

# State's Title to Thousands of Acres of Swamp Land at Stake

## Finances For Investigation Are Requested

### Property Worth Millions May Be Saved Liljeqvist Advises Committee

The state's title to thousands of acres of swamp and over-flow land valued at several millions of dollars is the stake for which the state land board is playing in asking for an appropriation of \$1,000 to conduct investigations and carry on necessary litigation for retaining possession of these lands, L. A. Liljeqvist reminded the committee, an appropriation of \$25,000 was made to the state land board for investigating alleged frauds in connection with the possession of swamp and other state lands. As a result of investigations carried on under the act of 1919, he declared, \$125,000 had already been brought into the state's irreducible school fund through a compromise entered into with the Pacific Livestock company. This he pointed out was five times the total amount allotted for the work, of which \$5,000 had been diverted to surveys in connection with the exchange of state lands and some \$5,000 still remained in the hands of the land board.

In addition to the \$125,000 collected from the Pacific Livestock company as a result of investigations by the attorney general's office Liljeqvist declared that these investigations had revealed sufficient indication of fraud in connection with the possession of other lands to justify the belief that thousands of acres of land would be regained for the irreducible school fund if the investigations could be continued and necessary litigation carried out. It was for this purpose, he explained, that the state land board was asking for the \$15,000 appropriation at this time. Thirty-six thousand acres of swamp lands in Klamath county he indicated came under this latter head. The state had also called upon to defend its title to thousands of acres of swamp land in the Warner valley which was being claimed by riparian owners. Malheur lake alone, he pointed out, contains 47,000 acres of land worth more than a million dollars, to which the state's title had never been made certain, and another 10,000 acres in Silver Lake needed attention to preserve the rights of the state.

Some objection was raised by members of the committee to appropriating money from the general fund for prosecuting investigations which resulted only to the benefit of the school fund. The school fund, they argued, should be willing to foot the bill for the investigations. Liljeqvist was asked to advise the committee as to whether such a procedure were possible under the state constitution if so to draft a bill covering the point.

When Liljeqvist proposed to present to the ways and means committee in behalf of the state land board, arguments against a bill by Ryan exempting land and gravel used in public construction work from payment of state royalties, Representative Kay objected on the ground that it would not be fair to the committee which has this bill under consideration.

John M. Mann, city commissioner of Portland, appeared before the committee with an offer to turn over the entire plant and equipment of the Cedars, Portland's detention hospital, valued at \$55,185 to the state without cost if the state would operate the plant. If the state did not care to accept this proposition, Mann asked that an appropriation equivalent to \$2.00 per day per inmate from counties outside Multnomah county, be made toward the maintenance of the institution. This, it was estimated, would aggregate \$73,000.

There was no apparent disposition on the part of the legislators present to accept the offer of the institution, which, it was agreed, was now being operated far more

economically than might be the case should the state attempt to take it in hand as a state institution.

An appropriation of \$92,620 is being sought by the state board of health as against \$48,816 appropriated two years ago. Included in the budget for the forthcoming biennium is an item of \$20,000 for the bureau of nursing which has been subsidized by the Oregon Tuberculosis association during the past two years. Mrs. Dunbar, secretary of the association, appeared in behalf of the request for the public nursing bureau which she pictured as one of the most important features of the work carried on by the health board.

George H. Himes, curator of the Oregon historical society presented the needs of that department for the biennium aggregating \$23,100 as against \$15,000 appropriated two years ago.

An appropriation of \$6,000 is sought by the Oregon Humane society which desires to extend its activities into every county in the state within the next two years. E. J. Jaeger, president of the society, appeared in behalf of this request.

General revision upward in salaries of district attorneys are contained in a tentative schedule presented to the committee by E. L. Connors, district attorney for Yamhill county in behalf of the state association of district attorneys. The new salary scale, Connors explained, was prepared with a view to a greater uniformity in compensation based on the work of the department in the various counties.

Mrs. Alexander Thompson of Portland, a member of the ways and means committee two years ago, appeared in behalf of Senate Bill 114 making payable increases in state appropriations to state normal institutions allowed two years ago but for the payment of which no provision was made. Mrs. Thompson was assured that the intentions of the legislature two years ago were good and that the omission would be rectified at this session.

The committee voted to report out favorably a bill by Senator Bell creating a new state emergency board composed of seven members of the ways and means committee including the senate and house chairman. This removes from the board the governor, secretary of state and state treasurer. No reflection on the integrity or ability of these officials is intended by the proposed bill, it was explained, but the proposal was made with a view to removing from the tax levying body the money spending bodies. Arrangements were made for writing into the bill an amendment further defining deficiencies and providing that no deficiency could exist where no appropriation had ever been made.

Senator Upton's bill abolishing the emergency board entirely will come out with an adverse report from the committee. Upton, however, will submit a minority report insisting that the privileges of the emergency board had been largely abused in past years by state departments which looked to that body as an easy way out of financial difficulties.

## Oregon Committee Goes North Tonight

The Oregon legislative committee on fisheries will go to Seattle Friday night for a conference with a similar committee from the Washington legislature relative to fishing along the Columbia and legislation to regulate the same. An effort will be made at the conference Saturday to secure action by the Washington legislators for a law parallel to one now in effect in this state forbidding the use of purse seines within the three-mile limit at the mouth of the Columbia river. The Oregon law on this question was passed at the session of 1919 following a conference with the Washington legislators who agreed to enact a similar measure.

In an opinion handed down last Saturday by the supreme court upholding the constitutionality of the Oregon law which has been attacked by fishermen and cannery interests, the court pointed out that while the act was unquestionably one designed to save the fishing industry of the state, failure of co-operation on the part of Washington was working a great hardship on the fishing industry in Oregon. The opinion of the court recommended that efforts be made to secure action by the Washington legislature similar to the Oregon law.

## Measures Passed In House

H. B. 17, by Kuhl—Defining criminal syndicalism and sabotage and providing punishment therefor.

H. B. 124, by Clatsop county delegation—Amending section 3586, Oregon laws, relating to salary of constable, Seaside precinct.

H. B. 125, by committee on insurance—Authorizing life insurance companies to act as trustees.

## Sidelights

A bill providing for the appropriation of twenty thousand dollars for the expense of continuing soil, irrigation and drainage investigations by the Oregon Agricultural college experiment station was introduced in the house by Representative P. J. Gallagher of Harney and Malheur counties.

## Ziegler Scores Proposed Port Bills In Letter

Playing Mayor Baker of Portland for his support of pending legislation regarding the Port of Portland, J. B. Ziegler, of that city, has sent a statement to the governor and committee considering Port of Portland bills, stating that the people of Portland and the state at large, have been misled into consenting to state control of the port. Mr. Ziegler says in substance, that the bills under consideration provide for a reorganization of the port control and absorption of the dock commission and its properties amounting to \$10,000,000 which at the present time are administered by the dock commission appointed by the mayor and operating under the provisions of the charter of the city of Portland; that the present bills introduced into the legislature provide that all bonds and taxes shall be imposed upon the property co-terminus with the port and are several times larger than ever before provided; and that they would provide for the appointment of a port commission by the legislature or governor and to be responsible to the state instead of the port district, thus taking control out of the hands of municipality, which furnishes the funds.

This plan, says Mr. Ziegler, was initiated by unidentified interests under the sponsorship of Mayor Baker. He says, that these "unidentified interests" either have property to sell in the port or hope to secure a monopoly of the benefits accruing from its development.

"For instance," says Mr. Ziegler, "the tentative plan is for the great freight terminals and 1500 feet docks on the west side, while it is quite obvious that such terminals, being trans-shipment terminals, should be located on the east side where the cargoes are most the vessel to avoid the consequent unnecessary obstruction and cost of transporting the cargoes across the harbor. West Portland should have all the industrial terminals she needs, but our shipping should not be burdened with the costs of bringing cargoes to the west side for re-shipment just to satisfy the monopolistic greed of the investors in that district."

## Domestic Relations Court Held Attempt to Curb Children's Court

Senator Hume's bill amending the act of 1920 creating the court of domestic relations for Multnomah county is regarded by Oregon social workers generally as an attempt to emasculate the children's court, according to P. A. Parsons, a director of the Social Workers Association of Oregon who headed a delegation appearing before the Multnomah delegation Thursday afternoon protesting against the bill.

Any attempt to interfere with the children's court will be fought to the bitter end, the social workers feel it is known in no unimpeachable terms.

Hume's bill proposes to give the circuit court concurrent jurisdiction with the court of domestic relations, provides for appeals from the decision of the judge of the juvenile court and makes the court one of record. Hume also expressed his objection to the informal manner in which proceedings of the court were conducted and to the practice of the court in a talk-backing to its hearings only those whom it chose to admit and barring those whom it desired to bar.

Speaking in behalf of the six thousand members of the state federation of women's club Mrs. Alexander Thompson of Portland declared her opposition to any change whatever in the present law.

Mrs. Harry H. Haker, secretary of the child welfare commission, insisted that its very informality, which Senator Hume objects to, is the very keynote to the success of a children's court.

Mrs. C. W. Hahnel, president of the state parent-teachers association, declared that the association was strongly opposed to any interference with the court as it now stands, insisting that Hume's bill would turn back procedure in children's cases to the days before the juvenile court was established.

Roscoe P. Hurst, of the Pacific Coast Rescue association, refuted statements by Hume to the effect that persons were barred from hearings in the children's court. No one interested in any proceedings in the court were ever denied admittance but were invited to attend, he declared, adding that mere curiosity seekers might sometimes be barred by the judge. He also opposed Hume's attempt to make the court one of record, insisting that records of procedure in children's cases should be destroyed, excepting final commitments and such records as related to adoptions. Hurst was willing to yield the right to appeal from decisions of the court.

Parsons declared that the move to give circuit courts concurrent jurisdiction with the children's court was opposed by its advocates followed by every other state in the union. He also admitted the right to appeal, but only to some higher court which in this case meant the supreme court of the state. Any change in the law as it now stands, without some profound reason for the change, he declared, was hazardous, asking that the court be permitted to continue unimpeded until it should have been given an opportunity to still further prove its usefulness. He upheld the informality of the court's procedure and insisted that any formality would merely demoralize the child haled into its jurisdiction.

Senator Hume expressed his readiness to amend his bill to meet the wishes of the social workers. He was asked by Senator Moser, chairman of the Multnomah delegation, to prepare the amendments which he was willing to make and the social workers were asked to

## Bill Would Curb Court Activities In Purchasing

A bill to curb county officials in award of contracts for materials, equipment or supplies without formal action was introduced in the house yesterday afternoon by Representatives North and Kuhl of Multnomah county.

It amends the present law on this subject, but which applies to counties of fifty thousand population or over, so as to make the provisions applicable to counties of ten thousand or over in population.

The bill provides that no contract for materials, equipment or supplies shall be entered into by any county or board of county commissioners, or any officer of such county, until after bids have been submitted to the county commissioners or county court upon specifications therefor in writing and advertised not less than six issues of a daily newspaper or two issues of a weekly newspaper.

"The teeth" in this bill are found in the clause which reads: "All county courts and every board of county commissioners shall not be bound by any contract nor in any way liable thereon for materials, equipment or supplies unless the same is authorized by a resolution made in writing, signed by some person or persons duly authorized to execute the same for said court or board."

The bill also provides that county bidders are to be given preference over non-residents of the county for furnishing printed matter, stationery and all supplies of like character when the bid of the resident does not exceed that of the non-resident by more than ten percent on items up to and including one hundred dollars, or five percent on items exceeding that sum.

## Noose for Road Agents Contrary To Constitution

The privilege of participating in the semi-occasional cockle parties now staged at the state prison here under provision of the act of 1920 will not be extended to gentlemen of the road who ply their trade armed with deadly weapons.

When Senator Hume launched his move to extend capital punishment to highwaymen he evidently forgot to consult the state constitution which provides that the penalty of death can be applied only to the crimes of murder and treason.

The Hume bill was making fair progress on its way through the committee on revision of laws, to which it had been referred for consideration, when someone took the joy out of the occasion by bringing up the constitutional question.

Unless the constitution can be changed so as to broaden the scope of capital punishment these gentlemen of the road must of necessity be contented with a term of years behind prison walls.

## Tax Exemption To Stimulate Building Urged

Washington, Jan. 28.—Tax exemption for all new dwellings for at least fifteen years to stimulate building, was advocated by Lawrence Purdy, former president of the New York city board of taxes and exemptions, today before the housing conference called by the chamber of commerce of the United States. Such an exemption would be a substantial inducement to builders, he said, adding that it was fully warranted by the housing shortage.

An interesting fifteenth century tombstone has been discovered at Worktop, England, which is being rescued as a memorial to local men who fell in the war.

## Radical School Teachers Target Of Belknap Bill

"No person shall be permitted to teach in any common school, high school, university, agricultural college, normal school, or any other state school of this state, who teaches bolshevism, radicalism or theories of government subversive of the principles of our government or either publicly or privately engages in destructive or undermining criticism of our government, or who fails to endeavor to impress on the minds of his or her pupils or students the principles of patriotism and loyalty to the United States, or instill into their minds a true comprehension of their rights, duties and dignity of American citizenship."

This is one clause of a bill introduced in the house yesterday afternoon by Representative E. H. Belknap of Benton county.

The bill provides that unless they have declared their intention to become citizens of the United States, teachers and their absence if found guilty and the revocation of their certificates to teach by this act.

## SENATE APPROVES BILL ASKING SURVEY OF COST OF COLUMBIA BRIDGE

Under a suspension of the rules the senate Thursday afternoon passed Senator Norblad's bill providing for a preliminary survey and estimate for an interstate bridge across the lower Columbia river. The bridge as contemplated in Norblad's bill would be constructed to accommodate foot, vehicular and railroad traffic. At the present time it is necessary to ferry across the river in going from Oregon into Washington. It is proposed to build the new bridge as near the ocean as is practicable.

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## Measure Provides Autos Must Stop At All Crossings

A bill requiring all drivers of motor vehicles on public roads outside of municipal corporations to bring their vehicles to a full stop not less than twelve feet from any railroad track before proceeding across such track, and to look in both directions and listen for approaching trains before attempting to cross the tracks, was introduced in the house Thursday by Representative Albert R. Hunter of Union county.

The penalty for violation is fixed at a fine of not more than ten dollars or county jail imprisonment for not more than five days or both fine and imprisonment, and the revocation of the driver's license for a period of thirty days.

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