



*Photograph by Taber, San Francisco.*

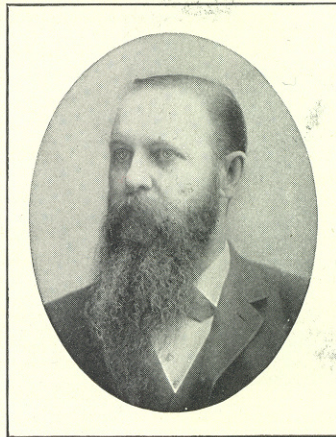
THE NEVADA BANK OF SAN FRANCISCO.

This great financial institution, the most famous and important on the Pacific Coast, stood faithfully behind Benson.

California, and looking into the homestead, school-land, timber-land and forest-reserve iniquities in that State and in Oregon. And I will say right here—and my language is plain, that such a mass of fraud you will find nowhere else on earth. And it is all based upon that insinuating, self-serving, and wonderfully elastic thing which I call Land Conscience. Land Conscience is common enough. A man who would not dream of taking money from his employer's till, a man who, as a juror, would spurn a bribe, a man recognized as a person of probity, is as likely to be possessed of a smooth, easy-going, self-deceptive Land Conscience as the gentleman who goes forth o' nights with a jimmy.

When the sense of honor of a United States Senator, two Representatives, a Commissioner of the General Land Office, a United States District Attorney, a half-dozen Surveyors-General, and other high Federal officials, will not restrain such persons from permitting

themselves to be enlisted on the side of graft—one can see that this Land Conscience may be lulled as by a Circean song. The enmeshing in the legal net, by indictment after indictment, of Senator John H. Mitchell, Representatives Binger Hermann and John N. Williamson, and United States District Attorney John H. Hall, on charges of conspiracy against the Government to gain possession of hundreds of thousands of acres of valuable land in Oregon, though it may be more conspicuous and more arrestive of the public sense than other affairs of the kind, is merely incidental to the great campaign of Graft in West Coast land affairs.



SENATOR J. H. MITCHELL, OF OREGON.

Now under indictment for conspiracy to defraud the Government.

Farther on I shall have something more specific to say of the Oregon land frauds; but in writing of this gigantic Pacific Coast villainy I wish to begin nearer to the beginning. What one finds of land fraud in Oregon to-day was made possible by the success of the grafters in other parts of the country, and