

"Lincoln Conspiracy, by One of the Conspirators," Begins in Next Sunday's Oregonian.

Morning Oregonian

Read in Next Sunday's Oregonian the Lincoln Conspiracy, by One of the Conspirators.

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PORTLAND, OREGON, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1902.

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How to Adopt Metric System.
NEW YORK, Dec. 4.—A committee of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers today reported a resolution declaring that the metric system will now be used in the United States. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 100 to 0.

New Election to Decide Tie.
HELENA, Mont., Dec. 4.—Governor Toole today ordered a special election December 29 in Yellowstone County to elect a member of the Legislature. The election was made necessary because Morse, Democrat, and Bever, Republican, each received the same number of votes, which is the first instance in Montana of the kind.

NO FRAUD AT ALL

Land Office Denies Any Laxness of Officials.

SENATOR MITCHELL TALKS

Spirited Defense of His Own and McBride's Appointees.

WHAT MR. TONGUE HAD TO SAY

Activity in Land Entries is Natural and Due to Business Conditions That Are Familiar to Everyone.

Assertions of House Land Committee

While the land laws are loosely drawn, yet if they were adequately and intelligently enforced by the local and General Land Office officials could be reduced to a minimum, if not altogether stopped. The land office is conducted according to precedent, rather than on good judgment. Local land officers are daily accepting testimony and affidavits from perjured entrymen and witnesses without making any attempt to ascertain whether or not "fraud is being attempted" or having any personal knowledge of facts. They are generally negligent and careless. Remedy the administrative office, and there will be no necessity for repealing these laws.

The President's Assertion

In their actual use the desert land law, the timber and stone law and the commutation clause of the homestead law have been so perverted from the intention with which they were enacted as to permit the acquisition of large areas of the public domain for other than actual settlers, and the consequent prevention of settlement.

Secretary Hitchcock's Assertion

The reports of the special agents of this department in the field show that, at some of the local land offices, carloads of entrymen arrive at a time, every one of whom make entry under the timber and stone act. The cost of 160 acres of land under that act, and the accompanying commissions, is \$415. As many as five members of a family, who, it can be readily shown, never had \$2075 in their lives, walk up cheerfully and pay the price of the land and the commissions. Under such circumstances there is only one conclusion to be drawn, and that is that where a whole carload of people make entry under that act, the unanimity of sentiment and the cash to exploit it must have originated in some other source than themselves.

OREGONIAN NEWS BUREAU, Washington, Dec. 4.

The leading editorial of The Oregonian in its issue of November 29, charging Commissioner Hermann and the several members of the Congressional delegation with "passive acquiescence" in the abuses of the land laws that have been uncovered in Oregon, created a stir among those arraigned. When shown this editorial, Senator Mitchell said:

"In the first place I am not responsible for the appointment of a single Register or Receiver in any of the land offices in Oregon except two, that is William Farre, appointed last winter to a position in the Burns office, (in which case I joined with Representative Moody in recommending his appointment) and Hon. George W. Bibbe, appointed on my own recommendation a few months ago. Receiver of the land office at Oregon City, furthermore, up to date, I have neither personally nor in any manner whatever asked the Administration to retain in office any one of the men now filling the positions of Register or Receiver. Possibly I may do so in the future, as to some of them, provided I am satisfied when the matter comes up that they have made good, honest officials, and have not been guilty of any frauds or other irregularities in connection with their office. If in any case any one of them after careful investigation, is found to have been guilty of any fraud or other irregularity in his office, I shall not only recommend his discontinuance in office, but shall demand his removal."

Mitchell Knows Nothing of Frauds.

"The connection of my name in any alleged land frauds in Oregon is wholly gratuitous and without any grounds whatever on which to base it. Furthermore, while no doubt some land frauds have been perpetrated in Oregon, as at present advised, I do not believe that Oregon, as a state, is any more open to imputations upon this ground or to be held up before the country in an improper light, than any other timbered Western state, and I am impressed with the belief that very much of this recent howl against Oregon in regard to the land frauds, at least in so far as proceedings have been had under the general laws of the United States, has behind it the purpose in certain quarters of securing the removal of the Commissioner of the General Land Office, and thus to make a place for some other gentleman from some other state."

"In my judgment the administration of the General Land Office by Mr. Hermann has been honest, able and conscientious. The truth is, the great fault is in the present land laws of the country, some of which ought to be radically modified

and others repealed. The opportunities given by these laws to those who desire to take advantage of them, and the great demand for timber land in the Western country, which results in so much business being done in the land offices of Oregon and other Western states at the present time, naturally suggests that there must be some fraud; undoubtedly there is some fraud, but as a representative of the State of Oregon at the National capital, I resent the charge, no matter from what source it may come, that the people of Oregon, any more than the people of any other Western state, should be held up before the country as they now are, as being engaged in a saturnalia of fraud in connection with the public lands."

Simon Not Responsible.

Senator Simon did not care to discuss the editorial beyond saying: "I am not responsible for any of the land office appointments in Oregon. Not one of them was made at my solicitation. I have on the contrary, sought to have changes made in many of these offices, believing that the public service would be materially benefited by such changes. But in all such efforts I have been unsuccessful."

Hermann Has Been Careful.

Commissioner Hermann said: "So far as the General Land Office is concerned, its instructions to the various local land officials, as well as to the special agents of the General Land Office, have been not only in compliance with the law, but have earnestly enjoined upon the various officials named the utmost vigilance in the matter of the execution of the various land laws. All information submitted to this office by such officers, as well as that from other sources, has been promptly submitted for the fullest examination to the proper officials, with dispatch as once to investigate, and if confirmed to bring to justice those against whom charges were made. Various suspensions of land entries in different portions of the state have been made by my direction immediately upon information which I believed should receive attention. Special agents have been and are now making careful and costly examinations pursuant to these directions. Before cancellations can be secured the office must possess the proper evidence, and the parties implicated are entitled to be heard in defense whenever their entries are subject to suspicion or are under investigation. This is being done with all energy possible, so far as this office, and those to whom the proper administration of the lands belong, are concerned."

Tongue Says State is Upright.

Representative Tongue when seen had the following to say: "I question the wisdom or propriety of attempting to detract from the good name of the State of Oregon by wholesale charges of corruption against its citizens or public officials, unless these charges are made upon good evidence sufficient to produce convictions. I have attempted to ascertain the foundation for the claims that public lands have been fraudulently entered in Oregon, but have been unable to secure the slightest evidence of the fact. I understand that special agents sent to investigate have discovered no evidence of fraud. Not a single specific charge has been promulgated or a single man put upon his defense."

"I understand that these charges of fraud have been based upon the rapid increase in the number of entries made during the last year. This is slender foundation upon which to convict any one. A great increase in the number of entries was certainly a very natural result of business conditions that are familiar to every one. The value of timber lands in Oregon, from various well-known causes have increased greatly, but is yet far below the value of like lands in many other states. Oregon has more splendid timber than any other state in the Union. Why should not its citizens who have means to invest avail themselves of the laws of the United States and secure tracts of this class of lands whenever they can find a suitable tract to purchase."

"Answering the statement of The Oregonian so far as it applies to me personally, I understand that the Federal appointees at the two offices named, Burns and The Dalles, I had no responsibility for their appointment. They are not in the district which I represent, and their selection devolved wholly upon the other members of the delegation."

All Are Honorable Men.

"So far as the appointment of the other land officers is concerned, the appointees at the time of appointment were honorable men, of good reputation, and if their integrity was questioned I had never heard of it. If, however, The Oregonian and the Land Department are not by mere rumor, but by some tangible, substantial evidence that these men or any of them have been guilty of aiding, abetting or conniving, or negligently permitting frauds against the Government or its land laws I shall be glad to join with my colleagues in recommending the appointment of their successors. But I am not prepared to convict these men without proof of their guilt. Neither until there is proof of their guilt shall I call upon them to prove their innocence or else confess themselves culpable in silence."

Till-mook Cases Still Up.

"Outside of the Tillamook cases, which are being investigated by the proper tribunal, if there is anywhere in Oregon any man who has attempted to secure public lands in violation of the laws of the United States, I have not heard his name, nor a statement of any specific facts. The Oregonian probably is aware, however, that it is no more the province of the delegation in Washington to discover and prosecute people violating the land laws of the United States than it is to discover and prosecute persons who violate any other laws of the United States. That belongs to the courts and other departments of the Government. The only specific attempt at fraud in reference to the public lands in Oregon that has in any way come to my knowledge was, I think, something like a year ago, possibly longer. I learned that a gentleman in the East

WOES OF MINERS

Told by Themselves to Strike Commission.

FIGHT AGAINST THE UNION

As Penalty of Adherence to Membership.

GRAPHIC STORY BY A PRIEST

Miners Barely Able to Exist, and Boys Sent into Mines as Soon as They Can Toodle—Rumors of Settlement Renewed.

The coal strike commission took the testimony of miners as to their earnings and conditions of work. Miners told of discrimination for refusal to leave the union. A few boys told of being required to work 24 consecutive hours, though other men's safety depended on their vigilance. A priest told of the general poverty of the miners in graphic language.

In consequence of the statement that miners were afraid to complain to inspectors, because the latter were always accompanied by mine bosses, the commission summoned the inspectors to testify.

SCRANTON, Pa., Dec. 4.—At today's sessions of the Anthracite Strike Commission the representatives of the miners continued to call witnesses, mostly practical miners, who told their story of conditions as they exist in the Hazleton, or Middle, coal fields. The miners tried to show by these witnesses that the Cox and other companies had violated the agreement entered into by both sides when the commission was appointed, that the strikers should return to work and be given their old places back where they had not already been filled. Some of the witnesses called testified that they were not given back their old places, and maintained that the men prominent in the union in the various localities during the strike were discriminated against. The commission has decided to invite the mine inspectors to appear before them, because the miners assert that the workmen fear to inform the mine inspectors of dangerous or unhealthy places in the mines, because inspectors are usually accompanied in the mines by some representative of the company, who may cause the man's discharge. This is a new point before the commission.

Talk of Peace.

Rumors of possible negotiations looking to a settlement outside the commission continue to be heard. Lawyers admit that they have heard rumors, but say they know nothing about a possible settlement. Whatever is done will be first decided upon in New York, where those in authority to act are located. Several attorneys, among them W. W. Ross, of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Company, have returned to the metropolis. Whether it is in connection with peace negotiations cannot be learned here. The opinion still prevails here that the operators and miners will agree on most points before the commission concludes its hearings.

Reward for Leaving Union.

Andrew Mathey, a Slavonian, who was employed by Cox Bros. & Co., was the first witness. He was the president of his local union, and was told by the company, he said, that if he quit the union, he would be given a boss job. He refused, and later was given such bad work that he gave up his job. He said he was the means of bringing in Slavonians to this country at the instance of a breaker boss at the Cox mines. They were promised \$19 a day, but received only 65 to 80 cents a day.

When the witness was asked by Mr.

Darrow how many times he had seen the mine inspector in the mines, Commissioner Watson asked the purpose of the question. Mr. Darrow said that, as a rule, the mine inspector is accompanied by a company official, and, therefore, a miner is afraid to make a complaint in the presence of his boss. Mr. Mitchell maintained inspectors should be unaccompanied, and their attention not diverted from bad places in the mines.

John G. Sirenix, an Englishman, followed Andrew Mathey. He said he averaged about \$300 a year, and had worked in the mines for 20 years.

John Farari, an Austrian, formerly employed by the Cox Company, said he was able to save only \$60 in the last seven years.

Suppose He Fell Asleep.
Jackson Ansbach, of the Hazleton region, was an interesting witness, because he is the first freeman to appear before the commission. He said he received \$1.57 for a day of 12 hours, and his assistant \$1.25. On every other Sunday, when he and his assistant shifted from day to night work, they were compelled to work 24 hours straight without relief. This statement caused a buzz through the courtroom, and every commissioner straightened up and became more interested. In answer to a question put by the commission, he said he was off one day every two weeks, thus working six days one week and eight days the following week.

"Supposing you should fall asleep when you were on the long shift of 24 hours, what would happen?" asked Mr. Darrow. "Well," he replied, "if I slept long enough, the fans would stop, gas would accumulate in the mines, and if any explosion took place, some men might be killed."

Barely Able to Exist.

Rev. James V. Hussie, rector of St. Gabriel's Roman Catholic Church, Hazleton, was the next witness. Drinking among the miners, he said, was at a minimum during the strike. When asked to explain the general conditions as he found them, Father Hussie said he had lived in the coal regions practically all his life.

"The conditions in that region," he said, "are deplorable. The miners are barely able to exist. I say this without any coloring, knowing that I am under oath. I realize that what I say is going to the American people, and I want to talk cautiously. I have been in their homes. They are not homes, but merely a habitation, a resting place. They are a frugal, conservative, reasonable and God-fearing people. We have eight Catholic churches in Hazleton, and they are crowded every Sunday with worshippers, and this is no doubt, true of the churches whose faith is opposed to ours."

Father Hussie said that this was the condition before the strike, and that during their suspension the miners and their families were more pinched, and that they barely existed. "Families cannot be kept together," he said. "The boys are sent into the mines almost as soon as they are able to toddle about, and the girls are sent to the mills in the large towns in the vicinity, or drift to small cities." He related instances of poverty, and said it took one man six years to pay off a funeral debt of \$300.

In reply to further questioning, Father Hussie said that he had examined 50 or 70 miners and found that only three of them were able to save any money. One was a Scotchman, one an Austrian, and the third inherited money.

He Brought in Greenhorns.

Andrew Mathey, who was on the stand at the morning session, was recalled to give more information regarding the alleged importation of Slavonians to the Cox mines. He told how he had been paid to go to Hazleton and meet the "greenhorns," who had been shipped by his mother from Europe at the request of himself, who had been asked to do so by a foreman employed at the Cox mines. Judge Gray, evidently thinking that the alien laws were being violated, became greatly interested, and said:

"When was this?"

"Seventeen years ago," replied the Hungarian.

"Oh," said the Judge, as he leaned back in his chair.

"The commission adjourned until tomorrow."

Today was set as the time limit for coal companies to answer the case submitted by the miners, but the Cox Company's time was extended until tomorrow, the officials of that company being absent and not prepared to make answer. Beside the large companies which signed the request made to President Roosevelt for the appointment of the arbitration commission, 46 companies have up to date signified their willingness to abide by the decision of the arbitration commission. Among these are the Leigh Coal & Navigation Company, G. B. Markle & Co., A. Pardee & Co., Calvin Pardee & Co. and Jermin & Co.

WILL BE RATIFIED

No Fear for Fate of Cuban Reciprocity.

SENATORS GIVE PROMISE

Are Only Opposed to Direct Legislation.

ELKINS CHANGES HIS ATTITUDE

Majority Will Vote to Ratify Treaty, Which Will Be Signed Today, but Do Not Want Tariff Question Opened.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4.—President Roosevelt is assured that, if the negotiations with Cuba for a reciprocity treaty are concluded satisfactorily by the State Department, the treaty will be ratified by the Senate during the present session.

While many Senators were, and still are, opposed to direct legislation by Congress on the subject of Cuban reciprocity, some of them at least, and perhaps a majority among the Republicans, would vote to ratify a reasonable reciprocity treaty. Senator Elkins, who led the anti-Cuban reciprocity forces in the Senate during the last session of Congress, today informed Mr. Roosevelt that he would support a proper Cuban reciprocity treaty and expressed the belief that such a treaty would be ratified by the Senate soon after its presentation. Such a solution of the commercial obligations of the United States to Cuba would be entirely satisfactory to Mr. Elkins and many of his Senatorial colleagues, who opposed the enactment of direct legislation because they feared such action would open up a tariff controversy which, in the view of strong advocates of the protection system, might prove embarrassing, if not dangerous, to the Republicans.

The President, it is understood, has received assurances from other Senators, who last Spring, opposed reciprocity legislation, that they will support by voice and vote a Cuban reciprocity treaty.

RECIPROCITY TREATY HELD UP.

Cuban Ministers Desire Definite Authority From Congress.

HAVANA, Dec. 4.—The reciprocity negotiations between General Tasker Bliss and the Cuban Secretaries, Zaldo and Montes, is practically at a standstill, owing to the latter desiring to await the outcome of the bill introduced in the House of Representatives providing for the appointment of a committee to draw up a bill defining the limits of the concessions which the Cuban government can offer foreign countries in negotiating reciprocity treaties. A committee of the House began the study of the question today.

It is known that Secretaries Zaldo and Montes have reached a satisfactory agreement with General Bliss, and that practically all that is left to be done is the signing of the agreement, but they do not wish to assume any responsibility, especially since the recent Cabinet crisis and in view of the apparent determination on the part of the National party to oppose the government. The National party

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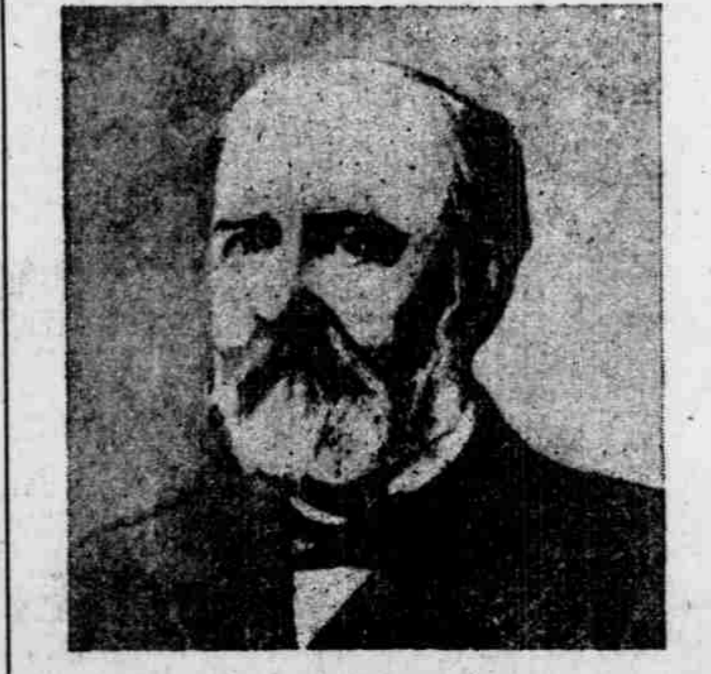
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MINISTER TO JAPAN WHO DIED SUDDENLY



A. E. BUCK, OF GEORGIA.