

IT IS NOT PROOF

FRAUDULENT PENSION MONEY MUST BE RETURNED.

DEMANDS OF THE GOVERNMENT

A Pension Case From Georgia Under Consideration—Where Woman Impersonated Deceased Brother's Wife, Causes Promulgation of New Order by Treasury.

WASHINGTON.—It is stated at the treasury department that where a pension certificate has been issued to a woman who impersonated the widow of a deceased pensioner, and pensioner's checks have been drawn payable to her and delivered to her upon vouchers executed by her, and the bank cashed such checks, which were in due course paid at the subscribers upon which drawn, the government will make reclamation of the amount. In other words, bankers and other persons who cash pension checks are charged with the responsibility of establishing the identity of the payees of such checks to the same extent that they are charged with the responsibility of establishing the identity of the payees of ordinary commercial transactions. The exhibition of a pension certificate is not identification of the person named therein. This ruling was held in a case arising in Georgia, wherein one Clarence Owens, whose real name was Jolly Melton, obtained a pension, it is said, by impersonating the deceased wife of a soldier, and received payment at the rate of \$5 per month from April 8, 1901, to May 4, 1903.

It developed in the examination of this claim that the soldier left a widow, who is supposed to have died in Florida. Molly Melton, a sister of the soldier, impersonated her deceased sister-in-law, obtained the pension, forged endorsements of her deceased sister-in-law to the checks and obtained the money. For this offense she was tried in the United States district court at Savannah, Ga., and was sentenced to one year and one day's confinement in the penitentiary.

The officials of the Northern Pacific railroad deny the statement attributed to Frank Waterhouse, manager of the Boston Steamship company of Seattle, in a recent testimony before the interstate commission, that his company had a contract with the Northern Pacific which prohibited that railway company from accepting freight brought in by tramp steamships. They assert that while the company has no exclusive contract and no agreement beyond a division of rates on business from the Orient, it is the general practice of railroad companies in the transaction of their business to make a concession to establish and maintain permanent lines with a fixed and regular schedule of sailings and arrivals, and with advertised routes, with dockage facilities, etc., over transient steamships, mostly foreign, which have happened to pick up a cargo and have no regular business.

Brings Amur's Passengers. SEATTLE, Wash.—The steamship Farralon reached Seattle Monday, having on board the passengers of the overdue Canadian Pacific steamship Amur. The Amur left Skagway of Sunday, December 13, and on Monday, the 14th, ran into Harbor reef at the entrance to Port Simpson. At high tide it pulled off, but in doing so broke its tail shaft. It succeeded in reaching the wharf at Port Simpson and on Friday the Farralon went in and took it to dock.

Better Demand for Coal. WILKESBARRE, Pa.—The Lehigh Valley Coal company and the Lehigh & Wilkesbarre Coal company announce a suspension of work from December 24 to January 4, and it is likely that this move will be followed by other companies. Those who are familiar with the coal trade say there is a brisk demand for coal at the present time, and restriction is more to keep up prices for the winter than because of any overproduction.

Story of Landing Confirmed. WASHINGTON—Official confirmation has been received from the island of Los Pinos, which lies close to the coast of Panama. These troops number eighty and they have taken up a position on the high island.

Wreck of the Discovery Found. SEATTLE, Wash.—A special dispatch from Juneau says that the wreck of the steamer Discovery has been found. An Indian from Cross Sound found the wreck and brought the news to Juneau. The revenue cutter Rush has gone to the scene, taking the Indian as a guide.

Commerce with Canada. WASHINGTON—Commerce between Canada and the United States shows a rapid gain both in the figures of the year about to end and in those of the decennial period which ends with the present year. The year's commerce with Canada, as shown by the figures of the department of commerce and labor through its bureau of statistics, will aggregate nearly two hundred million dollars, against less than one hundred millions in 1885.

Violate Their Agreement. ALTONA, Pa.—The Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburg Coal and Coke company announced a wage reduction at its Helvetia operations amounting to 10 per cent, to go into effect January 1. While the Helvetia miners are a comparatively insignificant part of the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburg company's workings, the reduction is considered prophetic of a more sweeping move by the company shortly, which will cut the wages of 16,000 men.

ONE IN THREE GETS PLACE.

Civil Service Report Shows What is Done for Winners.

WASHINGTON—Frank M. Kiggins, chief examiner of the civil service commission, in his annual report says that during the last fiscal year there were 112,624 persons examined for the classified service of the government and 49,423 appointments in all branches of the service. Of the appointments 24 per cent were to purely clerical positions, 3 per cent to professional, technical or scientific positions, 35 per cent to mechanical positions requiring no educational examination, and 7 per cent to skilled labor positions, not exactly mechanical in their character, but requiring no educational examination. Of all those examined nearly 80 per cent passed, and 35 per cent of all examined were successful in securing appointments. Mr. Kiggins says the commission has reduced its examinations to essential tests of fitness and urges the consolidation of a large number of local boards of examiners throughout the country, to secure closer supervision and more effective administration.

The report states that conditions of employment in the Philippines are improving and the salaries for technical men have been increased, with the result that within the last five months more applicants have taken examinations for that service than for the preceding year. The number of Americans in that service now constitutes more than 50 per cent of the entire force, there being 2,777 Americans and 2,697 Filipinos in public employment. As the Filipinos acquire a knowledge of English and become more familiar with American methods, they are expected to take the places of Americans.

RUSSIA IS DEFIANT. London Hears a Report that Causes Anxiety in Well Informed Circles. LONDON.—Reuters Telegram company has learned that considerable anxiety exists in the best informed circles of London regarding the possible outcome of the situation in the far east. Pages are, it is said, expressed that the Russian government may have overstepped the bounds which would make the continuation of peaceful negotiations with Japan possible. It may be regarded as quite certain, it asserts, that Japan will not accept the principles of the last Russian note, which is at variance with Japan's main contention, and that Japan's reply must necessarily be cast in this sense. Apart from the delicate state of the negotiations between the two nations Reuters says it is also known that Russia is assuming a more defiant attitude, and the outlook may be regarded as more gloomy than it hitherto has been, although it cannot be said that the resources of diplomacy have been completely exhausted.

The statement concludes by saying that there is as yet no actual news of fresh developments and that no ultimatum has been sent by Japan to Russia.

REPRESENTATIVES' NEW HOME. Will Be Started Soon and to Cost Seven Million Dollars. WASHINGTON—Speaker Cannon and Representatives Hepburn and Richardson of Tennessee, comprising the commission having in charge the construction of an office building for the house of representatives, were informed by Attorney General Knox that the jury of condemnation had fixed the price to be paid for the site at \$741,000, and that his department was now engaged in reviewing title to the various pieces of property preliminary to the government taking title. The ground will then be cleared and the erection of the building begun at once. The structure is to cost between \$5,000,000 and \$4,000,000 and its construction will take several years.

NINE DIE IN WRECK. Frisco Fast Train from the South Strikes Open Switch in Kansas. KANSAS CITY.—In a wreck of the "Meteor," the St. Louis & San Francisco railway's fast train from the south, eight persons were killed and thirty-two others injured at Godfrey, Kan. Of the injured, five probably will die and fourteen were seriously hurt.

The responsibility for the wreck is laid at the door of a brakeman of the freight train, who failed to flag the passenger train. He has disappeared. The engine on the freight had become "dead" and the crew was ordered to remain on the main track and turn the switch for the passenger train about due, the brakeman being ordered to flag the Meteor. This he neglected to do.

Mrs. Wood Safe for Manila. NEW YORK.—By special permission of the war department, Mrs. Wood, the wife of General Leonard Wood, and her 3-year-old son will sail on the transport Kilpatrick, which leaves this port for Manila, carrying the Second United States cavalry.

Attempt to Blackmail a Priest. DULUTH, Minn.—Rev. Father Gilbert of Hurley, Wis., pastor of a Roman Catholic church there, is in receipt of several communications from anonymous persons threatening him with death if he fails to place \$5,100 in a designated spot in the Hurley cemetery by a certain time. The first of these communications he paid no attention, but subsequent ones have so preyed on his mind that it is feared he is nearly overcome by nervous prostration.

How Alliance is Delayed. LONDON.—The Daily Mail's Peking correspondent declares that a few Manchurian nobles, who are under Russian influences, are delaying the conclusion of an alliance between China and Japan.

Find of Gold in Wisconsin. MILWAUKEE, Wis.—A special from Menominee, Wis., says: Gold ore has been discovered on a farm near the town of Lucas, Dunn county, near this city, last assays \$145 to the ton.

RECORD OF WOOD

SECRETARY ROOT WRITES TO SENATOR PROCTOR.

FAVORS THE YOUNGER GENERALS

Where Rule of Seniority Prevails Military System Must Be Weak—Sound Reasons President Should Follow in Making Military Appointments.

WASHINGTON.—The letter of Secretary Root to Senator Proctor, acting chairman of the committee on military affairs, dated November 18 last, giving a resume of the military record of General Leonard Wood and stating the chief considerations which led to his nomination as a major general, was made public Sunday. After quoting from remarks complimentary to General Wood, made by General Miles, Lawton, Graham and Forsythe, the letter recites that "upon these and similar evidences of fitness President McKinley appointed Captain Wood colonel of the First volunteer cavalry in May, 1898. The secretary also quotes from the commendations of Generals Young, Wheeler, Sumner and Shafter on General Wood's conduct in the Santiago campaign, and says General Wood's appointment as commander of the Santiago province appears to have been based upon a statement made by General Shafter in a dispatch to the department in which he said he thought General Wood by far the best man to leave in command of Santiago."

The secretary reviews General Wood's subsequent military career, saying in this connection: "The high estimate put by the secretary of war upon General Wood's services as military governor is shown in the published orders of the war department," referring to the general orders of March 25, 1902, and July 4, 1902, which have heretofore been published. The secretary adds that the opinions expressed in those orders also were the opinions of both presidents under which the service was rendered, saying: "Upon a review of General Wood's entire military record, I think it fair to say that no officer in the American army below the grade of major general has held more important commands, rendered more distinguished service or demonstrated to a higher degree the possession of the qualities which fit a man to render valuable service to the country as a major general."

Speaking of the principles of which, he says, sound political reason requires the president to follow in making appointments, the secretary says: "The law which recognizes seniority alone as the title to promotions up to the grade of colonel, abandons that rule when it deals with general officers and imposes upon the president the duty of selecting the best men for promotion, without expressing any limitation upon the class from which he is to make the selection."

The secretary adds that when such a selection is to be made two different considerations always present themselves to the appointing mind—one, a desire to reward long and meritorious service; the other, to secure the best possible man.

INSIST ON AN EARLY TRIAL. Senator Dietrich and General Cowin Demand Hearing in Court. OMAHA—United States Senator Charles H. Dietrich of Hastings, with his attorney, General John C. Covin, appeared before W. H. Munger Friday afternoon for the purpose of arranging for the early appearance of Senator Dietrich for trial in the recent indictments found against him by the federal grand jury in the Hastings postoffice cases. Senator Dietrich was not required to give any bond. In the absence of District Attorney Summers at Lincoln Friday evening Assistant District Attorney Rush was present at the conference.

Both Senator Dietrich and General Cowin insisted on the hearing being held for the earliest practical date. Senator Dietrich, who was vociferously at the beginning of a special session of the United States district court, fixed for December 28. Assistant District Attorney Rush was averse to assuming the responsibility of fixing the date in the absence of Summers. The matter was deferred therefore until Summers arrives.

Bills Introduced in the House. WASHINGTON—A bill was introduced in the house Friday by Mr. Vreeland (N. Y.) to provide for the allotment of lands in severity to the Indians in the state of New York and to extend the protection of the laws of the United States over such Indians.

Mr. Hearst (N. Y.) introduced a bill to establish a parcels post. It provides for a classification of mail matter, defining the kind that shall be carried in the different classes.

Mr. Gardner (Mass.) introduced a bill to create a committee to recommend legislation for the development of the merchant marine.

Fool Not to Be Fooled With. NEW YORK.—It has been learned, owing to a World dispatch from New Haven, Conn., that the action of the railroad officials recently in pulling the night express from New York to Boston under heavy armed guards was due to a demand for \$5,000. The letter, which threatened the entire destruction of the train if the money were not forthcoming, was made by pasting together on a sheet of paper words clipped from newspapers.

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NEBRASKA STATE NEWS

NEWBY STATE BRIEFS.

WAR ON COYOTES.

Club Organized in Custer County to Exterminate Them. CALLAWAY—A move is on foot to organize a county coyote club in this county, each precinct in the county to have a club of its own, and all to work together over the county. For many months the coyotes have been raiding the chicken yards, the pig pens, and in several instances have killed and devoured sheep and calves, and it is proposed that these clubs be organized and on a certain day each week during the winter months a general roundup will be made with the determination of exterminating these pests. The animals are more numerous than they have been for years, and as there is now no bounty on them, but little effort has been made to kill them off. Their hideous howl may be heard in every direction as soon as the sun goes down, and is kept up during the entire night.

The move has been started for the organization of the clubs and it is thought that by each precinct having an organization of its own, and electing its officers and holding regular weekly roundups, hundreds of coyotes can be captured and killed.

WOMAN KILLED BY CARS. Buggy Struck by B. & M. Passenger Train. AURORA—A terrible accident occurred at the city limits of Aurora, Mrs. Alex Wilson and Miss Ethel, her daughter, 19 years of age, whose home is four miles southwest of Aurora, were on their way to the city to do some trading when they were struck by B. & M. passenger train No. 42, at the crossing west of the round house. Mrs. Wilson's neck was broken, resulting in immediate death. The daughter received serious injuries, including a broken leg and bruised head, but so far as can now be told it is thought she will recover. The horse they were driving was instantly killed. The buggy was carried on the pilot of the engine until the train was stopped. The supposition is that the victims of the frightful tragedy were watching freight train No. 45, which was about to pull out of the yards, and failed to see the fast train until it was too late. The husband and father is one of the oldest settlers of this community.

For Primary Teachers. The primary teachers of the state especially favored this year in having the amount of their salaries increased by the board of education of the city of Omaha, who are to be present and address them at the state teachers' meeting. Miss Cooper attended the public schools of Oswego, N. Y., and graduated from the state normal school at that place in 1885. In this school she received special preparation for the work she has since done so successfully, that of training and fitting prospective and beginning teachers for their work.

Boy Hurt by Cars. NEILAWKA—Claude Johnson, a boy about 14 years old, was swinging on the side of a freight car while switching was being done. As the car ran by the yard the boy was knocked off by the cattle chock and a couple of gashes cut in the back of his head, another five inches long across his forehead, and his right hand was completely severed from his arm.

Has Smallpox Scare. GENEVA—This county is having a smallpox scare and a board of health, just organized, sent out a number of quarantine cards.

Adjudged Insane. BASSETT—John L. Gordon, aged twenty-seven, of Kirkwood, precinct, was brought before the insanity board here and adjudged of unsound mind. He was taken to Lincoln by Sheriff Smith. Mr. Gordon disappeared last summer for several months, and though strict search was made by relatives, he could not be found. In August he reappeared at his old home. His friends are certain that medical treatment will restore his mind.

Prizes to Be Given. Two prizes aggregating \$50 will be given to Nebraska debaters this year if they win from Kansas and Washington universities. Chancellor Andrews has offered a prize of \$50 for one of the teams if it wins. This will be known as the "chancellor's prize." The prize will be shared equally by the speakers. To the other team if it wins will go a prize of \$50, also shared equally, known as the "university prize." Where this prize comes from has not yet been given out.

Killed by a Fall. LINWOOD—A serious accident occurred one mile east of here whereby Joseph Polifka, aged 28, lost his life. He has been working for L. C. Sedlicky for two years. They were hauling hay, Sedlicky being about twenty rods ahead of him on another load. The hay began to slip and Polifka called to Mr. Sedlicky, who stopped his team and got off his wagon, but could not see Polifka, so he went back to the wagon. Polifka was lying beside the hay dead, his skull crushed.

Select Omaha Architects. WAHOO—The report of the board of county commissioners of Saunders county awarded the contract to draw plans and specifications for the new \$85,000 court house to Fisher & Lawrence, architects, Omaha.

Boy's Injuries Fatal. BLAIR—Gifford Tucker, the 13-year-old boy of Mr. Freeman Tucker who was run over by the cars at DeSoto and whose leg was amputated, died from his wounds.

FOR LAND FRAUDS

REPUTED HEAD OF CONSPIRACY TAKEN IN CHARGE.

OPERATED ON A LARGE SCALE

John A. Benson of San Francisco Accused of Bribing Officers of the Government on His Present Trip to the National Capital.

WASHINGTON.—John A. Benson, a wealthy San Francisco real estate operator, charged by the Interior department with being the head of the alleged land frauds extending over a number of western states and territories, to which Secretary Hitchcock referred vigorously and at length in his annual report, was arrested here at the Willard hotel by Secret Service Officer John A. Burns just as he was preparing to leave the city for New York.

The charge on which the arrest was made was bribery, it being alleged in the affidavit of Mr. Burns and in the warrant that Benson had paid \$500 to Woodford D. Harlan, former chief of the special service division of the general land office and now a clerk in that office, on March 15th of this year, for the purpose of extracting from him information regarding the investigation of his operations; at that time being made by the land office.

The warrant was issued by United States Commissioner Andrew S. Taylor, and as soon as Benson had been apprehended by Officer Burns he was taken before Commissioner Taylor. He wished to have a preliminary hearing of his case postponed and the date for such hearing was fixed for December 29th. He gave bail for his appearance on that date, when the government attorneys will ask to have him held for the grand jury.

A statement was made by an officer of the government that the information obtained in regard to the alleged conspiracy implicates a number of persons at present employed in the Interior department at Washington and elsewhere.

Numerous arrests are expected to follow that of Benson, in short order and some employees who may not be arrested will be discharged from the service. It is said that Secretary Hitchcock and the special attorneys in the case have considered it absolutely necessary to the working out of the case that no action be taken with reference to the other alleged offenders until the principals in the case had been apprehended.

The government attorneys, Mr. Arthur B. Pugh, who has been the special attorney for the Interior department on the land frauds, and Mr. Oliver P. King, assistant attorney of the Department of Justice, who has also been employed on the case, stated in asking for a large bail bond for Benson that he had been guilty of bribery during his present visit to Washington, since last Monday, and in the Interior department itself, notwithstanding that he was aware that his connection with the alleged frauds was fully known by the Interior department.

The statement was made later that Secretary Hitchcock was so incensed at the flagrancy of this offense that he told the officers to have Benson arrested at once, although it had not been planned to have him arrested at this time.

CONDITIONS ARE COMPLICATED. Navy Department is Not Giving Out Information. WASHINGTON—After a conference between Secretary Moody, Rear Admiral Taylor, chief of the bureau of navigation, and Brigadier General George Elliott, commander of the marine corps, it was decided that if present conditions on the isthmus of Panama continue, General Elliott will sail for Colon on the steamer from Philadelphia when that vessel goes south with the new battalion of marines, which has been ordered assembled at Philadelphia for dispatch to the isthmus. The Dixie is now on her way north for this purpose.

General Elliott has been anxious for some days to give a field command and it is the present intention of the officials to grant his request.

ST. JOHNS GO ASHORE. THREE.—During a fierce blizzard on Sunday the schooner Susan was driven ashore off St. Johns. Its crew, after twelve hours in an open boat, made port this morning badly frost bitten. The schooner Mary Ellen went ashore at Trepassay. The crew clung to the rocks all night and suffered terribly from exposure. The schooner Fashoda went ashore at Green's pond. The crew escaped. It is feared that the schooner Diaper has foundered with its crew.

Not to Employ Russians. LONDON.—The Daily Mail's Tokyo correspondent says that the Korean foreign office denies the reported agreement to employ Russian officers in the Korean army.

Revising the Land Laws. WASHINGTON.—The commission on public lands, recently appointed by President Roosevelt to report on the condition, operation and effect of the present land laws, and of the use, disposal and settlement of the public lands, held its first meeting Thursday. This body is composed of Commissioner W. A. Richards of the general land office, Gifford Pinchot, chief of the bureau of forestry, and F. H. Kestel, chief hydrographer of the geological survey.

Marines Find Good Camp. WASHINGTON.—In a cablegram from Rear Admiral Coghlan, commanding the naval force in Atlantic-Isthmian waters, which reached the navy department Thursday night, the landing of the battalion of marines from the Prairie at Grogon is reported. The battalion will go into camp at that place the medical officers having reported that the health conditions there are fully satisfactory. Grogon is some distance above the sea and comparatively healthy.