

LOCHER TO PROBE

'TOWER OF BABEL'

Will Inquire Into Activities of
C. H. Knight, Promoter
of '1915 Project.'

Former Associate Tells of
Worries of Investors in
Venture.

The modern "Tower" of Babel," promoted by C. H. Knight of Cleveland, today will receive the attention of Cyrus Locher, county prosecutor.

Locher said last night he would inquire into the affairs of the Pan-American Recreation Tower Co., and the Ohio Recreation Tower Co., which preceded it, in both of which Knight, now in Los Angeles, Cal., was the moving spirit. He is described as a gray haired, large girthed man, weighing 350 pounds.

The prosecutor will be aided in his investigation by C. F. Young, mechanical and consulting engineer, formerly connected with southern and eastern railroads in an executive capacity, who prepared the plans and prospectuses for the gigantic tower which Knight proposed to feature the Panama-Pacific exposition in 1915.

Young, in his apartments in the Alhambra, 10403 Euclid-av, yesterday corroborated Los Angeles dispatches saying scores of men and women, who have purchased tower stock, are anxiously awaiting materialization of the project.

The engineer added many names of Cleveland investors in the "Tower of Babel" undertaking and related incident after incident of callers at his suite who wanted information about Knight.

Inquire About Investment.

"Many men and women have been coming here for months," said Young. "Some of them are old, feeble and poor.

"Some believe they have lost all their property and are greatly worried. Their apprehension has been enhanced by failure to obtain any word of the inventor.

"I feel it my duty to place every bit of information at hand before the county prosecutor and I shall call on him today."

Prosecutor Locher, when informed last night that Young would ask for an investigation of Knight's affairs, said he would do all in his power to unravel the alleged tangled condition of the recreation companies.

Locher added that an elderly and wealthy Cleveland woman had already called on him for an investigation.

"I don't remember her name," explained Locher last night. "but she said she had invested \$5,000 in the exposition tower scheme and Knight had also promised to marry her.

"Some time later the woman told me she received a letter from Knight. It was dated from California and suggested she send her brother to Los Angeles to work for him on the tower. The brother went to the coast, I am told, but Knight had nothing for him to do, I have learned, and it was necessary for the sister to send him money so he could return to Cleveland.

"I could take no action against Knight at the time because the facts were not sufficiently substantiated or of such a nature as to warrant court action."

Other developments here yesterday into Knight's affairs disclosed that Knight's offices in 606 Columbia

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stack of elaborately illustrated tower booklets and prospectuses.

Young said last night the prospectuses and booklets had cost about \$2,000 and declared Knight had not paid the printers.

Asked to detail his connection with the tower enterprise Young said:

"I was in Cleveland in the summer of 1912. Before coming here I was manager of the Chattanooga (Tenn.) Electric Railway Co. and had been connected with the Galveston City Railway Co., and the New Orleans & Southern Railway Co. and had been manager and chief engineer for New York and Philadelphia railroads.

"Knight hunted me up. I didn't know him. He had me call at his office and showed me a drawing of a tower which he said he had tried to have erected in Cleveland; that the plan had fallen through, but that he contemplated a similar venture for the Panama-Pacific exposition. The plans were not complete and I worked out the engineering details. He was to pay me \$100 a week.

"I worked on the plans from Aug. 12 to Nov. 5, 1912. About Nov. 5 I began to question men and women I had heard talking to Knight in his office. Sometimes the talk was loud and I heard threats from several men demanding their money back.

"Convinced that I no longer desired to associate with Knight, I resigned. Before resigning I went to J. A. Hanna, president of the Pan-American Recreation Towers Co., told him the situation and he, too, resigned.

"I had interested Mr. Hanna in the matter because I thought the tower feasible and was certain it would be a big money making project.

"I have spent about \$500 and much valuable time in tracing down and locating men and women who invested in Knight's enterprise and I shall give all the names and addresses to Mr. Locher so he can investigate their stories."

Young estimated yesterday that at least \$10,000 worth of Knight's stocks had been purchased by Cleveland people. How many persons living in other sections had invested, he had no idea, he said.

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building, 112 Prospect-av S. E., had been closed for several months, but his effects are still there. The effects consist of desks, other office furniture, rugs and clothing.

H. Boyd, agent of the building, said yesterday owners of the building had ordered him to close the office after waiting in vain for Knight to pay bills for back rent.

"Knight was an inventor," said Boyd. He had offices in the Columbia building for almost three years and when not selling stock for the tower he was selling stock for a patent window refrigerator and a roof ventilator.

"Some years ago Knight promoted the Ohio Recreation Tower Co. to finance building a tower on the Mall here, but smaller than the one proposed for the exposition, but the thing fell through."

A search of Knight's offices yesterday disclosed a pile of mail and a big