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REFORM IS DELAYED

Land Laws Will Not Be Changed At Present Session.

DELAY WAS RATHER EXPECTED

Commission Appointed by Roosevelt to Decide on Needed Changes Has Not Yet Made Final Report.

Washington, Dec. 16.—The house committee on public lands today voted to postpone indefinitely the bill to repeal the timber and stone act. This action means there will be no land-law reform this session. This result was expected, especially in view of the fact that the public lands commission has not yet made a final report. The bill passed on was by far the most important of the land reform bills pending, but when it was passed by the senate last session there was a distinct understanding with the members of the house committee that it should not be reported to the house during the present congress.

The house committee turned the bill down by a vote of 10 to 4, those voting for repeal being: Chairman Lacey, of Iowa; Miller of Kansas, Needham of California and Volstead of Minnesota. In turning down this bill the committee stated that the repeal of the timber and stone act would shut off the source of the greater portion of the reclamation fund, and would seriously handicap irrigation work begun by the government. Furthermore, it was said that the repeal of this law would be of immeasurable benefit to railroad companies and other large holders of forest reserve lands, as it would cause a considerable rise in the value of scrip, which would be the only remaining way of getting large tracts of government timber land. There was, moreover, a general belief that the timber and stone act, if properly administered, is not a bad law.

ROOSEVELT URGES ACTION.

Anxious Interstate Commerce Commission to Have Greater Power.

Washington, Dec. 16.—President Roosevelt considered today with several friends his recommendation that increased powers be conferred by legislation upon the Interstate Commerce commission. Those to whom he talked were not only members of congress, but men in other walks of life. To all he indicated his earnest desire that action of a definite nature—action that would bring results to the people—should be taken as soon as practicable.

A day or two ago he considered the question with Judge Grosscup, of Chicago. Today he discussed it with Judge William W. Morrow, of the United States court at San Francisco.

By invitation of the president, a special committee of the Commercial Travelers' Protective association called on him today to consider his recommendation that the powers of the Interstate Commerce commission be extended so as to enable the commission to pass upon questions of railroad freight rates, subject only to review by the courts.

MITCHELL MUCH GRATIFIED.

He Wins Important Committee Ship in Face of Much Opposition.

Washington, Dec. 16.—Senator Mitchell was highly gratified today to receive the appointment as chairman of the committee on interoceanic canals, which will handle all legislation hereafter enacted affecting the Panama canal and the canal zone. He succeeds the late Senator Hanna.

A very strong fight was made to keep Senator Mitchell out of his position, and it was only when all endeavor to force Senator Platt to accept the place failed that the position was given to the Oregon senator.

Friends of Panama really wanted to make Kittredge, of South Dakota, chairman of this committee, but could not consistently jump him over Mitchell.

Senator Mitchell was fought because he was an earnest advocate of the Nicaragua route.

Dredge for Oregon Harbors.

Washington, Dec. 16.—Representative Hermann appeared before the rivers and harbors committee in support of his bill asking an appropriation of \$100,000 for a dredge to be used on Oregon coast bars. Representative Hermann has received assurances from Chairman Burton and other members of the committee which lead him to believe the committee will incorporate in the river and harbor bill a provision for the dredge. The committee is unwilling to make further appropriations for the coast projects.

Canada Will Not Come to Fair.

Ottawa, Ont., Dec. 16.—The Dominion government decided today not to send an exhibit to the Lewis and Clark exposition.

AMERICA LOSING FLOUR TRADE.

Shaw Confers With Millers Regarding Drawback on Imported Wheat.

Washington, Dec. 17.—At the request of Secretary Shaw, representatives of a number of the leading flouring mill interests of the country were at the treasury department today in conference with the secretary on the subject of the regulations now in preparation to allow drawback on exported flour made in part from imported wheat. During the conference the secretary questioned the millers present on several matters of detail in connection with the milling of wheat, the condition of the export trade and the necessity for the action asked for.

At the conclusion of the conference a statement made by Secretary Shaw was given out in which he says:

"The importance of the question will be appreciated when it is known that during October, 1903, 1,800,000 barrels of American made flour were exported, and in October, 1904, less than 800,000 barrels. In other words, the exportation of American made flour has fallen off during the present season more than one-half. If the European bakers that have been using the American made flour change, it will be next to impossible to get the trade back, and it never can be gotten back until the American farmer sells his wheat cheap enough to permit the American miller to undersell."

SLAIN BY DRUNKEN RUSSIAN

Chinaman Singled Out by Sailor and Filled with Bullets.

Shanghai, Dec. 17.—The disorders created by the sailors of the dismantled Russian vessels Askold and Gromovoi reached their climax yesterday when one of the crew of the Askold murdered a Chinaman without the slightest provocation.

The Russian was apparently intoxicated and rushed through one of the streets of the Chinese settlement with a loaded revolver in his hand. He fired several shots at passers by, but failed to do any damage. Then he made for a Chinaman who was standing in front of his store, and, seizing him by the throat, emptied the remaining chambers of the pistol into his victim's body. A petition has been presented to the authorities here requesting that the Russian crews be excluded from the Chinese settlements, where they have been making life a burden for the residents. The matter will, in all probability, be submitted to the foreign consuls, as not a day has passed during the past month or so without some complaint being made against the Russians. So far as can be learned, the Chinese officials have kept the matter secret, but this latest exploit could not be kept from the knowledge of the people in general, and united action is likely to be taken against the Russian sailors.

TO GET PHILIPPINE EXHIBIT.

1905 Fair Deal Only Awaits Approval of Insular Department.

St. Louis, Dec. 17.—The Chronicle this evening says:
The sale of a large Philippine exhibit for \$16,000 to the Lewis and Clark exposition company, is awaiting the authorization of the Insular department at Washington. A careful and extensive list of displays, making a very comprehensive inanimate exhibit, was prepared by the Philippine board for the Portland company. The price of \$16,000 was accepted by the Western fair corporation, and the conclusion of the deal only awaits the approval of the Washington authorities.
The exhibit includes displays from the ethnological, agricultural, forestry and other important departments at the St. Louis fair. It is estimated that the Lewis and Clark company could not duplicate the exhibit in the islands and ship to Portland for double the sum it will pay for the exhibit to be secured in this way.

No News of Missing Attache.

Paris, Dec. 17.—The foreign office has not received any information which it considers creditable concerning the disappearance of Lieutenant Decuivre, the French naval attache at Port Arthur. The statement was brought out by sensational London papers to the effect that the officials here had been advised that Japanese torpedo boats deliberately sunk a junk on board of which were the French and German naval attaches. The officials point out that the \$2,000 reward for news of its missing attache is still unclaimed.

Robber Locks Cashier In.

Hibbing, Minn., Dec. 17.—A lone robber held up the bank at Chisholm during business hours today, secured \$2,200, and escaped. He forced Cashier Griesser into the vault at the muzzle of a revolver and locked the door.

TO ACQUIRE CANAL

Site of Locks at Oregon City May Be Condemned.

SENATOR FULTON FATHER'S BILL

Hopes to Have It Included in River and Harbor Measure—Nation Has a Right to Build.

Washington, Dec. 14.—Based on a report of United States Attorney Hall, sent to congress today by the secretary of war, Senator Fulton intends to introduce a bill authorizing the government to acquire by condemnation the canal and locks owned and operated by the Portland General electric company at Willamette Falls. The board of engineers, which made an examination of this canal two years ago, reports there is sufficient water in the river even at the lowest stage, to meet the demands of commerce and to supply power for the several manufacturing establishments now located at Oregon City.

District Attorney Hall, reporting on the legal question, says if the government desires to acquire this canal, "the measure of damage would be the actual present and prospective value of the locks, together with the damage suffered by depriving owners of the right to take water therefrom for manufacturing or other commercial purposes."

Already, based on these reports, Senator Fulton has secured a promise from Representative Jones to endeavor to secure a provision in the river and harbor bill, now being framed, authorizing the purchase of the electric company's canal after condemnation. Representative Jones will base his demands on Senator Fulton's bill, which will probably fix the limit of the cost of the canal at \$600,000 or \$700,000.

SHORTER SCHOOL DAY.

New York Board to Consider Adoption of Three-Hour Day.

New York, Dec. 14.—A report is being prepared by Superintendent Maxwell for presentation to the board of education, which, it is said, will be the first step toward the adoption of a three hour or three and a half hour day for the lowest grades in all the elementary schools of this city.

The board of superintendents has been investigating as to the relative results obtained by full-day classes, part-time classes, morning classes and afternoon classes in the first two school years, since the beginning of November. The investigation was begun as a result of a proposal to cut down the school day in these grades generally by eliminating certain studies. President Tift, of the board of education, said in reference to the scheme:

"While a five hour day is probably good to keep children off the streets in some parts of the city, I believe in short school days for younger children. I would give every child educational facilities as great as possible, but not so great as to interfere with proper mental and physical growth. More than three hours' class work daily makes the children restless."

CHINESE LIKELY TO RISE.

First Japanese Reverse Is to Be the Signal.

Chicago, Dec. 14.—The Chicago Daily News has the following today from a staff correspondent at Hong Kong:

"Rumors of impending Boxer troubles are prevalent throughout North China. Information from several sources points to the fact that the Chinese are drilling everywhere, and that conditions are similar to those that preceded the last outbreak, but that the trouble is more widespread, and the organization much better. It is believed that large numbers of Japanese officers are drilling troops in the interior and commanding detachments of General Ma's army northwest of Peking, and that a Japanese reverse will be the signal for a general uprising of the Chinese against Russia, led by Japanese officers."

"Many residents here fear that such an outbreak could not be confined to its original limits but would endanger the safety of the foreigners throughout China."

Russia May Protest.

St. Petersburg, Dec. 14.—Considerable interest is manifested in the report from the island of Perim, in the straits of Bab el Mandeb, that the British steamer St. Leonards was taken to Perim by the British cruiser Fox because she was credited with carrying coal for the Russian second Pacific squadron. If it should appear that the St. Leonards was stopped solely for the reason that she was carrying coal for the Russian squadron the matter is likely to become the subject of a protest to the British government.

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