure 250 tons of fruit this fall," said Franklin T. Griffith, of the Willamette Fruit Company, today. "Last year the prune crop of Clackamas county was a failure, but this year we will harvest two thirds of an average crop," continued Mr. Griffith. The prune crop in Clackamas county this year sustained damage by reason of the delinquent and unseasonable spring rains that will reduce the yield, but the quality of the fruit will be superior. Unseasonable cold spring rains is the principal damaging element with which the Willamette valley orchardist has to contend in the raising of prunes. It is to counteract this adverse climatic condition that the Willamette Fruit Company is experimenting. The company is fertilizing its orchard on an extensive scale, believing that in building up the soil lies the only means of strengthening the trees and fortifying them against severe weather conditions. During the time that the experiment has been made, the trees have taken on a more healthy appearance and the owners of the orchard are convinced that the trees are more capable of withstanding severe weather conditions.

The picking of prunes will begin in two weeks, and with the largest dryer in the valley the Willamette Company is prepared to cure their crop. The dryer can accommodate 2900 trays.

RIGHTS OF BONA FIDE SETTLERS.

Will Not Be Affected By Proposed Withdrawal of Public Lands.

Register Dresser, of the Oregon City Land Office, has received from Commissioner W. A. Richards, of the United States Land Office, under date of August 3, a letter relative to the telegram of recent date withdrawing certain public lands in this district from settlement. The letter directs the withdrawal, temporarily, of all vacant unappropriated lands in townships 5 to 13 south, both inclusive, range 4 east, from settlement, entry, sale or other disposal, under the public laws, pending the determination as to the advisability of including said area within the Cascade Range Forest Reserve.

Regarding the rights of settlers who have already located on lands included in the specified area, Commissioner Richards says: "Neither this temporary withdrawal nor the permanent reserve of the lands which may follow, will affect any bona fide settlement or claim properly initiated upon the lands prior to the date hereof, provided that the settler or claimants continue to comply with the law under which their settlement or claims were initiated, and place their claims duly of record within the prescribed statutory period. The withdrawal operates to defeat all settlement, claims or other claims initiated subsequent to this date, regardless of the date upon which you receive the telegram."

There has been made no general expression here of the sentiment as to the action of the general land office in proposing to add to the forest reserve. Some think that in reducing the acreage of the public lands of this district that the settlement and development of this section is in this manner discouraged. Others entertain an opposite view.

UNCOMMON WISDOM.

Some Oregon City People Profit By Neighbors' Experience.

It's a wise man who profits by the experiences of his friends and neighbors. Here is a chance to do it, and every man, woman or child in Oregon City who knows the misery of a bad back, the nervousness and restlessness caused by kidney disorders, will show uncommon wisdom to profit by this advice. G. A. Parrish, the well-known Portland musician, who lives at 38 1/2 Grand Ave., says: "My first attack of kidney complaint consisted principally of dull aching pains across the loins. I paid little attention at first and it gradually grew worse. When I did anything that required exertion, or if I caught cold, I was sure to have backache in an acute form. I was feeling quite miserable some time ago and one evening while looking over the paper I noticed a convincing 'ad' relating to Doan's Kidney Pills, which persuaded me to purchase a box. The results I obtained from their use were satisfactory in every way."

WILL GO TO 'FRISCO.—County Treasurer E. Cahill will attend the G. A. R. Encampment at San Francisco this month. The county court has appointed F. W. Greenman as deputy county treasurer to serve during Mr. Cahill's absence. L. W. Ingram, Robert Kellan and a large number of other comrades in this locality will attend the San Francisco encampment.

Subscribe for the Enterprise

WAS FOR HERMANN

Why One Democrat Supported The Ex-Commissioner.

Forest Groves Times Gives an Interview With Colonel Cowing, Of Oregon City.

The Times has never known very much about the merits of the controversy between Congressman Hermann, as commissioner of the general land office, and the officials of the interior department, and it was probably not very different from nearly everybody else in the country,—not excepting wise editors who pretended to know all about it during the campaign last June that resulted in the election of Mr. Hermann to his present position, says the Forest Groves Times. Mr. Hermann made no explanation except to say that he and Secretary Hitchcock differed in regard to matters of detail connected with the office, and as the secretary was the superior officer he as subordinate had to go. But a few days ago the Times had a talk with a man who does know in regard to the difference of opinion that led to retirement of Mr. Hermann, and his explanation is so clear and specific that we are sure the public will be interested in it. This gentleman is Colonel Cowing, the well known attorney at Oregon City. Mr. Cowing was for many years register of a land office in Minnesota appointed by Cleveland, and since coming to Oregon he has devoted himself almost exclusively to land office business, and probably few men in the country are better qualified than he to judge in this matter.

Colonel Cowing says that every since the present secretary came into office, and especially since he came under the influence of Commissioner Sparks, he has proceeded on the assumption that every person taking lands under the general land laws of the country was trying to get them fraudulently. In order to checkmate these supposed land-robbers he has devised strange forms of oaths, not provided for in the laws, for them to subscribe to; has sent out scores of "inspectors" to hunt for frauds, and now for more than a year and a half has not issued a patent for lands proved up on—all upon the assumption that somebody may get a tract of land he is not entitled to under the law. Mr. Hermann did not approve of these methods and refused to send out certain blanks desired by the secretary, claiming they were not contemplated by law, were vexatious and unnecessary, and that where a settler had complied with the law patent should issue to him. This was the difference of opinion that led to retirement of Mr. Hermann.

Mr. Cowing said he had always been a democrat and had never before voted for a republican, but he so thoroughly endorsed Mr. Hermann's course in that controversy that he voted for him, and now that he was elected he hoped he would be put on his old committee on public lands—its chairman if possible—and that it would meet immediately after the assembling of congress, and that they would summon the secretary before them and ask him if he would change his procedure to conform to law, and then, if he did not do it, bring the matter to the attention of congress and secure such action as would lead to a reversal of the policy that has prevailed in the land department in the last few years.

Mr. Cowing believes most positively that Mr. Hermann not only has the law on his side but that congress and the country will endorse him as soon as they fairly understand the merits of the question.

THE OLD RELIABLE

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Absolutely Pure
THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE

