

COOK TRIED TO STEAL PARSON'S LIFE WORK

The Discredited Explorer Now Charged with Seeking to Pub- lish Yahgan Grammar as His.

MISSIONARY LENT IT TO HIM

The Rev. Thomas Bridges Never Could Get His Manuscript Back—Belgian So- ciety Acknowledges His Authorship.

Dr. Frederick A. Cook, the Bushwick Avenue explorer, who professed to have discovered the north pole, and has since been declared one of the boldest fakers the world has ever known, is receiving the condemnation of explorers and scientists of this country and abroad for another alleged attempt at faking which has just become public.

The latest charge of deliberately attempting to deprive another man of the credit due him, to be laid at Dr. Cook's door, is that he tried recently to have published under his own name a valuable acquisition to ethnological science, gathered and compiled by an aged missionary who lived and died in Tierra del Fuego. Dr. Cook, it is asserted, obtained his confidence on a visit there years ago while Cook was a member of the Belgian antarctic expedition which went in search of the south pole. The work in question was a Yahgan grammar and dictionary, and represented the life work of the Rev. Thomas Bridges, a missionary, who spent some twenty-five years among the Onas and the Yahgans, two barbarian tribes of Tierra del Fuego, which are rapidly nearing extinction.

The Yahgan Grammar and Dictionary consisted of some 30,000 words, and was compiled as a scientific record of the language of a tribe which would soon pass out of existence. That Dr. Cook attempted to publish this work under his own name in the report of the Commission de la Belgica, is charged by Charles H. Townsend, Director of the New York Aquarium, and a member of the Explorers' and the Arctic Clubs, from both of which Dr. Cook was expelled after the exposure of his Mount McKinley claims and the refusal of Copenhagen University to accept his north pole "proofs."

It was Mr. Townsend who was largely instrumental in laying the facts concerning the Yahgan Grammar and Dictionary before the Commission de la Belgica and causing the commission to reconsider its first intention of publishing the work as Dr. Cook's and deciding to bring it out as the life labor of the Rev. Mr. Bridges, its real author.

Never Saw the Yahgans.

The Belgian expedition, of which Dr. Cook was a member, started for the antarctic in 1897 and did not return until 1899. Dr. Cook was surgeon of the expedition. On the way south, the Belgica stopped at Tierra del Fuego, where Dr. Cook met the Rev. Thomas Bridges. Dr. Cook and the Rev. Mr. Bridges became good friends before the Belgica resumed her way southward. While in Tierra del Fuego Dr. Cook had an opportunity to make a cursory investigation of the ways of the Onas. But of the Yahgans he knew little or nothing, except what was told him by Mr. Bridges.

On the way back from the antarctic the Belgica again stopped at Tierra del Fuego for a short time, and again Dr. Cook and Mr. Bridges spent many hours discussing the traits of the Onas. All together, Dr. Cook was in Tierra del Fuego some six weeks, it is said.

Before the voyage north was resumed, Mr. Bridges showed Dr. Cook the manuscript he had compiled for the Yahgan Grammar and Dictionary. According to the story told by Mr. Townsend and other explorers, Dr. Cook induced Mr. Bridges to lend him the manuscript to take back to Belgium, promising to return it after he had used it for reference in getting up a report to be published by the Commission de la Belgica. Dr. Cook never returned the manuscript, Mr. Townsend says.

The original manuscript of the Yahgan Dictionary is now in the possession of the Commission de la Belgica. The manuscript compiled by the old missionary is not in the hands of the commission. Just where it is has not been learned, although the general impression among those who know the details of the matter is that Dr. Cook still has the grammar manuscript.

Mr. Townsend knew of the existence of the Bridges manuscript years ago. In 1888 Mr. Townsend was the naturalist on the Albatross expedition sent out by the United States Government to the antarctic region. He visited Tierra del Fuego and was told all about the life work of the old missionary.

Not long ago Charles W. Furlong made a voyage to Tierra del Fuego. Mr. Furlong is an artist-explorer and a friend of Mr. Townsend. While in Tierra del Fuego Mr. Furlong learned the history of the Bridges manuscript. The Rev. Thomas Bridges died before Mr. Furlong reached there, but from the missionary's son, Lucas Bridges, he learned of the efforts which had been made to get back the valuable manuscript which Dr. Cook had borrowed ostensibly for the purposes of reference.

Mr. Furlong was told that Dr. Cook had promised to return the manuscript to the Rev. Mr. Bridges in a year and a half after it was borrowed. At the expiration of the year and a half the old missionary wrote to Dr. Cook asking him to return the Yahgan Grammar and Dictionary. But no reply came from Dr. Cook, according to Mr. Furlong. Again and again the missionary wrote for his manuscript, but he received no answer to his letters.

Son Tries to Recover Records.

A few years ago the Rev. Mr. Bridges died. And then his son Lucas took up the work of trying to recover the borrowed manuscript. He was still trying to get it back when Mr. Furlong returned to the United States. Upon his return Mr. Furlong told Mr. Townsend all about it. Mr. Townsend remembered that he had received a copy of the lists of reports which had been published, or were to be published, by the Commission de la Belgica as a result of the antarctic expedition of 1897-98-99. In this official list there appeared under the heading "Anthropologie, Vol. 10," the following reports: "Medical Report, by F. A. Cook; Report Upon the Onas, by F. A. Cook; A. Yahgan Grammar and Dictionary, by F. A. Cook."

Mr. Townsend says he then wrote this letter to the Commission de la Belgica:

The Aquarium, New York, Jan. 4, 1910.
The Commission of the Belgica, Brussels, Belgium:

Gentlemen: I inclose herewith a copy of a letter from Mr. Charles W. Furlong, who has recently returned from Tierra del Fuego. He brings information that Dr. F. A. Cook is not the author of the Yahgan Grammar and Dictionary as announced in your list of reports on the voyage of the Belgica, and that the entire work should be credited to the late Rev. Thomas Bridges of the mission station at Harberton, Tierra del Fuego, Argentine Republic.

Mr. Furlong, who is now writing a series of articles in Harper's Magazine on the Onas and Yahgans of Tierra del Fuego, is well acquainted with the family of Mr. Bridges. Mr. Lucas Bridges, his son, has made several attempts to secure the return of the manuscript from Dr. Cook, but without success. My object in writing is to inform your commission that the family of Mr. Bridges is exceedingly desirous of having the Yahgan Grammar and Dictionary credited to the Rev. Thomas Bridges, who was for twenty-five years engaged in its preparation.

They protest seriously against Dr. Cook's claim to its authorship in any way. It was merely loaned to Dr. Cook with the understanding that it be returned in a year or so.

Will you have the kindness to inform me if the manuscript of the dictionary is already in the possession of your commission? If it is not, I may be in a position to secure its immediate recovery in this city in order that it may be returned to Mr. Lucas Bridges, or, with his permission, published either in the reports of the Belgica or elsewhere, as a contribution to science and an act of justice to its author, Mr. Bridges.

Very respectfully,

C. H. TOWNSEND.

The reply of the Commission de la Belgica to this letter disclosed the fact that the commission had already experienced some trouble with the Yahgan manuscript. Publication had been started under Dr. Cook's name, but the work was interrupted, owing to the difficulty of finding Dr. Cook to question him about parts of

the work. The letter received by Mr. Townsend from the Scientific Director at the Royal Belgian Observatory was under date of Jan. 14, 1910, and said, in part:

"The original manuscript of the Yahgan Directory is still in the possession of the Commission of the Belgica. We have, however, no original manuscript of the grammar, also the work of the late Rev. Thomas Bridges. The publication of both has been begun, but the work was interrupted by us, as it was undertaken in bad conditions, owing, for instance, to the voyages of Dr. Cook.

"We thought doing well in addressing ourselves to Mr. Lucas Bridges, who kindly authorized us to publish his father's manuscripts. So the work has been recommenced already. You may be sure, at all events, the gentlemen who are going to publish the manuscript of the dictionary shall plainly recognize the late Rev. Thomas Bridges as the only author of the important work."

Herbert Bridgman, who is a fellow-member with Mr. Townsend in the Explorers' and Arctic Clubs, said yesterday that he, too, knew of the attempt by Dr. Cook to publish the life work of the old missionary as his own.

"Dr. Cook used to talk to me about his investigations in Tierra del Fuego," said Mr. Bridgman yesterday. "He always told me that he had made a special study of the Onas and had learned enough of them and their language to write a full report for the Belgican Commission. His claim of having mastered the language of the Onas and the Yahgans is ridiculous. The six weeks he spent there was not long enough time to master the subject sufficiently to compile a grammar or dictionary. Cook saw more Onas than he did Yahgans while he was there. In fact, he saw very little of the Yahgans, and the publication of their grammar and dictionary as his own work would have been preposterous."

PAID CHECKERS FOR NO WORK.

Falkenstein Testifies He Had to Credit Them with Full Pay for Short Time.

The Government had another surprise in store yesterday for the defense in the trial of Charles R. Heike, Secretary and Treasurer of the Sugar Trust, and five former employees of that corporation, on a charge of conspiracy to defraud the United States, which is in progress before Judge Martin, in the Criminal Branch of the United States Circuit Court. It consisted in the testimony of Henry Falkenstein, a former employe of the trust on the Williamsburg pier, who is now house detective at the Plaza Hotel. He gave damaging evidence against several of the accused.

This evidence, coupled to the story told by Schwerdtfeger, the former checker on the Government weighers, at Thursday's session, of how all the trust's checkers used the steel springs to keep the scales on which sugar was weighed for the purposes of duty from recording the true weights, greatly strengthens the Government's case, as compared with its situation in the trial of the trust itself more than a year ago and the trial of several former employes of the company last Fall. Falkenstein was examined by Winifred Denison, who is assisting Henry L. Stimson with the case.

The witness said that he was employed by the trust from April 21, 1897, to November, 1900, first in the office of Spitzer, the former dock boss, who is now serving his term in the Atlanta prison, and later as a checker on the piers. He received his instructions either from Spitzer or from Harry Walker, Spitzer's assistant, who is now on trial. Falkenstein then substantiated the Government's version of what happened at the Williamsburg refinery on Nov. 20, 1907, when Richard Parr made his famous raid and discovered the steel spring being operated in the scale in Scale House 1. Falkenstein identified the entries in various of the dock books relating to the weighing of cargoes that figure in the indictment, and declared that he was directed by Walker to pay full time to any of the checkers working with the Government weighers, regardless of whether they worked full time or not.

Falkenstein said that the records of weights as falsified on the piers went into the hands of a Mr. Benedict, in the main office of the company at 117 Wall Street, and after they had passed through the office of Bendernagel, the cashier, who is now on trial a second time, they went into the office of Gerbracht, the Superintendent of the refinery, who is also among the defendants at this trial. During the afternoon session Falkenstein was recalled for a question, and as he passed the chairs where the defendants were sitting Gerbracht was observed to say something to him.

"Your Honor," said Falkenstein, "this man called me a liar."

"Never mind," whispered Mr. Denison, who had started to call another witness.

"This is not the place to speak about such a matter," remarked Judge Martin rather sharply.

"But I was testifying under oath on the stand and I told the truth," said Falkenstein, as he passed out. He waited around the door of the court room during most of the remainder of the session, and the spectators were expecting to see something interesting as Gerbracht came out when the court adjourned. Falkenstein, however, apparently got tired of waiting, for he moved away a half an hour before adjournment, and the former refinery Superintendent made his departure from the Federal Building in peace.

The remainder of the Government's evidence yesterday consisted largely in introducing into evidence pages of the dock books, showing the weights of sugar taken by the city weighers on drafts included in the shipments covered by the indictment.