

GETTING EVEN
WITH TILLMAN

(Continued from page one.)

for indicating me in the courts which no doubt would have resulted in my arrest and all this fuss, fury and confusion about the seriousness of the case and the gravity of the offense with which he charges me can be attributed to personal malice alone.

Referring to the president's letter to Senator Hale, Mr. Tillman declared that the president recognized the extraordinary character of his action, "as well as the unlawful use he has made of the secret service." Mr. Tillman said he did not deny the authenticity of the letter or the telegram of which photographs were made, and he presumed the letter from William E. Lee was also a correct copy, but he was not aware of its existence until it was brought to his attention by the president's statement and added that he was not in any way responsible for Mr. Lee's ideas expressed in it.

Taking up the president's statement concerning Dorr, a land agent working his bluffs through Reeder and Watkins of Marshfield, Or., Mr. Tillman said:

OUTRAGEOUS FALSEHOOD.

"It will be noted that I accused Dorr in the senate of being a swindler and asked the postoffice department to issue a fraud order against him. Dorr declared in his circular, 'So sure is Senator Tillman of my success that he has subscribed and paid the necessary fees for a quarter section for himself and 39 other sections for 10 of his nearest relatives.' It was this bold and outrageous falsehood mainly that caused me to denounce Dorr as a swindler as well as to declare in the senate that he had no warrant for the assertion. The sleuths whom the president put upon my trail have made their report and a perusal of it will show to any fair-minded person that so far from endeavoring to justify the fraud order against Dorr they were really put to work to investigate me and endeavor if possible to discover something to my discredit, while the president directed the investigation. I say this because it is hardly possible that a post-office inspector would set about getting photographic copies of the letters of a United States senator and trying to convict him of lying in the orders did not come from a high source.

"Let us suppose for a moment that I was guilty of a falsehood in declaring that I had not undertaken to purchase any land, what did that have to do with Dorr's transparent and open use of the mails to induce men to send him money to purchase land? Dorr's declaration that I had paid the fees for an absolute falsehood and the post-office inspectors, while they searched the records for entries at Coquille, 'noted that Reeder and Watkins had filed several hundred applications' but nowhere mentioned that any had been filed in my name or for me. Therefore, the falsehood is proven on Dorr and yet the president declared the assault which Senator Tillman made on Mr. Dorr was according to report of the inspector, a wanton assault made to cover up Senator Tillman's own transactions.

PRESIDENT'S PROPOSITION.

"No such statement was made by the inspector. In fact, so earnestly intent on convicting Senator Tillman is the president, he actually committed himself to this proposition, to wit: 'Tillman voluntarily and without any compulsion from any source and with nothing to conceal brought up a matter in the senate, which he need not have done, to cover up transactions which were absolutely unknown to anyone except himself and his correspondents, Reeder and Watkins, and were entirely honorable and clean, and which were closed on the swindlers, Dorr, when his mail was not delivered, retired from the land business and became a fruit grower as reported by the inspectors. The swindlers had secured a good many thousands of dollars before the exposure in the senate stopped people from being duped, and yet Theodore Roosevelt, who poses as the only remaining honest man in public life, in the face of these facts, has felt called upon to attack the character of a man whose integrity has never before been questioned, and whose official position is second only to his own.

"In doing this he makes a false declaration, for the inspectors nowhere say any such thing as above quoted, which can be proven by an examination of the report.

ABOUT THE LYING.

"Now about the lying: My letter of Feb. 15 of which the president has secured a photographic copy antedated by four days my statement in the senate that I had not bought any land or undertaken to buy any and the president considers this positive proof of falsehood. I did not say I had not considered the purchase of land; I did not say I had not contemplated the purchase of land, because I had done both.

"In my conversation with the attorney-general in regard to the resolution which I introduced and which he himself prepared after we had talked over the whole land situation, I distinctly remember telling him that my interest in the matter had been aroused by my desire to purchase some of the timber land and that my coming to him was due to the fact that I discovered upon investigation that I could not buy it through any agency whatsoever, that I could not but it even by law suit, because I was advised by very able lawyers in the west, among them the Hon. George Turner of Washington, that in attacking the holders of these land grants no one would have any standing in court except the grantor, the government itself. I was perhaps disingenuous, but a moment's thought will convince any honest minded man that as I had not signed any papers, had not paid any money, had taken nobody's receipt, the usual processes by which one undertakes to buy land, I was speaking accurately and not falsely. Existing legends on the meaning of the word 'undertakes' and my use of it. Did I mean to conceal the fact that I was anxious to buy some of the land? Not at all. Did I mean to attack Dorr as a swindler when I myself was engaged in a dishonest and dishonorable transaction? That is what the president would have people believe. Can I be justly be charged with falsehood when I had told the senate of the entire transaction, it could have made no difference whatever, while I could have been charged with introducing my private affairs into a public discussion. For what law did I break? What wrong did I do or contemplate? According to the report of the attorney-general in answer to the resolution which I introduced and which passed the senate, the president's dear friend, still holds in defiance of law upwards of two millions of acres of the best lands of Oregon and California and refuses to sell them at any price. I never expected, and could not under the terms of the law as I construed it, get more than seven quarter sections for myself and family, one for my private secretary and one for Mr. Lee, making nine in all. This in the aggregate would mean that I would obtain through my activity here, as the president's charge is this morning's edition, or 1,440 acres, at a cost of \$4,500. With the president undertake to say that I have lost my right to buy land because I am a senator? Can the president deny my activity in securing the passage of the resolution instructing the attorney-general to bring suit for the recovery of this land

for the use of actual settlers? If Mr. Harriman and others like him are made to disgorge by reason of these suits, the net result will be in favor of buying a little bit more of the land to be used as the basis of a charge of being a liar and a corrupt senator to be disgraced."

TILLMAN IN SPOKANE.

Senator Tillman then told how his attention had been brought to this land while at Spokane, Wash., in October, 1907. He wrote to Reeder and Watkins asking for information and telling them of his desire to purchase some of the land if possible. Desiring to find out if the conditions of the land grant to the state of Oregon made it possible for "purchasers" and not "actual settlers" to buy at \$2.50 per acre, he wired to the librarian of the senate for a copy of the act. He met Mr. Lee at Moscow, Ida., and talked with him on the subject, arranging that he would go to Marshfield and investigate in person. He authorized Lee to draw on him if he found the lands were what they were represented to be.

"Lee's authority as my agent never went beyond an examination of the land, and if the application was filed, to see that I got good timber land instead of rocks and marshes," said the senator. He went into detail in explaining his effort to learn the exact status of the lands and got an opinion from Senator Turner of Washington. After returning to Washington, D. C., in December, he let the matter drop, believing it to be a "very doubtful proposition" until Mr. Lee showed him a letter from Reeder and Watkins, which Mr. Tillman said had been stolen from the desk in his committee room along with other papers in this case, and declared the theft was probably by some of the secret service sleuths.

"When Reeder and Watkins," he said, "indicated their desire that I should exert my influence in the senate, I wrote the letter of Feb. 15 of which the president obtained a photographic copy. In the meantime, and before that letter was written, on my own invitation, and after conference with the attorney-general, I introduced the two resolutions of Jan. 31, one calling on the attorney-general for information and the other which became a law, instructing him to institute suits. My official activity then is shown to have taken form in the senate before I knew anything about Reeder and Watkins' attitude or expectation and I was in no way influenced by them.

"I was still anxious to obtain some of the land if it could be done legally, and wrote Reeder and Watkins to that effect, but my faith in them, and in the whole scheme, died when I received the circulars of Dorr which came to me on Feb. 17 and 18, from three different directions, showing the widespread circulation of them."

"Mr. Lee's report to him, he said, had also led him to believe that Reeder and Watkins were not 'of the caliber and character' to be employed in a matter of such magnitude.

"Dorr, of whom I had never heard before," he said, "was evidently pushing his scheme of getting suckers to invest and using my name as I have indicated, without authority; because I had not paid any fees to him or written to him or filed any applications, I therefore, felt it incumbent on me to expose the swindle in the senate which I did on February 19 and asked the postoffice to issue a fraud order. I pressed the passage of the joint resolution in the senate and on April 30 it became a law. March 15 I was taken ill and on May 16 after a partial recuperation, I sailed for Europe, returning Oct. 21.

SPYING ON A SENATOR.

"The president's sleuths set to do the dirty work of spying on a senator when that senator had exposed a fraud which was being perpetrated on the people, reported to him on July 25. I had nothing to do with the change in the law of which the president complains in regard to the secret service. So the president's animus is not against me on the score of ground for which he has attacked Messrs. Tawney, Smith and others in the house, but one of personal malice engendered by hatred because of my course in the senate during the last seven years.

"I have not attempted to deceive anybody; I have not told any falsehoods; I have not broken any laws; I have not been guilty of any immoral conduct. I had the right to purchase the land if I could, but my judgment told me it was unsafe as an investment. I would like to get some of it yet and if the attorney-general and his successor shall not die of old age before anything is done, it may be possible that I may have the opportunity to purchase some of these timber lands which he made mention in his report. Through my action attention has been directed in a compelling way to the need of prompt action by the department of justice. Whether I ever get any of the land or not does not matter if Harriman and others of that ilk are made to disgorge the large holdings which they have stolen and are attempting to hold.

"The president italicized the words 'as well as myself as though it were unlawful, immoral or improper for a senator to buy any land or to act in that chamber on any question affecting his personal interest. I fail to see any sense or reason in this position, but I must submit to the judgment of the senate and the country. I had not become a party to any litigation; I was not interested except as a private individual wanting to purchase and as a senator desiring to enable others to have the opportunity to do so. Of course, the president is sure that I have done something very discreditable and outrageous. He hates me and would destroy me if he could.

"The president gloats over the fact that my letter was written just four days before he announced in the senate that he (1) had not undertaken to buy any land in the west, as clinching his contention that I have lied to the senate. The records show that in the interim the Dorr circular had been sent to me, for on Feb. 19, when I made the exposure of Dorr, I said in the senate: 'In the last day or two I have had my attention called to a scheme of swindling, etc.' It is easy for those who are themselves vulnerable to convict on this flimsy evidence and the president seems to work on that theory.

"On reading Dorr's circular the whole scheme and combination of swindlers, Reeder and Watkins in Marshfield and Dorr in Portland, (I did not know anything about Conns and Schaffer) flashed on my mind and remembering Lee's somewhat dubious report as to the character and qualification of the firm of Reeder & Watkins, I decided at once to see to it that my name should not be used to inveigle others into their game. Hence my action in the senate.

"The president dismisses with a wave of the hand any possibility of my honesty by saying, 'It is unnecessary to comment on his proposal made in this letter to use his influence as a senator to force the government to institute a suit which would make it easy for him personally to obtain some of the land.' It might be well to inquire whether or not the attorney-general has been ordered not to obey the law of Congress passed last April, which I will call the 'Tillman-Bonaparte law' ordering suit to be instituted for the recovery of these lands. My culpability is of such magnitude in contemplating the purchase of 1,440 acres of land at \$2.50 per acre in the eyes of this stickler for official rectitude—in others—that it may be feared that he is determined to block my so-called nefarious transactions.

"The man who announces to Congress that he, Theodore Roosevelt, assumed the right to permit the steel trust to show its greatest rival contrary to law, would doubtless not hesitate to help his dear friend Harriman in holding 2,000,000 acres of the public domain because Mr. Tillman had contemplated

and wanted to buy 1,440 acres. The president, having convicted Tillman, proceeded to clear Dorr in both cases, contrary to the facts, and maliciously staves from the center of the stage, which it is his greatest delight to occupy, and complacently looks to have the American people and the senate give their approval to his verdict. I await that verdict calmly and without fear and will glade odds to it.

COURTS INVESTIGATION.

"In conclusion, Mr. President, I court the most searching investigation. Nay,

I demand it. I declare most emphatically I have never sought to conceal my effort to buy land. I spoke to the attorney-general about it; I explained to the agent of the secret service the whole transaction when I gave him the Dorr circular and the letters which had been sent me concerning it. The question of motive will at least control and it cannot be shown that I have any reason to conceal anything. I invite comparison of my private life and my public work as a man and a senator with Theodore Roosevelt and any other

man, and feel absolutely sure of the ground upon which I stand."

Senator Tillman closed his speech at 1:19 p. m. There was no demonstration or applause, and the immense crowd in the galleries readily cleared out.

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