

NICARAGUA CANAL REPORT

Route Favored by the Commission.

SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES

Dimensions Made Necessary by the Demands of Modern Commerce—Estimated Cost \$125,000,000.

Washington, Dec. 31.—The full text of the preliminary report of the Nicaragua canal commission was today made public. It says:

The commission visited Nicaragua, personally examined the entire canal route from ocean to ocean, and employed some 70 engineers, with their assistants and helpers, for 10 months, in making careful surveys and examinations of the canal region. The commission believes that the construction of a canal across Nicaragua is entirely feasible. The estimates of the best route have been nearly completed. These routes are known as the Lull route, the Panama Canal Company's route and the Lull route. Their estimated cost is approximately \$124,000,000 and \$125,000,000 respectively.

The assumed dimensions are considerably greater than ever before proposed, both in length of locks and in depth and radius of curvature of the canal. These increased dimensions have been made necessary by the demands of modern commerce, size and weight of modern ships, etc. This necessarily made a corresponding increase in the estimated cost, and is a way inconsistent with the estimates made from former surveys, which contemplated a much smaller and simpler canal.

It is the opinion of this commission that of the two routes herewith estimated for, the one called the Lull route is the more desirable, because it is easier of construction, presents no problems not well within good engineering precedents, and will be a safer and more reliable canal when completed. It also believes that the dimensions and form of construction proposed by the commission are better than the cheaper form, as the smaller dimensions would undoubtedly call for expensive improvements within a short time after its completion. Both of the routes referred to above admit of variations which may reduce the cost. These are now being considered by the commission. The work necessary for an exhaustive discussion of and report upon the entire canal problem is being pushed as rapidly as its great magnitude permits, and when completed the report will be submitted without delay.

J. E. WALKER, Chief Engineer, U. S. N., President of the Commission.

"LOUIS M. HAUPT, Civil Engineer, Member.

I concur with the other members of the commission with respect to the construction work and feasibility of the canal, but I think, in view of the increased size of the canal estimated for, the difficulty incident to work in tropical countries, that the estimate is more than it should be by about 20 per cent.

"PETER HAINES, Colonel Corps of Engineers, Member."

SUGGESTS INVESTIGATION.

They want a First-Class Statesman Sent to the Philippines.

New York, Dec. 31.—A dispatch to the Herald from Manila says Admiral Dewey considers it absolutely necessary that a first-class statesman be sent to Manila to thoroughly investigate the situation there and ascertain the aspirations of the Filipino republicans. He further states that the United States should accept their responsibilities in the Philippines which have been acquired by conquest. If they should neglect this duty they would put themselves back 200 years in the world's history.

The first republican government has been organized over the question of American intervention in the government of the Philippines. Owners of property desire American co-operation. The present temporary cabinet, which will exercise power pending the elections, is very anti-American. It has no American co-operation whatever, and wants to declare a free republic and to consider Americans as allies. It is willing to grant liberal commercial treaties, with a monopoly of the sugar and railways, and to repay the expenses of the American occupation of Manila.

Problems due to malcontents continue in the provinces of Tarlac and Panaman. Republican troops have been sent there to quell the disturbance.

Killed Three Men.

West Plains, Mo., Dec. 31.—At Amos, in Ozark county, William Barlow today shot and killed two men named Cobb. Sheriff Luna quickly organized a posse at Gainesville and started out to capture the murderer. A posse was found near the scene of the shooting, and before being arrested he had killed Henry Winge, a member of the posse, and then surrendered.

HEIRS OF CHARLES DURKEE.

Their Claims May Cost Uncle Sam a Hundred Millions.

Chicago, Dec. 31.—A special to the Tribune from New York says: If the assertions of the heirs of Charles Durkee, formerly mayor of Buffalo, are well founded, the national government may be compelled to pay them more than \$100,000,000 on account of some Pacific railroad bonds which, it is alleged, the former mayor on his deathbed said belonged to him.

According to the attorneys of the estate, Mr. Durkee told his wife he had caused to be forwarded to the Metropolitan National bank of this city a tin box containing an assignment of the railroad bonds in question, amounting to more than \$64,644,000, but from that time until this, it is alleged by the attorneys, they have been unable to get any trace of the box.

There was a rumor afloat in 1894, it is said, that some of the bonds had passed through the hands of Grant & Ward, and the matter was called to the attention of the secretary of the treasury. The heirs are said to have obtained information later that some, if not all of the bonds in question were recovered and lodged in the vaults of the treasury in Washington.

It is said the court of claims is again to be called upon to make an investigation. These bonds are said to have been issued on account of the Union Pacific, Western Pacific, Central Pacific, Kansas Pacific, central branch, and the Sioux City & Pacific railroads. They bore 6 per cent interest. The accrued interest, it is alleged now amounts to twice the principal.

Charles Durkee, it is alleged, was the assignee of all the construction bonds and of all the original bonds issued by the Pacific corporations. It is alleged that Charles F. Folger years ago recognized the validity of these bonds.

CABLES IN PHILIPPINES.

War Department Takes Steps to Connect the Islands.

New York, Dec. 31.—Colonel Kimball, of the quartermaster's department in the army building here, received orders from the war department to secure at once an iron ship from 1,000 to 1,200 tons, for use as a cable ship to lay cables to connect the islands of the Philippines. The department has already ordered for this purpose 166 miles of marine cable, weighing 525 tons. The cable will take about 6,500 cubic feet for coiling.

The cable is to be coiled in skeleton tanks in different holds in the vessel. The cable ship must accommodate on the forward deck the "playing-out" machinery, which will weigh from 15 to 20 tons, and the accessories, weighing from 5 to 10 tons. In the afterhold will be fitted out the quarters for the crew of 20 men. This space will be used for coal on the way out. The ship will be kept on station as a cable ship, or can be used as a transport. She is to be secured at once.

BIG EXPRESS ROBBERY.

A Wells-Fargo Employee and \$60,000 Missing.

San Antonio, Tex., Dec. 31.—The local office of the Wells-Fargo Express Company is out a money package containing \$60,000. The money was sent here from Houston for the Southern Pacific to meet its payroll west from that city to El Paso. It arrived Wednesday morning and was given to C. A. Beeler, the Wells-Fargo money delivery clerk, to hand over. Beeler started for the depot and was seen en route. Four hours after his departure his wagon was found five miles west of the city in a thicket, the horse almost dead from the effects of hard driving. Inquiry developed the fact that no delivery had been made. There was no evidence of a struggle in the vicinity where the vehicle was found. Beeler had been in the employ of the company for nine years, and enjoyed the confidence of all. He spent several years on the frontier as a cowboy. His friends stoutly assert that he is the victim of foul play, and his wife also inclines to this belief.

WANT NO PENSIONS.

Bitterness of Ex-Confederate Veterans Not All Worn Away.

New York, Dec. 31.—The following resolution, offered by Comrade Beasley, formerly of North Carolina, was unanimously passed at a meeting of the Confederate veteran camp, of New York: "Resolved, That the Confederate veteran camp of New York condemns in unmeasured terms the efforts of Senator Butler, of North Carolina, who is not a Confederate veteran, to debauch the manhood of the South by seeking to obtain pensions for ex-Confederate soldiers from the United States, and that any similar effort by Southern members of congress will be abhorrent to this camp and meet with unqualified condemnation."

May Cross the Line.

Vancouver, B. C., Dec. 31.—Salmon cannery men are alarmed at the Dominion government regulations. They say if the fisheries department remains obdurate and refuse to agree to the cannery men's suggested amendments, all the canneries on Fraser river must close down, or rather go over to the American side. This means that a British Columbia industry, in which about \$3,000,000 is annually spent, will be bodily transferred to the United States.

WANTS NO NICARAGUA CANAL.

Russia Launches a Campaign Against the American Scheme.

New York, Jan. 2.—A dispatch from Paris says: The Herald's European edition prints the following:

Russia is evidently beginning a campaign against the Nicaragua canal. The Novoe Vremya publishes an article not only warmly advocating the Panama scheme, but filled with bitter dislike of the United States.

The writer says the predominance of the United States would have been desirable for Russia a few years ago, but all this has changed since the last war. He goes on to say that, having despoiled poor Spain, the United States has become a colonial party and an Asiatic power.

"Forgetting the Monroe doctrine of America for Americans, which implies the other doctrine that American dominion must be confined to America, the Yankees," he says, "are now entering into open competition with us in China and Korea. They have no scruples over an alliance with their traditional enemy, England, and with Japan for this purpose.

"For this reason Russian financiers and diplomats ought to give their support to the French undertaking when it comes to seriously discarding the neutralization of the Panama canal and placing it under the general control or guarantee of the European powers."

The writer declares the Panama route would be more beneficial to Russia than the Nicaragua route.

"This latter canal," he adds, "even supposing its completion possible, would be a purely American undertaking, whereas the Panama canal remains in the hands of our allies, the French, or it may become an international enterprise with the addition of a strong American element to its shareholders."

The Novoe Vremya says: "Russia must therefore, be on her guard against the United States, especially in view of the enormous wealth of its Pacific shores and strategic position occupied by Americans in the Sandwich, the Philippines, the Samoan and the Mariana islands."

WILL NOT RETURN.

General Merritt's Official Connection With the Philippines Has Ceased.

Chicago, Jan. 2.—Major-General Wesley A. Merritt and bride are in Chicago. They will spend the holidays here and then go to New York, where the general will assume his position as commander of the department of the East.

The general says that his official connection with the Philippines has ceased. He thinks this government should ignore Agoncillo, the Filipino representative. According to the general's belief Agoncillo is trying to hold up the United States.

General Merritt smiled when the question of "embalmed" beef was brought up.

"What fresh beef was furnished us at Manila came from Australia," General Merritt says, "but most of the meat furnished the army was canned, and a good share of it was taken with us. We did not experience the least trouble with it. Myself and my staff lived on canned meat part of the time, and we were in the best of health."

MRS. BOTKIN GUILTY.

Convicted of Murder in First Degree—Life Imprisonment the Penalty.

San Francisco, Jan. 2.—Rather to the general surprise of those who have followed the Botkin trial, and to the entire dismay of the defendant and her attorneys, Mrs. Cordelia Botkin was tonight found guilty of murder in the first degree for causing the death of Mrs. John P. Dunning, by sending a box of poisoned candy to her in Dover, Del. The condemned murderess will be spared an ignominious death on the gallows, however, the jury that found her guilty imposing also the penalty of life imprisonment. The verdict was unexpected. An acquittal was confidently awaited by the defense, while the prosecution feared a disagreement.

Big Gold Strike.

El Paso, Tex., Jan. 2.—Considerable excitement was caused in mining and smelting circles here today by the arrival of authentic information of one of the biggest gold strikes yet made in Northern Mexico. E. U. Beauchamp, who arrived today from Bacereac, Sonora, by way of Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, reports the discovery of an immense fissure vein of free milling gold ore 20 miles south of Bacereac. The ore is reported to contain 18 ounces of gold to the ton, and the vein has been traced for several miles. American prospectors in Casas Grandes and surrounding districts are arriving on the scene in large numbers.

Fastest Train in the World.

Cleveland, O., Jan. 1.—As a result of a meeting of division superintendents of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern railroad, just held here to rearrange time-tables, it is announced that the new fast mail, which is to be started next Sunday between New York and San Francisco, will be the fastest regular train in the world. That is to say, there is no other train which goes so great a distance in as short a time every day in the year. The total reduction in time between New York and San Francisco over the present schedule is a little over 13 hours.

PACIFIC COAST NEWS

Items of General Interest Gleaned From the Thriving Pacific States.

Wheat Grade.

Regarding the grading of Washington wheat by the Portland Chamber of Commerce at 59 pounds per bushel, a dealer in Walla Walla says in the Union of that town: "Oregon ought to have a state board to grade wheat, instead of throwing the responsibility onto the Portland Chamber of Commerce. It now costs 75 cents for an Eastern Washington wheat raiser to have a car of wheat inspected at Tacoma. In Portland it costs nothing—a slight premium for having wheat shipped to Portland. As a matter of fact, the law of Washington in regard to the inspection of wheat is unconstitutional. I could take \$1,500 or \$2,000 and knock the law out. That is the opinion of some of the best legal talent of Tacoma. I have to pay a tax on warehouses, and a second one for inspection. That makes it a double tax, and unjust. Just because wheat weighs 58 pounds to the bushel don't cause it to bring the highest price. We have to pay more for the heavier wheat, that, for instance, which goes 60½ pounds to the bushel, classed as choice milling. Even after wheat has been inspected at Tacoma and found to go 58 pounds to the bushel, heavier wheat has to be mixed with it in order that it may pass as No. 1 in foreign markets. That makes more trouble for the wholesale wheatbuyer."

The Shingle Market.

In commenting on the present condition of the shingle market, the Tacoma Lumberman says the good effects of the closing-down proposition are already being felt. The prices are firmer and there are practically no shingles on the market. Eastern buyers are in the field trying to contract for round lots. They are using argument to prove to the mill man that he should contract now, "because shingles may be weak in the spring." If he really thought so he would not try to buy now. The mill man is getting a little wiser each year. He knows more about the shingle business than he did a few years ago. He knows that the big Eastern buyer, as a rule, lays for him and ambushes him when he can. The line yard man of the East—who is not in any sense a jobber—buys out of season, always, when the market is off. If the mill men will remain closed down until February 1, start off with moderate prices and raise them as the trade demands, the year 1899 will be the best one the shingle men have ever seen.

No Corner in Salmon.

When the salmon pack on the Fraser river was definitely announced this year, a report was circulated to the effect that an attempt would be made by certain well-known packers and capitalists on the Pacific coast to "corner" the market. "No such attempt has ever been made to my knowledge," says a packer in the Vancouver (B. C.) Province. "The Fraser pack this season amounted to only 197,000 cases, but still I think it would be almost impossible to corner the market. Taking into consideration the whole pack of the Pacific coast, it would require about \$250,000 to control the market. As a result of the small pack on the Fraser this year prices are slightly higher. We do not look for much of an advance, however."

Prepared to Carry on Work.

Otto Hansen, having leased the Irs Erb sash and door factory, of Salem, and equipped it with new machinery, is now prepared to carry on work in that line in keeping with the growing demands. Mr. Hansen has already in place a new turning machine and a new mortice machine, both of the latest patterns, and has now on the road from the manufacturers two other new machines—a Universal woodworker for jointing and facing and a door and blind clamping machine with sash attachment. John S. Pennebaker will be Mr. Hansen's foreman and business manager, and they have already every assurance of prosperous patronage.

Stimson Mill Not Sold.

There is no truth in the report that the old Port Madison mill, which has been shut down for several years, had been purchased by the Stimson Mill Company, of Ballard, and that the company would run the old mill on a scale far exceeding the palmiest days of the old Madison Mill Company. A flat denial is given these rumors by C. D. Stimson, of the Stimson Mill Company, who says that there is not the slightest foundation for such a rumor.

After Portland's Business.

Advices from Butte, Mont., are to the effect that the Great Northern Railway Company contemplates the construction of a cut-off from that city west to Lewiston, Idaho, to connect with the extension of the O. R. & N. Co., and thus secure advantageous and direct means of sharing Portland's traffic.

Reported Removal.

The sash and door factory at Rainier will probably be removed from that place, and in anticipation of this action the citizens of the two Washington towns, Kelso and Castle Rock, are making efforts to secure the plant.

PACIFIC COAST TRADE.

Portland Market.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 59c; Valley, 61c; Bluestem, 62c per bushel.
Flour—Best grades, \$3.20; graham, \$2.65; superfine, \$2.15 per barrel.
Oats—Choice white, 40¢@41¢; choice gray, 39¢@40¢ per bushel.
Barley—Feed barley, \$22@24; brewing, \$24 per ton.
Millstuffs—Bran, \$16 per ton; middlings, \$21; shorts, \$16; chop, \$15.50 per ton.
Hay—Timothy, \$9@10; clover, \$7@8; Oregon wild hay, \$6 per ton.
Butter—Fancy creamery, 55¢@60¢; seconds, 50¢@53¢; dairy, 45¢@50¢ store, 30¢@35¢.
Cheese—Oregon full cream, 11¢@13¢; Young America, 15¢; new cheese, 10¢ per pound.
Poultry—Chickens, mixed, \$2.50@3 per dozen; hens, \$3.50@4.00; springs, \$1.25@3; geese, \$6.00@7.00 for old, \$4.50@5 for young; ducks, \$4.00@5.00 per dozen; turkeys, live, 11¢@12¢ per pound.
Potatoes—60¢@70¢ per sack; sweets, 2¢ per pound.
Vegetables—Beets, 90¢; turnips, 75¢ per sack; garlic, 70¢ per pound; cabbage, \$1@1.25 per 100 pounds; cauliflower, 75¢ per dozen; parsnips, 75¢ per sack; beans, 3¢ per pound; celery, 70¢@75¢ per dozen; cucumbers, 50¢ per box; peas, 3¢@3½¢ per pound.
Onions—Oregon, 75¢@81¢ per sack.
Hops—15¢@18¢; 1897 crop, 4¢@6¢.
Wool—Valley, 10¢@12¢ per pound; Eastern Oregon, 8¢@12¢; mohair, 26¢ per pound.
Mutton—Gross, best sheep, wethers and ewes, 4¢; dressed mutton, 7½¢; spring lambs, 7½¢ per lb.
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, \$3.50@3.00; dressed beef, 5¢@6½¢ per pound.
Veal—Large, 6¢@6½¢; small, 7¢@8¢ per pound.

Seattle Markets.

Onions, 85¢@90¢ per 100 pounds.
Potatoes, \$10@12.
Beets, per sack, 75¢.
Turnips, per sack, 50¢@60¢.
Carrots, per sack, \$1.
Parsnips, per sack, \$1.
Cauliflower, 50¢@75¢ per doz.
Celery, 35¢@40¢.
Cabbage, native and California \$1.00@1.50 per 100 pounds.
Apples, 85¢@50¢ per box.
Pears, 75¢@1.50 per box.
Prunes, 50¢ per box.
Butter—Creamery, 27¢ per pound; dairy and ranch, 18¢@20¢ per pound.
Eggs, 85¢.
Cheese—Native, 12¢@12½¢.
Poultry—Old hens, 12¢ per pound; spring chickens, 12¢; turkeys, 16¢.
Fresh meats—Choice dressed beef steers, prime, 6½¢@7¢; cows, prime, 6½¢; mutton, 7½¢; pork, 6¢@7¢; veal, 6¢@8¢.
Wheat—Feed wheat, \$22.
Oats—Choice, per ton, \$24.
Hay—Puget Sound mixed, \$9.50@10; choice Eastern Washington timothy, \$12.
Corn—Whole, \$23.50; cracked, \$24; feed meal, \$23.50.
Barley—Rolled or ground, per ton, \$24@25; whole, \$22.
Flour—Patent, per barrel, \$3.50; straights, \$3.25; California brands, \$3.25; buckwheat flour, \$3.75; graham, per barrel, \$3.60; whole wheat flour, \$3.75; rye flour, \$4.
Millstuffs—Bran, per ton, \$14; shorts, per ton, \$16.
Feed—Chopped feed, \$19@21 per ton; middlings, per ton, \$17; oil cake meal, per ton, \$35.

San Francisco Market.

Wool—Spring—Nevada, 10¢@12¢ per pound; Oregon, Eastern, 10¢@12¢; Valley, 15¢@17¢; Northern, 9¢@11¢.
Millstuffs—Middlings, \$18@21.00; bran, \$15.50@16.50 per ton.
Onions—Silverskin, 50¢@75¢ per sack.
Butter—Fancy creamery, 36¢; do seconds, 20¢@24¢; fancy dairy, 23¢; do seconds, 17¢@21¢ per pound.
Eggs—Store, 18¢@22¢; fancy ranch, 25¢@27½¢.
Citrus Fruit—Oranges, Valencia, \$2@2.50; Mexican limes, \$6@6.50; California lemons, \$2.00@3.00; do choice, \$3.50@4.50; per box.

A Gravy Bath for a Bow.

During the excitement of the recent South African elections, says the Westminster Gazette, two Dutchmen at a boarding house dinner table were eulogizing the superior virtues of their race as opposed to the English. Presently Queen Victoria was mentioned, when one exclaimed, "Damn Victoria." With that the Englishman who sat next to the offending Dutchman threw the whole contents of his plate on his head—meat, potatoes, cabbage and gravy. Every other boarder threw at him the article nearest at hand—half a loaf of bread, a hot potato or a jug of water—until the poor victim cried for mercy, which was granted him after withdrawing his words and making a suitable apology.

The Rage for Fur.

Fur is used on all sorts and conditions of gowns, and is applied in any way that may suit the wearer. Row after row made as narrow as possible is applied on the graded flounce of the new cloth gowns, a short nap fur being the easiest to apply and the best in effect. Buttons of fur are extensively used on a gown of this kind, while revers and collar, with cuffs to match, trim the waist.