

BUILDING UP THE NAVY

Uncle Sam Not Buying Any Cast-Off Warships.

CUBAN INTERVENTION RUMOR

Arming and Manning the Merchant Marines—Work on Coast Defense Guns Being Rapidly Pushed Forward.

Washington, March 12.—The United States government has not acquired a single additional ship for the navy. This is true, not because of a lack of offers of warships from abroad, but simply for the reason that the navy department is proceeding with all the circumspection consistent with the needs of the case in looking to the prices and qualities of the craft. There is a strong disposition to refrain from being drawn into bad bargains and to insist on getting good vessels at prices not extortionate.

Secretary Long was in receipt of a large number of cable messages today, almost all relating to offers of ships. Lieutenant Niblock, United States naval attaché at Berlin, St. Petersburg and Vienna, is particularly active in quest of vessels.

There was a good deal of talk during the day about the assignment of officers to the command of auxiliary cruisers, the St. Paul and St. Louis being especially mentioned, but Secretary Long set these stories at rest by the statement that he had not made any such assignments, and had only progressed to the point of informing himself of the possibility of getting the ships offered and manned quickly.

While looking after new ships, the officials of the navy department are not neglecting the other vessels, and arrangements have been made to make short repairs on several ships that in the ordinary course would not be treated in that fashion, but would require an entire overhauling. Thus, in the case of the Philadelphia, which has had five years hard work, and has never yet been gone over, as is the custom, orders have gone to Mare Island to put her in shape for sea within 40 days. The Yorktown, at the same yards, is not to be touched at present, not only because she is in fair condition, but also because she is not so formidable a craft as to make it desirable to divert to her repair the attention required elsewhere. At Norfolk the Newark is set down for 30 days' repairs, and as a good deal of work has already been done on her, she will be almost a new ship when she comes out of the yards.

The big monitor Puritan has practically completed her repairs. The monitor Comanche at Mare Island has been examined and found in tolerable condition. At League Island the Monitor Miantonomah and the ram Katakata went into commission today, although they have not yet received their orders. They will probably remain in the Delaware river or drop down into the bay. The torpedo boat Dupont sailed today from Mobile to attach herself again to the flotilla at Key West. Again it was said at the navy department that nothing had been heard from the court of inquiry at Havana, nor from Admiral Sicard at Key West.

The presence in the city of persons connected with steamship lines and steel works led to the circulation of a number of sensational stories during the day, but perhaps none of these had the persistency of one, which met summary denial at the hands of Assistant Secretary Day, to the effect that Minister Woodford had notified the Spanish government that the president intended sending to congress a message announcing his recognition of Cuban independence.

A conference was held at 3 o'clock in the office of Assistant Secretary Roosevelt, to map out plans for arming and equipping merchant vessels as auxiliary cruisers. This work, it is said, could be accomplished readily within two weeks' time, as all materials, except the guns, are on hand. The bureau of ordnance could not supply all the guns required within that short time, although some 70 or more are now available. The supply would be adequate, however, for the most effective auxiliary cruisers and the complete armament of the merchant ships could proceed as rapidly as possible thereafter.

As to the question of manning the auxiliary fleet, the navy department feels that the most effective step would be to enlist in the United States naval service the present merchant crews of the several ships. These crews are thoroughly familiar with the vessels, and could handle them with far greater effect than green crews of bluejackets. The ships would be officered from the line of the navy. In the case of enlisting a merchant crew, the pay and allowances would be about equivalent to the rates paid ordinary sailors, and the time of enlistment would doubtless be limited to short periods.

In the Interest of Miles.

Washington, March 12.—The senate committee on military affairs today decided to recommend the passage of a bill authorizing the revival of the grade of lieutenant-general of the army. The bill authorizes the president to nominate any officer to this grade. The bill is in the interest of General Miles.

SPURIOUS COINS IN PRISON.

Two Convicts at Folsom Are Caught in the Act of Counterfeiting.

Folsom, Cal., March 14.—A counterfeiting plant has been discovered within the walls of the state prison here. The work was done in the engine-room by convicts L. H. Coyne and James Brown, and so far as known only nickels were coined, presumably because no precious metals could be obtained.

The men were discovered in the act of making bogus coins by guards, who had been told of what was going on. When the officers rushed in Coyne and Brown leaped through a window and threw their dies and crucible into a canal leading to the American river.

A large number of well-executed 5-cent pieces were found. They were made of Babbitt metal, taken from the engines which run through the prison grounds to haul rock from the quarries. It is thought the dies were not made by the men who coined the money, but by some of the expert counterfeiters in the prison.

The impression prevails among the officers that it was the intention of the convicts to coin a great quantity of nickels and ship them out on the freight cars, where their friends on the outside could receive them in exchange for opium. Several of the bogus coins have been found in circulation in the town of Folsom.

A Yukon Coal Mine.

Seattle, March 14.—Coal in paying quantities has been found on the Yukon river about 1,000 miles above St. Michaels, and a company is about to be formed of Oregon and California capitalists to operate the mine. This discovery will be of vast importance to the river interests, as coal depots will be established at various points along the river so that steamers can depend on getting a supply of fuel at intervals of 800 or 400 miles. The promoters of the scheme say they can mine and transport coal to St. Michaels and intermediate points to sell at \$5 a ton, which they say will reduce present fuel bills over 300 per cent. The mine is close to the river bank, so that coal can be dumped direct into barges on the river.

A Terrible Fatality.

St. Louis, March 14.—Mrs. Helen Schwann was burned to death yesterday while lighting a gasoline stove. She spilled some of the liquid on her dress while filling the tank. When she struck a match to light the stove her dress ignited. Her screams attracted her three small children, who ran to her and attempted to pull the burning clothes off their mother. The woman was burned almost to a crisp and died in terrible agony. The three children were all badly burned about the hands and face.

Favorable Report Ordered.

Washington, March 14.—The house committee on public lands agreed to report favorably the Shafroth bill for the cession of all arid lands to the states in which they are located. Under the Carey act, 1,000,000 acres have already been ceded to the respective states, but none but Wyoming have taken advantage of the act.

Rosecrans Dead.

Los Angeles, March 14.—General William Stark Rosecrans, the last great captain of the Union army, died at 7 o'clock this morning at his home near Redondo. His death was not unexpected, it having been realized several days ago that his illness could not have other than a fatal termination.

Union Pacific Has Met the Cut.

Omaha, March 14.—The Burlington and Union Pacific announce a rate from Omaha to Portland and Seattle, meeting the latest cut made by the Northern route. The fare from here is \$20 for first-class and \$10 for second-class tickets.

Lomax, of the Union Pacific, and Francis, of the Burlington, are both opposed to the war and are doing all they can to get the rates restored.

Kansas City, March 14.—Effective today, the Rock Island announced a rate of \$20 second-class on all passenger business from Kansas City to either Seattle or Tacoma.

Mr. Bryan's Opinion of It.

Atlanta, Ga., March 14.—Hon. W. J. Bryan spent a few hours at Atlanta last night on his way to Macon. When asked his opinion as regards the action of congress in placing \$50,000,000 at the president's disposal for the national defense, Mr. Bryan said:

"I am glad the house acted promptly and unanimously. In fact, it might have been better to have made it a hundred millions to show the world that congress and American people, without regard to political differences, are ready to support the administration in any action necessary for the protection of the honor and welfare of the nation."

"Does this appropriation mean war?"

"Not necessarily," replied Mr. Bryan. "Instead of leading to war, a prompt liberality at this time may lessen the probability of war, and in the end prove a wise economy."

Shot and Shell for Fort Warren.

Boston, March 14.—A consignment of ammunition, consisting of 24 tons of shot and shell, came in today, and is being transferred by lighter to Fort Warren and the fortifications at Long Island head.

A CHANGE OF POLICY.

Spain Supports the Cuban Constitution.

Madrid, March 12.—Political and financial circles here realize that Spain is facing a grave problem. In view of the attitude of the United States, it is understood the Spanish government has changed its policy toward Cuba and is now courting the co-operation of the Cuban constitutional party, urging the maintenance of volunteers and the pushing of the campaign against the insurgents, thus giving the military policy predominance over diplomacy. This change is due to the fact that, if the radical autonomists insisted upon the disarming of the volunteers or incited the constitutionalists to disaffection, a conflict would supervene, "affording the United States an opportunity for armed intervention."

A Bitter Spanish Defeat.

New York, March 12.—The Cuban junta has received by messenger the official report of General Reinos, who commanded the Cuban forces at the battle of Najasa on February 21-24. The details of the battle show that while the Cubans were outnumbered four to one, for four days they held their position and caused the Spanish troops to retreat, leaving 203 dead men on the field. The messenger who brought the news also brought a copy of a Spanish paper admitting the retreat of the Spanish soldiers, but asserting that the four days' fighting resulted in a victory for Spain.

WORK IS NEARLY DONE.

Report of the Court of Inquiry Is Expected Soon.

Key West, March 12.—The United States dispatch-boat Fern arrived this morning from Havana. The United States battle-ship Iowa has sailed for Tortugas. The torpedo-boat Porter also sailed for Tortugas with mail for the fleet.

The Fern brought the Maine's silverware and 60 rifles recovered from the wreck. Mr. Bissell, stenographer of the court of inquiry, was on board. Both of the stenographers have now left the court, and it has only a temporary clerk. This leads many to think that its work is practically done and that it will return to Key West shortly. The Fern coaled, and provisions for the starving Cubans were then put on board. She is scheduled to start for Matanzas tomorrow.

The Marblehead will go from the Tortugas to Tampa, where it is reported she will take on additional ammunition.

The British cruiser Cordelia sailed today.

THE ALASKA BOUNDARY.

Said to Have Been Settled Favorably to the United States.

New York, March 12.—A dispatch to the Press from Ottawa says: Sir Julian Pauncefote, British ambassador, has informed the Canadian ministry officially that he has arranged a convention with the United States whereby the Alaskan boundary dispute has been settled. Under the terms of the convention the British government has conceded the claim of the United States that three marine leagues should be measured from the shore of the mainland, and should proceed along the shores of the inlets, which are thus recognized as arms of the ocean. The contention of the British and of the Canadian governments was that the three-league limit should begin on the ocean side of the islands, and that the delimiting line should be run across the inlets, and not follow their shores. These inlets are numerous and extend into the mainland a great distance, and the decision, therefore, is of much importance to the United States. The United States has agreed to the British locating the boundary on the limit of Chilkoot and White passes, because by the Russian-British agreement of 1825 the line of demarcation was fixed as one running along the tops of the mountains. The decision, while not entirely unexpected by the Canadians, is regarded with disfavor. It was understood that the British government was irritated at the forwardness of the Canadian ministry, but it was not thought that the surrender would be so sweeping.

YAQUINA ALONE FAVORED.

Adverse Report on Amendments to Sundry Civil Bill.

Washington, March 12.—The senate committee on commerce has reported adversely on the proposed amendments to the sundry civil appropriation bill, providing for river and harbor improvements under the continuous contract system and for which estimates have not been made. This decision has the effect of ruling out all the amendments of this character, except the one offered by Senator McBride, providing for the improvement of Yaquina harbor in Oregon and appropriating \$150,000 for this purpose, on which favorable action was recommended.

Senator Frye, chairman of the committee, afterwards explained the adverse action to the senate, and the house amendments and various amendments for rivers and harbors were laid on the table.

PASSED AND SIGNED.

Cannon's National Defense Bill Is Now a Law.

Washington, March 11.—President McKinley's hands have been upheld by both branches of the American congress. With enthusiasm, fervor and promptness almost unparalleled in the senate in time of peace, that body today passed the emergency appropriation bill, carrying \$183,000 for deficiencies and placing at the disposal of the president \$50,000,000 for national defense.

The vice-president and speaker of the house signed the bill this afternoon, and it was immediately sent to the president, who affixed his signature at 3:50 o'clock P. M. The bill is now a law.

The vote by which the measure was passed in the senate was unanimous. Seventy-six short, sharp and emphatic speeches were delivered in favor of the bill, each one being simply a ringing "aye" during the roll-call upon the passage of the measure. Not only did every senator present register his vote in favor of the bill, but for every absent member, the authoritative announcement was made that if present he would vote aye. From the time the bill was presented to the senate by Hale, until it was passed, not an inharmonious note was sounded. Party lines were swept aside. In the general outburst of patriotic feeling, pairs were broken, every senator being anxious to register his vote on the measure.

It was just 12:13 when Hale reported the bill to the senate and asked that it be placed on its passage. The members of the committee on appropriations had previously effected an arrangement whereby there would be no debate on the bill, and after it was read, Vice-President Hobart placed it immediately on its passage. The business was accomplished so quickly that most of the people who crowded the galleries scarcely realized that the measure, so far as congress was concerned, had become a law. Some of the spectators fully grasped the meaning of the senate's action, and when the announcement of the vote was made, a murmur of applause ran through the galleries. The members of the senate, however, maintained a dignified silence, the realization among all of them being keen that a situation which warranted the passage of so unusual a measure was too grave to prompt an outburst of applause. Earnest determination was evinced on both sides of the chamber, but there was not a note of levity that would detract from the seriousness of the work performed.

The house devoted itself to routine business today. The executive, legislative and judicial appropriation bill went through its last stages in the adoption of the final conference report, and the remainder of the day was consumed in the consideration of the senate amendments to the Indian appropriation bill. The substitute for the senate provision regarding the opening of the Uncompagire reservation was knocked out on a point of order, and the amendment goes back to conference.

The desire of the conferees to non-concur in the senate free homestead clause encountered bitter opposition, and an arrangement was made whereby four hours are to be devoted to debate on a proposition to concur submitted by Eddy.

Sherman, chairman of the Indian committee, declared that the free homestead provision would cost the government \$55,000,000. He desired to eliminate it from the bill, and has the support of the secretary of the interior.

Philadelphia Club's Offer.

Philadelphia, March 11.—At a meeting of the board of directors of the Union League Club the following was adopted:

"The Union League of Philadelphia, which, during the war of the rebellion raised, armed and equipped and placed in the field nine regiments of infantry and a battalion of cavalry, hereby pledges to the president of the United States its loyal support in war and peace, and congratulates him upon his steadfast efforts to maintain peace with honor."

Hawaii's Sympathy.

Honolulu, March 11.—The Hawaiian legislature has adopted a joint resolution, extending its deep and earnest sympathy to the United States in the great loss of life sustained by the destruction of the battleship Maine, and the flag over the executive building has been placed at half-mast as a mark of sympathy.

Will Forestall Spain.

London, March 11.—The indications are that the United States government will not wait for the arrival here of Commander Brownson in order to purchase warships. Definite orders have already been made for the purchase of ships building here, with a view to forestalling Spain, who is supposed to be bargaining for the same vessels.

Spanish Torpedo Boat Destroyers.

Glasgow, March 11.—The Spanish torpedo boat destroyers Orada and Audaz left the Clyde bank this afternoon fully manned and with all their guns and other armaments on board. They will embark the ammunition tomorrow at Greenock and will sail Saturday. At their trials, they developed a speed of 30 knots.

PACIFIC COAST TRADE.

Portland Market.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 74@76c; Valley and Bluestem, 77@78c per bushel. Flour—Best grades, \$3.85; graham, \$3.40; superfine, \$2.85 per barrel. Oats—Choice white, 35@37c; choice gray, 33@34c per bushel. Barley—Feed barley, \$19@20; brewing, \$20 per ton. Millstuffs—Bran, \$18 per ton; middlings, \$23; shorts, \$18. Hay—Timothy, \$12.50; clover, \$10 @11; California wheat, \$10; do oat, \$11; Oregon wild hay, \$9@10 per ton. Eggs—Oregon, 10c per dozen. Butter—Fancy creamery, 50@55c; fair to good, 45@50c; dairy, 35@40c per roll. Cheese—Oregon full cream, 12½c; Young America, 13@14c.

Poultry—Chickens, mixed, \$3.00@3.50 per dozen; hens, \$3.50@4.00; geese, \$6.00@7.00; ducks, \$5.00@6.00 per dozen; turkeys, live, 11@12c per pound. Potatoes—Oregon Burbanks, 40@50c per sack; sweets, \$1.75@2 per cental. Onions—Oregon, \$2.25@2.60 per sack. Hops—14@16c per pound for new crop; 1896 crop, 4@6c.

Wool—Valley, 14@16c per pound; Eastern Oregon, 7@12c; mohair, 20@22c per pound. Mutton—Gross, best sheep, wethers and ewes, 4c; dressed mutton, 7c; spring lambs, 5½c per pound. Hogs—Gross, choice heavy, \$4.25; light and feeders, \$3.00@4.00; dressed, \$5.00@5.50 per 100 pounds. Beef—Gross, top steers, \$3.50@3.75; cows, \$4.00; dressed beef, 6½@7c per pound. Veal—Large, 6@6½c; small, 7@8c per pound.

Seattle Market.

Potatoes—Yakimas, \$14 per ton; natives, \$11@13; sweets, 2c per pound; box of 60 pounds, \$1. Butter—Fancy native creamery, brick, 27c; ranch, 22@23c; dairy, 18@22c; Iowa fancy creamery, 25c. Cheese—Native Washington, 12@13c; Eastern cheese, 12½c. Eggs—Fresh ranch, 15c; California ranch, 14c. Meats—Choice dressed beef steers, 8c; cows, 7@7½c; mutton, 8½c; pork, 7c; veal, small, 8c. Poultry—Chickens, live, per pound, hens, 11@12c; dressed, 14c; turkeys, live, 12c; dressed, 16c. Fresh Fish—Halibut, 6@7c; steel heads, 6@7c; salmon trout, 10c; flounders and sole, 3@4c; tom cod, 4c; ling cod, 4@5c; rock cod, 5c; smelt, 2½@4c; herring, 3c. Olympia oysters, per sack, \$3@3.50. Wheat—Feed wheat, per ton, \$23. Oats—Choice, per ton, \$23. Corn—Whole, \$23; cracked, per ton, \$23; feed meal, \$23 per ton. Barley—Rolled or ground, per ton, \$23; whole, \$22. Flour—Patents, per barrel, \$4.25@4.50; straights, \$4.25; California brands, \$4.65; Dakota brands, \$5.40@5.75; buckwheat flour, \$6. Millstuffs—Bran, per ton, \$17; shorts, per ton, \$18@19. Feed—Chopped feed, \$18@20 per ton; middlings, per ton, \$24; oil cake meal, per ton, \$35. Hay—Puget Sound, new, per ton, \$12@14; Eastern Washington timothy, \$18; alfalfa, \$12; straw, \$7.

San Francisco Market.

Wool—Nevada, 11@13c; Oregon, 12@14c; Southern coast lambs, 7@8c. Hops—12@17c per pound. Millstuffs—Middlings, \$20@22.50; California bran, \$16.50@17.00 per ton. Onions—Silverskins, \$2.50@2.85 per cental. Eggs—Store, 10@11c; ranch, 11@12c. Cheese—Fancy mild, new, 10c; old, 8½@9c per pound. Butter—Fancy creamery, 18c; do seconds, 17½c; fancy dairy, 17c; good to choice, 15@16c per pound. Fresh Fruit—Apples, 40c@1.25 per large box; grapes, 25@40c; Isabella, 60@75c; peaches, 50c@61c; pears, 75c@81c per box; plums, 20@35c. Potatoes—Early Rose, 65@75c. Citrus Fruit—Oranges, navel, \$1.25 @3.00; Mexican limes, \$5.50@6.00; California lemons, choice, \$2.25; do common, 75c@1.25 per box. Hay—Wheat, \$16@18.50; wheat and oat, \$16@17; oat, \$14.50@16.50; best barley, \$13.50@15; alfalfa, \$10.50@11; clover, \$11@13.

Old Romance Recalled.

A Washington correspondent writes to the Chicago Tribune: Madame Bakmeteff, who visits her mother, Mrs. Beale, every year, is again in the city. She is a sister of Mrs. John R. McLean and widow of a former Russian charge d'affaires in Washington. A romantic story of their first meeting is told. It was in this way: Miss Beale was sitting on the door step of her mother's house, one of the colonial edifices of Lafayette square, when her little pet dog, seeing the count gazing admiringly at his mistress, entered a barking protest. The young lady called the dog off, the count apologized and the acquaintance began which subsequently led to their marriage.

English Petroleum Gas.

The natural gas from the well which was struck about a year ago at Weldon, in Sussex, is being analyzed, and is pronounced to be probably of petroleum origin. The Americans would have analyzed it and lighted the town with it long ago, as the supply is ample.