

LAND DEPARTMENT
FRAUDS EXPOSED

(Continued from Page One.)

of Green's report are the same for which Henry Meldrum, ex-surveyor general of Oregon, has since been indicted. In order to assure a survey of the surveyed public lands, the law requires that sworn application be made by three actual settlers in each township. According to the evidence given before the grand jury which indicted Meldrum, forged affidavits were prepared in a number of cases, purporting to be made by actual settlers upon lands which were in fact unoccupied. Meldrum then let contracts for the survey of these lands with the knowledge and express sanction of Commissioner Hermann, whose telegrams and letters to Meldrum and to the latter's chief deputy, Waggoner, formed an important part of the exhibits attached to Green's report.

These contracts were let without advertising to some one of Meldrum's deputies. From their inception they were fictitious and fraudulent. In many if not most cases no actual survey was ever made. The field notes did not comply with the regulations and the evidence of fraud was enough to put any man of honesty and ordinary intelligence upon his guard.

One of the government agents who investigated these surveys is said to have testified before the grand jury that out of 14 surveys which were included in his examination, 13 were clearly and indisputably fraudulent, and they cost the government \$54,000, most if not all of which went into the pockets of the conspirators.

In Collusion with Waggoner.

Early in December, 1902, it became known that Inspector Green had been making an investigation of Meldrum's office, and on the 5th of that month G. E. Waggoner, the chief deputy, wired his resignation to Hermann to take effect at once. Hermann replied on the following day with a telegram accepting Waggoner's resignation.

When Secretary Hitchcock learned what had been done he revoked Hermann's action and sent a pre-emptory order directing that Waggoner's resignation be rejected and that he be dismissed. Meldrum was also summarily removed. Special agents have since been gathering evidence as to Waggoner's share in the fraudulent surveys, and he may yet have to appear before a federal grand jury. The letters and telegrams that passed between Hermann and Waggoner formed an important part of the exhibits attached to the report of Inspector Green, which caused Hermann's removal from the land office.

These exhibits, when wanted later for presentation to the grand jury in this city, were found to have been taken from the files of the land office, and government officials believe that they were stolen for the purpose of removing evidence against the conspirators. The same explanation is given of Hermann's destruction of 36 letter press books, containing copies of his private letters. They were destroyed only a few days before he left the land office.

The Green report has never been made public. Hermann has been challenged repeatedly to request Secretary Hitchcock to make its contents known, but he has not dared to do so.

The disappearance of the exhibits greatly lessened the danger of criminal proceedings against those concerned in the conspiracy. Meldrum was indicted upon other evidence, but the letters and telegrams which had passed between Hermann and Waggoner were gone.

Forged Homestead Applications.

But there were other charges against Commissioner Hermann. The business of making entries upon public lands in the names of fictitious persons and upon forged and manipulated affidavits had grown to huge proportions during the last two years of Hermann's administration. The land grabbers operated with an assurance which seemed undisturbed by the slightest fear of exposure or interruption by the general land commissioner or by the agents under his control.

Some of the most notorious cases of these forged homestead claims are those for which Marie Wade Horne, McKinley, S. A. D. Pater and Emma Watson will be placed on trial in this city on the 18th inst. The indictments upon which they are held charge them with a series of entries upon public lands, the applications being in fictitious names and the attestations perjured. It was the constant effort of McKinley and Pater to get patents as quickly as possible after filing their applications, thereby enabling them to sell to innocent purchasers.

Binger Hermann accommodated himself with remarkable readiness to the wishes of the McKinley-Pater ring. The spurious applications which he filed were rushed through to patent with extraordinary speed, and in a number of instances the records of the land department show that this was done by the express direction of Hermann himself. The department was at that time from two to three years in arrears upon its regular business, and legitimate settlers were commonly re-

quired to wait from ten months to two years before patents were issued to them. From three to thirteen days sufficed to get out the patents upon these fraudulent applications.

Hermann Rushed Them to Patent.

In a number of instances where special agents of the interior department had made adverse reports upon certain applications, since proved to be fraudulent, Hermann ignored the reports, marked the cases "special" and passed them to patent immediately. Plainly he did not do so because of any personal interest in the patents, for they were purely fictitious persons. It was at the request of the ring of land grabbers who conspired and filed their forged applications that Hermann passed them to immediate patent. The poor settler could wait for his patent, but the greedy swindlers who were growing rich out of their thievery never failed to receive immediate attention at the hands of Commissioner Hermann.

Recommended Hermann's Indictment.

For months past the secret agents of the interior department have been investigating these transactions and Hermann's part in them. The result was a report to Secretary Hitchcock in February of this year, recommending that steps be taken at once to indict Hermann for his complicity in the fraudulent entries. Evidence was submitted with the report, to substantiate the charges, and it is said that this evidence will in all probability be submitted to the grand jury, which will meet next November.

The gigantic swindles charged to John A. Benson and F. A. Hyde, who are now under indictment, were perpetrated during the Hermann regime. Lands worth millions of dollars are said to have been stolen by these men and their accomplices. That their operations were carried on with the active connivance of some one in the general land office does not admit of a doubt. Benson was arrested on the 15th of last December, charged with having paid \$500 on March 15, 1902, to Woodford D. Harlan, then chief of the special service division of the general land office, as a bribe to obtain from Harlan information as to the evidence secured by the government's secret agents against the ring. Harlan had been one of Hermann's subordinates and the bribe was paid only six weeks after the latter had been dismissed in disgrace from his office. Benson was indicted on this charge of bribery last Friday.

The investigation into the operations of the Benson-Hyde ring began before a federal grand jury in Washington, D. C., three months ago and the inquiry was subsequently transferred to San Francisco, where it is now being prosecuted. Much of the testimony has been sensational in the extreme and it has pointed unmistakably to the conclusion that the land grabbers had the active assistance and co-operation of some one high in authority in affairs of the land department. Hermann's subordinates confessed to having received money from Benson in return for information as to contemplated forest reserves. The published reports of the testimony bristled with intimations that the land commissioner himself was fully aware of the bribery frauds that were being practiced.

The New York Sun of February 15, 1904, in reporting the testimony given the day previous before the federal grand jury in Washington, D. C., said:

"On one occasion one of the bribed clerks called at the New Willard hotel to see Benson and found another person in an adjoining room.

"Come in and meet him," said Benson. "It will be to your advantage."

"But the clerk was suspicious and declined the invitation. On the next visit, as he was about to open Benson's door, the clerk said he met Binger Hermann, commissioner of the general land office, coming out. They passed without a word. The testimony concerning this encounter caused a sensation before the grand jury."

PARTY PAPER'S TERROR.

Washington Post Asks Why Hitchcock Doesn't Back Hermann.

(Washington Bureau of The Journal.) Washington, D. C., May 7.—The Washington Post, a Republican newspaper, today in a review of the political situation common upon the apparent indifference in Oregon concerning the coming election, and says:

"Some people are demanding that Representative Hermann return to his district and explain why he resigned from his place as commissioner of the land office. If, say these trouble makers, Mr. Hermann resigned voluntarily, it ought to be easy for him to secure a letter of commendation from Secretary of the Interior Hitchcock, but Mr. Hermann does not come forward with such a letter and no one here suspects that M. Hitchcock is eager to write it."

Junets of the Republican machine. It is an interesting circumstance that A. E. Courtney, one of the 10 legislative candidates who refuse to put themselves on record upon charter revision, is a member of the civil service commission and actively aided the plans of the machine.

Even before the Republican primaries rumors became current that the machine was proposing to postpone the next city election, by legislative amendment to the charter, for the purpose of retaining control of the municipal patronage for another year.

These candidates who have refused to define their attitude toward the proposed charter-tinkering and who have ignored the opportunity offered them by The Journal to make known their views, have only themselves to blame if their motives are viewed by the public with suspicion and their candidacy with distrust.

It is quite probable that the question asked of these 10 candidates by The Journal will be reiterated by citizens who resent the threatened assault upon the charter, and who propose to know what manner of men they are asked to send to the state legislature.

The 10 men who refuse to state their positions on the question of charter revision are: A. A. Courtney and Sig Sichel, Republican nominees for state senators; and George W. Holcomb Jr., Thomas Crang, A. J. Capron, S. B. Linthicum, M. F. Henderson, W. R. Hudson, Madison Welch, E. E. Colwell, Republican nominees for representatives.

JAMES J. HILL
COMING TO COAST

COAST LUMBER MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE TO CONFER WITH RAILROAD PRESIDENTS 40-CENT RATE TO MISSOURI RIVER INSISTED UPON.

(Special Dispatch by Leased Wire to The Journal.)

Seattle, Wash., May 7.—The committee of the Pacific Coast Lumber Manufacturers' association appointed to meet the presidents of the Great Northern, Northern Pacific and Union Pacific railroads will probably hold a conference with President James J. Hill of the Great Northern on the coast.

The committee was appointed three weeks ago by President Everett Griggs of the lumber association and has been ready to go east whenever the railroad presidents indicated a willingness to meet them.

A telegram has just been received by President Griggs from Senator Foster stating that President Hill will come to the coast within a short time.

Senator Foster suggested that the lumbermen's committee arrange a conference in some coast city. The committee is insisting upon a 40-cent rate on fir and hemlock lumber from Pacific northwest points to the Missouri river territory.

DEBATES SPIRITED

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conference cannot take away the right of each church to determine for itself in this matter.

Study Original Sacrament.

So serious is the consideration which is being given to the question that the delegates are going back to the original sacrament administered to the Twelve disciples and trying to determine whether on that occasion the disciples all drank from the same cup. Those who favor the individual cup say this is not a material consideration.

Bishop Fowler's refusal to administer the sacrament with individual cups, seems to have been based upon an action taken at a previous general conference. A resolution was introduced providing that church should be allowed to follow their own judgment in the matter. The motion was discussed and laid upon the table. This was taken to be a negative action.

Bishop Walden is also quoted as having expressed himself in opposition to the use of individual communion services. He has said that the individual church should not assume the right to depart from a long established custom of the church.

Dr. Buckley Opposes.

Dr. Buckley, the great manipulator of Methodist conferences, is opposed to the individual communion cup. He has printed a series of editorials in his paper, the New York Christian Advocate, opposing a change from the common cup.

There seems to be no middle ground on which the question can be settled, and if it comes to an actual vote in the conference there will be one of the most violent contentions the conference has ever witnessed. The churches using the services say they would point blankly refuse to comply with any such demand of the conference. If the bishops and other leaders on the other hand will refuse to enter the communion in a church where individual services are used, the rupture promises to be a serious one.

There are a few women present in the capacity of delegates. This is the first time that they have been admitted as such.

Great earnestness characterizes every move made by the assembled delegates, who represent almost every part of the globe.

On Amusement Paragraph.

Among the memorials, petitions and resolutions before the conference, the amusement paragraph seems to be the favorite one, and the majority of the resolutions presented are against any change in it.

The temperance question also comes up for discussion. The Rock River valley conference will petition that the general conference request the president and the congress of the United States to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors in all the territories, islands and other places that are controlled by the federal government.

A resolution offered by J. W. E. Bowen (colored) of Tennessee, who is death of President McKinley, who was a member of the Methodist church, sets forth: "Since the last session of the general conference the civilized nations of the earth evidenced their deep sympathy and hearty approval of the American people in the untimely death of our late President William McKinley," and that the Methodist Episcopal church, represented by its general conference, records its high esteem for the late President McKinley, who as a member of the Methodist Episcopal church, was loyal to its every interest and who never was so happy as when sitting in the pews listening to the preaching of the gospel and also because of his distinguished service to the nation as one of its presidents.

The resolution concludes: "Resolved, That the committee on memorials appointed by this body, be requested to prepare a tribute to the precious memory of our distinguished layman."

The resolutions were adopted by a standing vote and the entire auditorium sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee," President McKinley's favorite hymn.

AGED MAN NEARLY DECAPITATES ENEMY

(Special Dispatch by Leased Wire to The Journal.)

Redding, Cal., May 7.—Christian Peterson, familiarly known as the "Governor of Hogtown," used a hatchet effectively upon the head of a man whom he had befriended, and who attacked him last night. "Jimmie," the blacksmith as the assailant is known, lived with Peterson in the latter's cabin on Rock Creek, near Kewick.

Jimie was a brawny and mean, and last night, after Peterson had gone to bed, Jimie rushed into his room and began beating him over the head with a board. Peterson sprang to the floor as quickly as his tottering legs would let him. He is an old man and had been ill. He grabbed a hatchet and there was a terrific duel in the dark.

Peterson finally felled Jimie, and cut him several times in the head, nearly splitting it open. He left Jimie lying in pools of blood and went to Kewick and surrendered.

Jimie will die, and Peterson is detained at Kewick awaiting developments. The officers found the wounded man lying on the floor, with blood bespattered all over the room. There was a scene of a terrific struggle. Both are old men, over 60 years of age.

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BAKER'S SON HAS
BEEN KIDNAPED

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)

Seattle, Wash., May 7.—A close search of Bainbridge Island by 200 men under Assistant Superintendent James E. Dye of the Pinkerton National Detective agency, resulted in the assurance yesterday afternoon that R. D. Baker's little son has been kidnaped.

The child is thought to have been carried from the island. The kidnapers evidently planned the work carefully and knew well the habits of the family. Last evening the search of the island was abandoned.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Baker were on their feet with the searchers for more than 24 hours. Mrs. Baker has borne

the strain as few women could and has shown rare fortitude at all times. Hope of a ransom is thought to have been the motive for this mysterious crime. It is believed that the baby is now hidden in some sloop or cabin along the shores of Puget sound within 15 miles of Seattle.

CANADA MAY IMPOSE
DUTY ON LUMBER

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)

Vancouver, B. C., May 7.—There is every indication that the Dominion government will yield to the milling interests of British Columbia for a duty on lumber and shingles.

In the event of this duty being imposed, Washington and Oregon millmen may expect it to be equal to that enforced by the United States against similar products coming from Canada.

papers, both political and independent, have joined in a demand for equality in tariff.

The British Columbia lumbermen claim that the radical difference in the tariff is the most serious difficulty they have to contend with. They assert that as matters now stand they lose more

money by running their mills than by letting them stand idle.

"Do you know the nature of an oath, my little man?" asked the judge. "I ought to," replied the boy. "I was a caddy at your golf club for two seasons."

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(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)

Baker City, Or., May 7.—The grand Democratic rally in Sumpter tonight attracted hundreds of people of both parties. A special train was run from Baker City carrying a brass band, the speakers and the stalwarts of the party. This is the first gun of the campaign and much enthusiasm exists in this part of the country.

News was received this evening confirming a strike of ore in the New York mine, which is situated in the Greenhorn district. Some assays go as high as \$10,000 to the ton and the ore chute is said to be extensive.

The Eddy bill will become a feature of the campaign in eastern Oregon. Candidates for the legislature will be asked to express their views and to say how they stand as to its repeal. An effort to that end will be made by the mining men, who say much business is being lost on account of the Eddy bill.

"NOBODY'S BUSINESS"

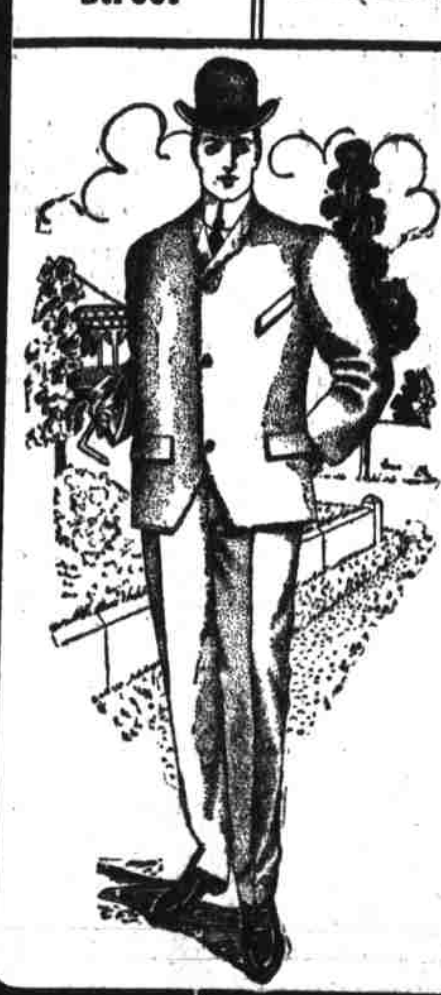
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who recall the years of struggle that passed before Portland finally secured its present charter. The adoption of a new charter was opposed by the machine at every point, but the popular demand for a better city government finally became too strong to be resisted longer.

Since the charter went into operation, a little more than a year ago, there have been many evidences of covert attempts among the machine politicians to evade or subvert its provisions. A conspicuous illustration was the effort of the civil service commission to convert the police and fire departments into ad-

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