

Lewis C. Ball, C. P. Gardner, W. O. Potter and Frank W. Burton.

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Report of Land Grabbing in Alaska.

The following dispatch from Denver, under date of August 12, was published in the Chicago Examiner (Hearst) on the 13th:

Scores of the wealthiest men in the United States from New York to the Pacific coast are to be arrested by special agents of the General Land Office, who have unearthed the greatest land grabbing scandal ever brought to light in America. It is claimed that 75 per cent of the coal entries made in Alaska prior to May 28, 1908, are fraudulent and that some of the greatest financial men as well as railroads and other corporations have resorted to a new trick in securing dummy entries. Men from the slums of Seattle, Butte, Denver and Chicago were approached by lawyers, who signed or allowed their attorneys to sign applications for coal lands in Alaska, which were turned over to the coal barons. Those accused are attempting to cover up, it is claimed, and political, social and financial pressure has been brought to bear on the government officials to stay prosecution. Investigations will be begun by the government next month in Seattle and hearings will be held in at least fifteen cities in the United States, extending from coast to coast. Commissioner Dennett expressed the conviction that at least 500 fraudulent entries comprising 300,000 acres of land will be canceled. Secretary Richard A. Ballinger of the Interior Department and Commissioner Dennett have evidence tending to show that 300 entries have been fraudulently made through dummies living in Seattle, Butte, Chicago, Denver, New York and other cities. The investigation has been under way for four years. All coal entries in Alaska have been under suspension during the past four years pending the outcome of the investigation. It is necessary to begin action soon because in some of the cases the statute of limitations will make prosecution impossible next spring. Several of the best men under the direction of M. D. McEniry, chief of the field division of Colorado, have been hurried to Alaska to secure further evidence. Several railroad companies owned in New York, Boston and Philadelphia are now attempting to delay prosecution, hoping to secure favorable legislation during the next session of Congress. Six large coal corporations are involved.

General press dispatches of the 15th allude to the above with this statement:

The Interior Department makes no denial of the fact that hundreds of coal land cases in Alaska are awaiting the attention of the land office on suspicion of fraud. In fact, there is a firm belief in the Department that fully 75 per cent of the entries now pending there will be canceled on the ground that "dummies" have been used and because of illegal efforts of individuals to combine. Three hundred and fifty land office agents and inspectors are now scattered over the country, taking depositions and arranging to compel the land grabbers to let go.

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The British Land Question.

Parliament still drags on with its all night

sessions discussing the financial bill (p. 779), the Tory members filibustering for delay, and the Ministers unable to agree to a strict closure—two or three of them threatening to resign if the others force it. But a modification of the House rules has been secured which enables the chairman to place some limitations upon the obstructionists. Consequently, Lloyd-George is making steady progress.

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In his cable letter of the 14th, appearing in the Chicago Tribune of the 15th, T. P. O'Connor, M. P., says that Lloyd-George—

and the other Liberal ministers have builded better than they knew in the land clauses of the Budget, which have made an appeal to the popular imagination, to hopes, true or false, but certainly magnificent, and, above all, to the long pent anger of the masses against the ground landlords in the towns, who have treated the industrious storekeepers so harshly. The result is that the land clauses of the budget are received with an outburst of popular enthusiasm, as if Lloyd-George preached a new evangel of humanity. This enthusiasm has been maintained by a feverishly active campaign in the country, every cabinet minister going on the stump and making the land clauses their sole topic. Lloyd-George's own speeches and Winston Churchill's even more fiery harangues have lashed democracy into a fury. This campaign is greatly assisted by the incredibly stupid speeches of the dukes and other great landlords, who cause equal indignation, scorn, and defiance by bewailing their poverty and threatening to cut off their charities to the hospitals and the old work people. Finally the Liberals are enormously assisted by the division in the Tory ranks which Lord Northcliffe's attacks [Northcliffe owns the London Times] on Balfour and the other Tory leaders reveal. The protectionists have looked on, silent, suspicious, and almost openly rebellious, while Balfour has detracted from tariff reform [protection] by making his attack on the budget wholly negative. In private caucuses, the protectionists bitterly protest against this policy and demand tariff reform as the first plank in the Tory platform and as a distinct and openly avowed alternative to Lloyd-George's budget.

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In connection with this great Parliamentary contest, there is being widely circulated and liberally signed throughout Great Britain, the following commendation of the pending financial bill by business men:

The finance bill now being discussed in Parliament offers an important measure of freedom to the business men of the country. They have long felt and expressed the desire for relief from the growing burden of rates on business premises, factories, machinery and dwelling houses. To secure this, even in the slightest degree, a new basis of assessment is necessary, and by providing for the valuation of land apart from the improvements made by private companies or individuals, the bill furnishes this basis.

So far from inflicting any burden on enterprise or

industry a rate or tax on the value of land would afford them stimulus and encouragement. Production of raw materials and buildings, which, after all, is an essential preliminary of manufactures and commerce, requires the use of land in sufficient quantity and on fair terms. This is denied to it by our system of land tenure.

Even a moderate rate or tax on the value of all land, whether used or held idle, would incline the owners to meet the offers of those who desire to develop it. In this way, such a tax would benefit the landowners themselves, and by increasing production would contribute to the prosperity of all classes in the country. We, therefore, commend this policy to business men in the hope that they will consider it in relation to their business interests, and support the demand for a consistent and uniform valuation and tax.

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Crete Desires to Transfer Allegiance From Turkey to Greece.

With the ascendancy of the Young Turks and the breaking up of old relationships in the Ottoman Empire, the island of Crete (vol. ix, 491) in the eastern Mediterranean near Greece, has strained again at the leash which has held her under the suzerainty of Turkey (with one brief interval) for 240 years. Geographical situation and racial relationship lead Crete to desire incorporation into the Kingdom of Greece, and for seventy years the island has been practically in insurrection. Greece would welcome Crete into her autonomy, but the four Great Powers, Great Britain, Russia, France and Italy, have guaranteed Turkish sovereignty, and Greece is not strong enough to defy them. In October of last year the Cretans reaffirmed their kinship with Greece, but Turkish sovereignty continued to prevail. On July 27 the troops of the protecting Powers were withdrawn, with the idea, apparently, that regenerated Turkey was equal to coping with the local situation. But disorders ensued, and on the 16th, after the Cretan cabinet had resigned, a provisional administrative committee took the oath of allegiance to the King and Kingdom of Greece.

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Steel Trust War on Labor Unions.

A carefully planned crusade against labor unions by the United States Steel Corporation has for several days been in progress in Pittsburg, but reports of it are only beginning to dribble through the press. The Associated Press report of the 15th, as it appeared in the Chicago Tribune of the 16th, made this reference to the matter:

The United States Steel Corporation has begun the process of eliminating from its mills all those with pronounced union tendencies, who might with reason be suspected of scattering seeds of unionism among the other workmen. Many skilled workmen employed by the Corporation have been discharged recently from employment in the mills, where they

had long worked, and on inquiring the cause for their discharge they were told that they talked too much or too loudly. In most of the cases of those thus discharged they found on inquiring for work at other plants of the Steel Corporation that there was no work for them, a blacklist having apparently been prepared.

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The Labor Trouble at McKee's Rocks.

Reports of rioting went out through the news dispatches of the 11th from the Pressed Steel Company's plant (p. 728) at McKee's Rocks, in Western Pennsylvania. The strikers had received information that strike-breakers were being rushed to the works and that the company intended to start the plant no matter what might result from violence to persons or property. It seems that the plant had not started, notwithstanding the assurances of officers of the company that it would be started several days ago. When the news of the coming of strike-breakers reached the strikers the latter are reported to have taken possession of all street cars running in the neighborhood of the plant and refused to permit any man not a striker to ride. The State troopers are reported by the dispatches to have been "forced to fire volley after volley over the heads of the strikers, who threw stones in return." At least a dozen persons are said to have been struck with missiles and three wounded by glancing bullets. Scores were clubbed by the troopers, who rode into the crowd on the gallop. Evictions of strikers from company houses began on the 12th, but the sheriff, after expelling seven families, refused to remove any more household goods, offering to protect the company's agents but demanding that they remove the goods themselves. As the company insisted that this was the sheriff's work he stopped further evictions. On the 15th, according to Pittsburg news dispatches, the strikers massed to prevent strike-breakers being taken into the works and fired on a steamboat doing duty as a ferry. The boat was driven out into the stream, say these dispatches, and—

the strikers took possession of the company wharf. The full force of State troopers rode into the crowd, swinging their maces on the heads of the men. Shots were fired by the strikers and the troopers then began firing with their service revolvers. The strikers retreated toward the river, followed by the troopers, who spurred their horses until hundreds were forced into the river to escape being run down. When the mob was dispersed 280 strikebreakers, enlisted in Philadelphia, Chester and Newark, were taken into the works. The steamer then went upstream to the city wharf, where more men were taken on board. The steamer Steel Queen also is loaded with men who will go into the works to-morrow. Altogether there are now 1,000 men ready to be taken into the plant. They are nearly all Americans. The boats carrying the men to the plant are mounted with gatling guns and the company officials say these will be used if the strikers continue their