

### ROSCOE MITCHELL RESIGNS.

Continued from Page 1.  
who were famous for work in several continents formed themselves into an impromptu committee and rushed in three automobiles to Mitchell's hotel to tell him while he was packing up what a fine stand they thought he had taken, for standards to which Mr. Hearst has not yet risen.

The American delegates even held for Mitchell an impromptu reception, during which Justice Frederick W. Lehmann made a short speech congratulating the reporter.

Thus Mitchell made his exit from Niagara alone, and without a job. From one view-point he had gone there as an agent of all the people who read newspapers, honor bound to transmit news truly. From another, he had gone there as a wage-earner in pursuit of a living, bound in order to hold his job, to transmit to his employer the kind of news his employer wanted.

Mr. Hearst's greatest newspaper trick to force this view upon him. In messages urging him not to resign and in other messages asking him to reconsider his resignation, the newspaper urged him "to be a good soldier and a good boy" and again "to send the news facts and leave the policy to the editors."

### "COME HOME COMFORTABLY."

A final message releasing Mitchell urged him to "come home comfortably" and to remember that "good soldiers are patient even if superior officers make mistakes."

I am not writing this story of a newspaper problem in order to glorify a man who has quit his job. I am writing it to invite the public to consider some of the things that go on behind the telegraph wires. As a reporter who has been on the job for ten years I have felt for some time that the public ought to be invited in; that it ought to take a hand.

The case of Mitchell presents the problem in concrete form. Hearst when he employed Mitchell, happened to hire a reporter who was ready to fight for standards which can never be wholly enforced, I believe, until the public takes a hand. The secret of Hearst's Niagara faking is out because Mitchell was a usual Hearst reporter. He was new to Hearst, although old to important departments of journalism.

The first time I saw Mitchell he was on the end of a telephone wire and the home of E. H. Harriman, at Arden, was on the other end. Harriman was lying, according to some reports, and according to others he was already dead. The man on duty as near as they could get to Harriman's home were plainly excited as the climatic point in a big situation was approaching.

### MITCHELL'S PASSION FOR FACTS.

I noted Mitchell because he was working at high tension and at the same time was cool. I noticed in what he sent down to his paper a little later, a real reason for cold facts. There were none of the flowery trimmings that other reporters wrote in.

I heard him again a little later. At Oyster Bay, soon after Roosevelt's return from America, yellow newspapers published so much inaccurate matter that the Colonel shut down on their all—save one. Roscoe Mitchell, I heard, was given the privilege of coming to the Colonel's home once a day, and carrying back to the telegraph station at Oyster Bay such news as there was, for distribution, as he saw fit, to other reporters.

I met Mitchell again while we both were assigned to Woodrow Wilson's campaign for the presidency. At Syracuse, while the now well-advertised trap was being set to put Mr. Wilson in a position that would make him appear to be a pleasant companion of Murphy, Mr. Wilson felt compelled to give a confidence of the utmost importance to some one of us. We were together on a porch outside of a club house in which Murphy was already seated at the luncheon table, and Mr. Wilson was momentarily expected to resume a seat which he had abandoned.

### WILSON REPOSES CONFIDENCE.

Of the group Mr. Wilson chose

Mitchell as the one in whom to repose his confidence. It was that he wished Mitchell to gather all the reporters party together and keep them ready for an immediate return to the condenser's car in the railroad station. The rest of the confidence was that things were going badly—that Mr. Wilson might at any moment withdraw from the day's proceedings. I was among those told to stand ready for a hurried return to the train. I never knew until the train was on its way back to New York and Mr. Wilson himself took up the theme with the rest of us why it was that one of the reporters had given us such an unusual message.

This bit of background to the Mitchell incident at Niagara is necessary because it will throw some light on the manner in which he was received there.

### AT VERA CRUZ.

The last time Mitchell figured in the news before he was sent to Niagara was when American warships were about to depart for Vera Cruz. It became a "newspaper secret" that the Navy Department had refused to take any Hearst man along on a warship. It also became a matter of Park Row discussion that the Hearst executives turned to Roscoe Mitchell, who had recently accepted employment on Hearst's American. Mitchell telephoned to Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, and received a ready permission to join the fleet. Daniels throughout the campaign had been in charge of the publicity section of the Wilson headquarters and knew and could judge Mitchell's work as it had been delivered to other papers.

Mitchell went to Vera Cruz aboard a United States warship and soon after he returned he found that the Hearst newspapers were in another middle with the government departments.

It was important to consider this middle, because it has a bearing on the peculiar personal responsibilities Mitchell assumed at Niagara.

In the Hearst headquarters in New York it became known that the Washington bureau "was all in as to handling the mediation conferences at Niagara, that none of the Washington men were on "speaking terms" with the mediators. More than that, the information conveyed to the home office was to the effect that one of the mediators had torn a Hearst reporter's card up and had thrown the fragments in his face.

### TURN TO MITCHELL.

Again the Hearst forces turned to Mitchell. They knew the high esteem in which he was held personally by those who knew him. I am not going to tell here why Mitchell accepted employment from Hearst. That has to do with the experience as a reporter in the capacity unfamiliar to the public—the capacity of a wage-earner working at what on the inside appears a highly sweat-d trade, however much it may appear from the outside to be a noble and romantic profession.

Mitchell on May 19th found himself on his way to Niagara with the information to go on, that none of those connected with the mediation would have anything to do with a Hearst man. He even knew of the incident of the torn-up card.

On the morning of May 20th Supreme Court Justice Lamar and Judge Lehmann, the American delegates, were seated on the porch of the Hotel Prospect, on the American side. Newspaper men known to them to be worthy of their confidence were grouped near them and a general "family chat" was in progress.

Into this chat a young man with a hatched face and a slightly Southern accent projected himself. He went up to Justice Lamar and Judge Lehmann and introduced himself, since none of the reporters there made a move to do so. He told them his name was Mitchell and that he had come to Niagara for Mr. Hearst's New York American.

He joined the party—but there was no further attempt to carry on the conversation that had been interrupted. Reporters and delegates alike seemed conscious of the need for restraint in the presence of a Hearst

### GETS SILENCE TREATMENT.

Mitchell left the party after a brief "silence treatment." Just inside the hotel doors he met Robert F. Rose, the attache of the State Department at the negotiations. With Rose the situation was different. He knew Mitchell and the things for which Mitchell stood.

Without any hesitation Rose reversed Mitchell's progress away from the delegation. He forced him back and personally introduced him to the delegates giving at the same time a strong and unequivocal guarantee that the delegates would always find themselves receiving a square deal from his friend and old-time associate. After that Justice Lamar and Judge Lehmann talked in Mitchell's presence, admitting him freely to the informal discussion.

To each of the mediators and to the Mexican delegates Mitchell gave his pledge that he was not responsible for Hearst's editorial policies, that as a reporter he wanted to give the facts of the developments and to give them fairly. He was accepted on that basis, and was given respectful and adequate hearings when he came for news. Then the trouble began.

### STICKS TO THE FACTS.

Mitchell filed a dispatch giving the actual developments. He was hopeful in tone, since the mood of all concerned was optimistic. Next day Mitchell bought a Hearst paper. Not a word of his dispatch was in the paper. But the Niagara date line was there just the same. No person on the ground could possibly have written, with any regard for the facts, the story that appeared. It was a Hearst story—simmering with insinuations that President Wilson was backing down and yielding. In a humiliating manner to each demand upon him.

The issue for Hearst's man at Niagara was interesting to himself, to the other reporters and to Mr. Rose who knew him. He had made personal pledges; and he had been received on those pledges.

The Hearst home office was not to aim an instrument through which he could force over to the public at large from Niagara a trained man's observations and views about a matter of critical national moment. The chief Hearst paper was not a paper that the reader could pick up with any assurance that a dispatch dated at Niagara than the desk of some writer in the Hearst offices.

Other reporters, whose papers permitted them to serve the public honest news, looked upon Mitchell's plight with mingled feelings. They all knew, of course, what had happened for they had been in the telegraph office while Mitchell was writing, alongside themselves, and in the questions passing back and forth they had become well aware of the general nature of Mitchell's dispatch.

### HOME COOKING SHOWS.

The offense of the first day was not the end. As the Hearst papers would continue to arrive the dispatch from Niagara would continue to show evidence of home-cooking in the American office. Some of it would be genuine and then there would be whole paragraphs of inserted material, cleverly designed to give an appearance of trouble in the mediation proceedings and shameful concessions on the part of Mr. Wilson and Mr. Bryan.

Mitchell made explanations to the American delegates and the mediators at first. He tried to square his personal pledges with the results, by pointing out what portions of the daily Niagara dispatch were his and what portions had never been sent by him.

It is not an easy thing to go into voluntary martyrdom, although those who do not have to make the journey may think it is. Mitchell was thinking of it. I don't know what, during the few days he continued to fight the issue out with the Hearst executives. But I do know that he has children in school and that the jobs for one earning a wage at his particular trade are rather far apart and not easy to obtain.

Mitchell sent protests to the Hearst executives with apparent success, for he announced to his fellow reporters

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