

# STEALING PUBLIC LANDS

## Western Nebraska Becomes Frightened Over Land Grafts --Settlers Robbed by Grafters

A sudden and marked change has just come over the spirit of the Nebraska land thieves' dreams. Perhaps they are merely turning over upon the other side, to dream again; or perhaps this is the restless stir premonitory to waking. As yet no man can tell. At any rate the change has come.

Since the preceding article of this series was written and since the conviction of the Krause brothers of Alliance in the federal court at Omaha upon the charges of maintaining illegal fences upon government land and of intimidating settlers, I have made a personal visit to a half-dozen of the principal towns in the western part of the state. In this my purpose was to verify one point which developed at the close of the Krause trial and to note its effect.

Six weeks ago Mr. S. R. Rush, of Omaha, was appointed as a special United States attorney to prosecute this and other recent indictments found in Nebraska for violations of the land laws. The work of enforcing these laws had been started by former District Attorney Williamson S. Summers, who secured indictments against several of the chief offenders and had the evidence in hand for further proceedings of this sort when about a year ago he was summarily retired from office. Concerning the circumstances attending his dismissal I shall have nothing to say now, for the present it will suffice to state that his retirement came while matters were pending and undetermined.

And it was wholly agreeable to the land grafters of the western part of the state. Without reflecting in any manner upon the official integrity or acumen of Mr. Summers' successor—a man of excellent repute—it was hoped that his interest would center upon some other phase of his work; it was confidently expected that by one means or another these investigations and prosecutions might be dragged along upon the calendar until they would be smothered by the dust of time.

But there were forces at work behind the curtain, unseen and unknown to the watchful ones. Presently it appeared that some one at Washington was really taking a living interest in this activity was getting "in the air." The proceedings against Mitchell, Hermann and others in Oregon had a grim tension about them; the Clark inquiry was evidently to be pushed in Montana; fraud cases were pending in the federal court at St. Paul; and even more significant, it was reported that the "soldiers' widows' graft was becoming rather unpopular in the interior department. Furrows of perplexity marked the jaundiced face of the cattle country.

The special appointment of Mr.

Rush, like that of Mr. Honey, the prosecutor in the Oregon cases, came as a bolt from the sky which until very recently had held none but the lightest of fair-weather clouds. For many years he had acted as assistant federal attorney at Omaha; the machinery of the office was thoroughly known to him; he was under instructions to proceed, and, being a plain, practical man, he put a very matter-of-fact interpretation upon these instructions. It is no secret that, immediately following his appointment, various plausible friends of "good government" were busily soliciting a reconsideration and counselling inaction for the present, chiefly on the grounds that the thieves, being honest law-abiding citizens, meant to take their fences down and restore their plunder of their own volition, and there was no use in stirring up an ugly scandal to discredit the fair name of the public land states. But the appointment was stubbornly allowed to stand. Within a month after taking up his new duties Mr. Rush had brought the first of the pending cases to trial, and secured a conviction.

The Krause jury returned its verdict sealed, after the adjournment of court for the day. Pending its formal rendering, the defendants discovered—whether by a "leak" or by rivination—that they had been found guilty, and upon what counts of the indictments. Forthwith telegrams were dispatched to many cattlemen and other interested parties throughout the western part of the state, telling of the outcome of the trial. It was soon known that these dispatches carried consternation—not so much because conviction had followed trial (for that was inevitable), as because the general government had at last "got action," in defiance of all precedent. Indictments for land frauds of all sorts had been common enough in this and other states; they had become matters of mere commonplace, exciting no particular comment. But an actual trial and an actual conviction! Most astounding!

On the day of the verdict a court official remarked in my hearing that now, in all probability, there would be a sharp decline in the market for fictitious homesteaders within this jurisdiction—at least for the present. It was to discover, if possible, the accuracy of this forecast that my last trip was made.

I went as a "hobo," intending to proffer my services at large as an errand man for hire. My errand took me to O'Neill, to Valentine, to Chadron, to Alliance, and to North Platte—each place, in the past, a center of the homesteading industry, where attorneys and agents have eked out their income or even subsisted entirely by virtue of

# BEER A LIQUID FOOD

## FOR Betterment of Mankind

### Professor Weber of Ohio State University Draws Line Sharply Between Spirituous and Fermented Liquors---Beer is Termed a Perfect Food By Many Eminent Authorities

Professor Henry A. Weber, of the Ohio State University, in a report recently published, drew the line sharply between SPIRITUOUS and FERMENTED liquors, basing the distinction mainly on the relative proportions of alcohol and extractive matter they contain. The extractive matter he characterized as the FOOD VALUE, and he referred to BEER as the

ONLY LIQUOR WITHIN HIS KNOWLEDGE IN WHICH THE EXTRACTS OF FOOD SUBSTANCES WERE, IN QUANTITY, IN EXCESS OF THE ALCOHOL.

According to his investigations, the average beer contained in the neighborhood of 4 per cent of alcohol, and such a beer could consistently be classed as a

"PERFECT FOOD," although the substances called for in a "perfect food" were not present in their proper proportions. Even the alcohol in these beers, in his opinion, through its oxidation and its effect on heat-producing energy, must be regarded as ENHANCING THEIR FOOD VALUE, an opinion which has also been expressed, after exhaustive scientific experiments, by PROFESSOR ATWATER, of WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY, as described in a previous report, and other eminent authorities.

Professor Weber states, that he would advise the sale of beer in the ordinary dry towns.

"AS A LIQUID FOOD FOR THE BETTERMENT OF MANKIND" in preference to the so-called "temperance beers" containing an alleged 2 per cent of alcohol or less; and that he did not consider that the consumption of a beer containing 4 per cent of alcohol, "AS A FOOD FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUSTAINING LIFE," WOULD TEND TO CREATE A DEMAND FOR A MORE STIMULATING BEVERAGE OR PROMOTE THE INCREASE OF INTEMPERANCE.

the "rake-off" from discovering willing claimants for their clients, the cattlemen.

At O'Neill a call was made upon a real estate agent who was credited with having figured in many transactions of this character, through a series of years. On this morning his office appeared to be anything but a center of activity; he was lolling alone unshaven and forlorn.

"What are you paying for homestead claims?" I questioned, going to the point, with the assurance of one familiar with his ground.

The query failed to kindle the least awakening spark of interest in his gloomy eyes. He did not even take the trouble to speak in answer, but scrawled some figures on a slip of paper lying handy and flipped it toward me across the desk. The figures were three big, discouraged-looking ciphers.

"Why, how's that?" I asked. "I was told to come to you." (Which was a lie, made expressly for the occasion.)

"Well, ou come too late—or too early," he growled. "There's nothin' doin' now; nobody's goin' to buy for a while."

"Why not?" I persisted. He took time to draw a long breath; then he mentioned the Krause case—mentioned it in detail and with feeling, speaking some unprintable words. At first it was a widely inclusive anathema upon the whole organized scheme of things, from O'Neill to the farthest star; but gradually it came to a focus

upon one man: Secretary Hitchcock, of the Interior Department. I judged that Mr. Hitchcock was rather disliked by this brooding new friend of mine.

"What's he doin' it for?" he demanded. "What's he goin' to make by it—blockin' business this way? It's goin' to ruin this country, makin' 'em viev out of everybody that's took a little bit of land. I wish he'd tell me what these sandhills is good for, except grazin', and what's the harm of takin' 'em and usin' 'em?"

"How do you know it's Secretary Hitchcock?" I asked. He broke out again with his unprintable monologue. "It's him," he assured me presently. "It's him, all right enough. It's been common talk he'd make trouble, if he kept his job."

The rest of his diatribe must be excused.

"And the cattlemen are going to quit?" I hinted.

The suggestion lit a new fuse of feeling. "Quit nothin'!" he said. "They're goin' to fight him and all his brood. Quit, and lose all they got in it! What do you take 'em for? He'll be the one to quit first; they're in it to stay."

"Isn't anybody buying claims here now?"

"I reckon not. I wouldn't give five cents a dozen for 'em, till this thing blows over. You might come back after a while—say two or three months; or else write me and find out."

"What would I be likely to get for homesteading?"

"Fifty dollars and expenses. That's what they beed payin'."

A little further tentative inquiry at O'Neill failed to develop the first symptoms of a "rise," and I went thence to Valentine. At Valentine, if anywhere, the traffic would be still prosperous; for there it had taken on bigger and bolder proportions. It was at Valentine that most of the Bartlett Richards and Standard Cattle Company's thrifty trades were consummated.

But there, too, the industry had suddenly been smitten into palsy. If anything, it was deadlier than at O'Neill; it was even difficult to get people to talk about the matter. They seemed exceedingly shy, distrustful of their own tongues. By-and-by, however, with the aid of a well-known and popular cow-country stimulant, one man (a lawyer, politician and real estate agent in one) was coaxed out of his real mood of reticence, but only to inform me, as his brother at O'Neill had done, that my application fell in an unfortunate "betwixt and between" period and would hardly find a taker. He, too, referred to the Krause verdict as the immediate blocking influence; and, rather curiously, he too spoke with considerable feeling concerning Secretary Hitchcock

## MARKET QUOTATIONS TODAY

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Chickens—9@10c.  
Hens—8@9c.  
Frys—12½c.

**Baker, Lawrence & Baker.**  
Eggs—Per dozen, 15c.  
**Fruits, Vegetables, Etc.**  
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Onions—5c.

**Tropical Fruits.**  
Bananas—5½c lb.  
Coconuts, \$1.00 per doz.  
Oranges—\$2.00@2.50.  
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**Live Stock Market.**  
Steers—3@3½.  
Cows—3@3½.  
Sheep—4c.  
Dressed veal—6c.  
Fat hogs—5½@½c.  
Baled Clover—\$9@10.  
Bran—\$22.50.  
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Butter fat—19c at station.  
Grain, Hops and Flour.  
Oats—Choice white, \$1.30.  
Barley—\$23@23.50.  
Flour—\$4.40.  
Wheat—80c.

**Portland Market.**  
Wheat—Walla Walla, 83@84c.  
Wheat—85@87c.  
Flour—Valey, straights, \$4.10; Graham, \$4.00.

**Hay, Feed, Etc.**  
Baled Cheat—\$10.  
Oats—Choice white, \$1.35@1.40.  
Millstuf—Bran, \$19.00.  
Hay—Timothy, \$13.00.  
Potatoes—\$1.15@1.20.

**Poultry—Chickens, mixed, 12½@13c; per lb; hens, 13c per lb; roosters, old, 10c per lb; fryers, 22c per lb; ducks, \$4.00@9.00 per doz; geese 8@9c per lb; turkeys, 17@18c per lb; dressed, 20@21½c per lb; squabs, \$2.50@3.00 per doz.**

**Pork—Dressed, 7½@8c.  
Beef—Dressed, 2½@5c.  
Veal—5@8c.  
Mutton—Dressed, 6½@7½c.  
Hops—Contract, 1905, 16c; 1904 crop, 25c for choice; 23@24c for primes and mediums.**

**Wool—1905 clip, valley, coarse to medium, 24½@25½c; fine, 26½@28c; Eastern Oregon, 19@22½c.  
Mohair—Nominal, 30@31c.  
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No. 2 for Yaquina—  
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Leaves Corvallis ..... 1:45 P.M.  
Arrives Yaquina ..... 5:45 P.M.

No. 1 Returning—  
Leaves Yaquina ..... 7:15 A.M.  
Leaves Corvallis ..... 11:30 A.M.  
Arrives Albany ..... 12:15 P.M.

No. 3 for Albany-Detroit—  
Leaves Albany for Detroit 7:30 A.M.  
Arrives Detroit ..... 12:30 P.M.

No. 4 from Detroit—  
Leaves Detroit ..... 1:30 P.M.  
Arrives Albany ..... 6:30 P.M.

No. 5 for Albany—  
Leaves Corvallis ..... 6:30 A.M.  
Arrives Albany ..... 7:10 A.M.

No. 8 for Corvallis—  
Leaves Albany ..... 2:40 P.M.  
Arrives Corvallis ..... 3:30 P.M.

No. 7 for Albany—  
Leaves Corvallis ..... 6:00 P.M.  
Arrives Albany ..... 6:40 P.M.

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Leaves Albany ..... 9:15 P.M.  
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Train No. 1 arrives in Albany it time to connect with the S. P. south-bound train.

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