

ACRES OF WATER UNLOADED

Millions Secured from Sale of Florida Swamps.

PROSPECT OF DRAINAGE REMOTE

How Promoters Dodged the Post-office Department and Scooped in the Money of Investors.

Summarizing the testimony taken by the committee of congress investigating the Everglades land swindle in Florida, the Washington correspondent of the New York World presents these connected facts:

More than sixty years ago the Everglades were ceded to Florida by the United States government. The region contains 4,000,000 acres, most of which is covered by from one to fifteen feet of water. The agreement was that Florida should devote to its school fund the revenue from the Everglades, if they were rented or sold.

After many different reports had been made as to the feasibility of draining the region and the probable value of the lands if drained, Hamilton Weston, the Philadelphia aviator, undertook in 1891 the first actual work of reclamation. The Florida Internal Improvement board, which had charge of the swamps, agreed to pay him 25 cents an acre for drainage. He did not get far with the project. It took years to settle the Weston claim against the state.

The reclamation of the Everglades did not get another boost until Napoleon B. Broward was elected governor of Florida in 1906. Reclamation had been one his battle cries in the campaign and he rehabilitated the project after he got into office. Broward and former Governor Jennings, a cousin of W. J. Bryan, controlled the Internal Improvement board. The first result of their agitation was the sale of some small tracts of the swamp at from \$2 to \$5 an acre.

Drainage Investigations. At about that time Major J. O. Wright, then an engineer of the United States Agricultural department, was sent to Florida, by congressional resolution, to report on the feasibility of draining the Everglades. He also was scheduled to report on the probable agricultural value of the reclaimed lands.

Wright spent many months in the region in 1906 and 1907. While he was there the state of Florida began to dredge the canals through the swamp and agreed to spend \$1.50 an acre on drainage. Speculators bought small sections at \$2 an acre and sold them with some success throughout the country at a much higher price.

In July, 1908, Governor Broward and former Governor Jennings interested Richard J. Bolles of Colorado in the Everglades plan. Bolles, who had made a fortune in western irrigation, went to Florida and bought from private individuals 400,000 acres and from the state 700,000 acres of the swamp at \$2 an acre, payable in installments, the state agreeing to spend \$1.50 an acre in drainage. The last of Bolles's installments is due in 1915, by which time the state has contracted to complete the drainage.

Major Wright, in 1909, completed his report on the Everglades and turned it in to the agricultural department. He asserts that his report was not intended either to boost or condemn the plans for the Everglades, but contained all the available evidence pro and con on the plan so that the public could draw its own conclusion.

Portions of the Wright report found their way into the hands of the swamp boomers and were widely circulated as commendatory. It is alleged that on the strength of these extracts from the Wright report, the speculators sold scores of thousands of acres of the swamp at from \$12 to \$50 an acre.

Immense Profits for Bolles. One batch of 180,000 acres of this land was sold through the Florida Fruit Lands company to persons in the middle west. There is a suit pending for recovery on the part of 12,000 persons who invested in this batch.

The plaintiffs in the case aver that Bolles received \$1,800,000 for this land on which he had paid the state of Florida about \$300,000 and on which he is expected eventually to pay \$100,000.

His selling agents, it is said, received on this batch, commissions of \$600,000. The Bolles agents, under many names, are selling the lands in all sections of the country at \$50 an acre. The promoters have cut the country up into sections, and virtually every state in the union, with the exception of Florida and the adjoining states, is covered with the agencies.

The postoffice department got on the trail of the promoters. Through the activities of the postal inspectors, S. B. Bolles, a brother of Richard Bolles, has been indicted in Florida with others. The indictment charges him with using the United States mails to defraud.

The promoters have evolved a scheme to beat the postoffice department. They do not use the mails any more. They have opened up offices all over the country where they "prove" the value of the property by showing prospective purchasers what will grow on the soil. The soil is in buckets in their show windows. They show the purchaser beautiful views of the level Everglades in a state of cultivation. They show him vegetables of all sorts and fruits growing rapidly in earth supposed to have been transplanted from the Everglades.

Almost Inaccessible. They do not tell the purchasers that the land in the Everglades, with the exception of the fringe, is almost inaccessible and that nothing but wild vegetation is growing thereon. Along the canals that have been cut into parts of the Everglades houses have been built and some farmers are prospering in some sections. These canals are miles apart and between them is nothing but water covered land with no prospect of drainage.

Engineers who have examined the lands say the present canals will never carry off the water; they are not large enough. The state of Florida has not guaranteed to build any further canals. It has no money with which to build them. The people who are not interested in the Everglades will not furnish the millions that it is estimated will be required to complete the work. The land companies, according to the Moss committee, are not getting any money to complete the drainage.

The Perils of the Circuit. The long haired actor man was bargaining for a rope. "I want it plenty long enough," he said.

"In case of fire?" inquired the hardware dealer.

"In case of an impatient landlord and a quick getaway," replied the actor.

"You'll want about sixty feet," said the dealer.

"All of that," replied the actor. "The last rope I had was too short and my trunk pulled me out of the window." And he rubbed the back of his head reminiscently.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

HIGH LIMIT FOR ARMY AIRMEN

Greater Altitude Than 4,000 Feet Deemed Useless for Observation Work.

The army aviators now in camp at Augusta, Ga., where they are having a lot of trouble owing to the weather that has prevailed in that section of the country this winter, have agreed among themselves not to make any altitude flights of a greater height than 4,000 feet. The reason for this is that the observations for military purposes, since at greater altitudes military observations are of practically no value.

Frank Coffey, the aviator who made the hydro-aeroplane flights in New York last week, and who was sent to San Antonio to instruct the army aviators in the use of the Wright biplane when the army was mobilized on the Mexican frontier last spring, knows personally all the officers who belong to the Army Aviation corps. He said yesterday that he had agreed with Captains Chandler and Beck and Lieutenants Arnold, Foulkes, Milling and Kirkland that altitudes over one mile were useless for military purposes.

"It seems to me," said Coffey, "that this agreement is both sensible and practical. In my opinion a height of one mile should be quite sufficient to safeguard the aviators either from rifle or artillery fire. In the event that it is not proved so in the first encounter, the military aviators can very quickly adapt themselves to altered conditions.

"The chief reason why aviators should not fly too high lies, of course, in the rapid change of atmospheric conditions in both ascent and descent, and added to this is the nervous tension attendant upon flying at great altitudes, a tension that is ever present no matter how experienced the aviator may be, or how great his nerve.

"We all know that aeroplanes can be driven to heights of 10,000 or even 12,000 feet, and that the aviators do 'get away with it' but after all, that is all they do. There is seldom if ever any valid excuse for going up 10,000 feet, and men have been doing it only because the promoters of aviation tournaments regard altitude contests as good paying attractions, and therefore put up big prizes for this most dangerous of all aeroplane contests.

"For military purposes a height of 4,000 or 5,000 feet will keep an aviator almost out of range of guns of all types. I believe that some day aeroplanes will fight aeroplanes and that there will be machines that may be called aeroplane destroyers, and maybe some other day, still farther away, aeroplane-aeroplane-destroyers, just like they have torpedo boat destroyers in the navy now.

"From the experience I gained while flying in Texas last spring, mostly with Lieutenant Foulkes as a passenger, I believe that little accurate observation work may be accomplished at altitudes of more than 3,000 feet, certainly topographical work at heights greater than that could not be accurate, since it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the true nature of the country above which you are flying. I am not optimistic about bomb throwing from aeroplanes, for at any reasonable altitude, and it would be too far to be reasonable, to drop the bomb accurately, the artillery would surely get the machine before many bombs were disposed of.

"I can cite an instance of just what is going to happen when an aeroplane flies too low over even light field places. Rene Simon, a crack French aviator, flew his sixty-mile-an-hour Bleriot about 2,000 feet over four batteries of the Third United States Field Artillery at San Antonio last spring. They fired at him, using blank cartridges of course. The concussion almost knocked Simon out of his seat, and only his wonderful airmanship kept him safe. His machine rocked and bucked like an untrained broncho. Artillery will not have to hit aeroplanes or their pilots. If high artillery explosives can be detonated within fifty yards of the flying machines attacked it will certainly bother the aviator flying too low. So a military aviator will have to fly at least 5,000 or 6,000 feet for safety when passing troops."—New York Times.

PEARLS REGARDLESS OF COST

Increased Importation of Precious Gems Indicates Prosperity in Patches.

That the high cost of living, about which so much is being said, has little effect upon the desire of the public for diamonds and other gems is shown by the big importations at the port of New York during 1911, and if the receipts at the custom house during the initial month of the new year can be taken as an indication the American people will be as anxious as ever to buy diamonds, pearls and other precious stones during 1912.

According to figures compiled by W. R. Treadwell, examiner at the Public Stores in New York City, the value of the January gem imports reached the almost record figure of \$3,113,000, as against \$2,996,670 a year ago. The imports indicate that the precious stone and pearl trades in New York have found the demand for certain lines to have in no way decreased since the holidays.

Of the gems imported during January 1912, the value of the cut precious stones and pearls are reported as \$2,298,508, as compared with \$2,210,361 in January, 1911, while the value of the uncut gems, principally diamonds, is placed at \$814,544. In the last twelve years the importation of gems during January have exceeded the 1911 values in only two years.

During 1911 the value of the gems which reached the country through the port of New York was \$6,874,258, exceeding all other years with the exception of 1906. During the last year the large imports are said by Maiden Lane dealers to be due in part to the demand for pearl necklaces.—New York Herald.

Not Wanted.

Hannibal sent a message to the chief of the Ligurians.

"Sir," he said, "I have about reached the conclusion that your assistance is doing me more harm than good. Therefore I must ask you and your little band of followers to offer me no more public aid."

The Ligurian leader was silent for a moment.

"And you do not fear my army?" "I fear the even less," replied the cheerful strategist.

Whereupon the Ligurian went away and took counsel with certain sympathetic friends.

Which shows that history is still a repeater.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Gentle Cynic.

Occasionally a soft answer starts a rough horse.

The Bee's Letter Box

No Reason for Roosevelt's Candidacy

KENESAW, Neb., Feb. 28.—To the Editor of The Bee: Colonel Roosevelt's reply to the governors that he would accept the republican nomination for the presidency of the United States in 1912 if tendered him makes most sober minded republicans as well as democrats sit up and take notice as to what it all means. When we look back to the night of November 8, 1904, when he made the following statement: "Under no circumstances will I be a candidate for or accept another nomination."

When we look back to the other date of December 11, 1906, when he said as follows: "I have not changed and shall not change that decision thus announced." Let us compare these statements with the one made February 24, 1912, as follows: "I will accept the nomination for president if it is tendered to me, and I will adhere to this decision until the convention has expressed its preference."

That a former president should make such conflicting statements in so short a space of time seems unthinkable.

That Theodore Roosevelt would turn his back and betray his friend, the present occupant of the White House, seems very unbecoming to a man who poses as a great reformer.

It is one of the greatest mistakes Theodore Roosevelt ever made to break his word to the American people. The governors should have left the colonel alone. The people of their respective states would have thought more of them. Our own governor is not making himself more solid with the people for the part he has taken. There is no valid reason why the republican party should turn down President Taft for Theodore Roosevelt.

NEILS MIKKELSEN.

The M. W. A. Rates. HARVARD, Neb., Feb. 28.—To the Editor of The Bee: My attention has just been called to the reply of John Steed to my suggestion that the rate question in the Modern Woodmen of America camp be adjusted along lines now in use by the Ancient Order of United Workmen only that the age limit of such settlement may be made, be at any time after fifty years in place of seventy. His illustration of a fire insurance company policy is not well taken.

Unless a man has insured largely and lost by fire has been light, few if any, ever pay what they receive back. As comparatively few of the many buildings insured are burned, the company are able to pay those who lose from the money received from those who do not lose on a fixed rate of loss to class insured, and when they find they have an undesirable risk, they withdraw as soon as possible.

It is not claimed by the Chicago convention so far as I have heard, that the present advanced rate after that the rate of \$1 per \$1,000 takes effect, is sufficient to pay the death loss of those members after that date if all stay in the order and mature policy by death, but that the rate of the younger members has been "loaded" to help the old member out on his rate he otherwise would have to pay.

I do not know the number, but for this purpose assume 100,000 members of the order past 50 years of age, that would gladly retire for a per cent of what they have paid in, in place of continuing their payments and maturing policy by death, no doubt a saving to the order of two-thirds the face of their policies, we think much more.

This is not an occasion for an "actuary" to make figures high or low, for as to that we say nothing, but what we do say is this: The order has advanced their assessment from the first promise they gave the member to carry a \$1,000 policy for a monthly payment of \$1.00 some years ago to \$2.50 and now the same policy to \$9 per month, giving the member no alternative but to pay or get out of the order.

The order has not kept its word, and we believe had the management so desired, they could have made terms with membership along lines we have suggested to the advantage of the member and the order, then let those stay who wish to do so and others retire. T. A. BARBOUR.

Another Insurance Protest.

FLORENCE, Neb., Feb. 28.—To the Editor of The Bee: Permit me to say the raise in rates in the Nebraska Mutual Life Insurance company of Hastings is unjust. Even if necessary, it was not made in accordance with the original plan, but should have been an extra assessment each year instead of a raise on the "quantity" of insurance, as we all started in the company alike with \$500 insurance, and the old age benefit is drawn out money before they have been in the company twenty years from the time of its adoption. But to "cap the climax" the proposed new policies gives new members the right to take out insurance up to \$2,000 from the start, which does not conform with our other policies that you and I took out at \$500 each; it does not show an equality basis and will be the worst mixed up mess of life insurance I ever saw, unless the members get together, as they are doing in the Modern Woodmen and rout the ones who are working on selfish motives. C. L. NETHAWAY.

Selling the Blue Sky.

OMAHA, Feb. 27.—To the Editor of The Bee: Regardless of political affiliations, why should not the enlightened and progressive people of Nebraska protect their own interests? Why can't we Nebraskans see that as good a law is passed in our commonwealth as was lately enacted in neighboring Kansas.

We refer to the law requiring reports from concerns that offer stocks for sale, with power to bar those that will evidently prove profitable to nobody—except the promoter.

No valid reason exists why Nebraska, which extends to protect its citizens against theft in other forms, should be content by inaction this biggest and cruelest of modern swindles.

Kansas claims to have saved its citizens by this law several millions of dollars during the last year.

"Selling stock in the blue sky," as it is called, and all other fake stock swindles should be barred by law in Nebraska as well as elsewhere and the promoters made to suffer the penalty. R. W. E.

The key to success in business is the persistent and judicious use of newspaper advertising.

Styepplus

A pack of trouble has come out of many a half-pint flask.

Some mules kick without any more reason than some men.

The linguist may be able to master all the modern tongues except his wife's.

A woman's idea of a good photograph is one that looks like she would like to look.

Think the only people who have time to think twice before they speak are those who stutter.

Women are more economical than men. A man will manufacture a tie out of the whole cloth, but a woman will generally use remnants.—New York Times.

Grand Opening Saturday, March 2d -of the- LEEDS WOOLEN MILLS \$15 UNION MADE FREE---\$5 TO \$8 PANTS---FREE On Our Opening Day With Every Two-Piece Suit Remember, we are the only people known to the \$15 Suit system using the high quality of work we employ in the construction of a suit to sell for \$15.00 Money Deposited With Us is as Safe as With a Guarantee Bank If We Fail to Please. DON'T BE SATISFIED WITH A PASSABLY GOOD SUIT GET ONE, PERFECTLY MADE. The more skeptical may doubt our ability to produce a substantial suit for a fifteen dollar price, but the wise need only to know we have located at 318 SO. 15th ST., BOURKE'S OLD STAND SAM EZELLE, Manager.

ORIGIN OF LOCOMOTIVE CAB them at all times to the weather. When the proposal was first made in Britain to protect engineers from the weather, it met with noisy opposition, as being calculated to enervate a highly virtry class of men, and the argument was considered so forcible that little attention has yet been bestowed in Europe to protect engineers from the heat of summer and the rigors of winter weather. Probably the same kind of arguments were used on this side of the Atlantic in early railway days, for the application of inventions designed to shelter the engineers made little progress till about ten years after the first American railroad started running trains. Crude appliances were introduced on different railroads, especially in the north, to shelter engineers, and old men used to be met with from all parts of the country who claimed that the road they worked on was the first to introduce a locomotive cab; but the idea progressed so slowly that as late as 1847 Sellers' steep grade locomotive was illustrated with nothing more than the boiler head to shelter the engineers. David Matthew, one of the first master mechanics of the Mohawk & Hudson railroad, claimed to have applied a cab to a locomotive in the early 30s, but no particulars were ever given and David had a weakness for claiming to be the originator of nearly all locomotive improvements. The first exact record of a cab being applied to a locomotive was when Eastwick & Harrison, in 1838, built the "Samuel D. Ingham" for the Beaver Meadow railroad, now a branch of the Lehigh railroad. John Scott, one of the pioneer locomotive engineers of the Baltimore & Ohio, claimed that he invented a locomotive cab, which was applied in 1837 to the engines Traveler, American, and Antelope. Mr. Scott claimed to have effected improvements upon the locomotive whistle and to have invented the copper-wire joint that came to be universally used. We had repeatedly heard the claim made that the first cab applied to a locomotive was on the Boston & Albany railroad, so we made inquiries several years ago. We then learned that in 1823 an engineer named Ellis applied a crude cab to the engine "Tartar" that consisted of corner posts covered with canvas. The invention proved popular among the engineers, and the modern cab was soon developed from that primitive arrangement.—Locomotive Engineer. Special trouser sale at Berg's, Saturday. Muffled Knocks. "Thank you so much for your singing, Mrs. Gwyer; it made the guests lively and talkative in a jiffy." "It was so kind of you to drop in, Mrs. Gollifer, you know I've never returned the call you made a year or two ago."

HOME FURNITURE CO. South Omaha 20% Below Omaha Price--Not One Day, But Every Day Big Spring Announcement of High Class Furniture, Carpets and Rugs The best at much below the prices you must pay in Omaha. 27x54-inch Velvet Rugs \$95c 27x54-inch Axminster Rugs, \$1.45 6x9 ft. Seamless Brussels Rugs, at \$4.75 9x12 Seamless Brussels Rugs— at \$9.75 9x12 Velvet Rugs \$12.50 9x12 Axminster Rugs \$15.00 See our complete line of Body Brussels and Wilton Rugs, furnished in all sizes, MUCH BELOW OMAHA PRICE. Solid Oak Side Board with large plate mirror— \$14.00 Acorn Stoves We sell a god 4-hole Range for ... \$24.50 We sell a good 6-hole Range for ... \$26.50 Set up in your home. Full line of Famous Gas Ranges in all sizes. STOVES SOLD ON PAYMENTS