LAST MESSAGE TO CONGRESS

Brief Summary of Roosevelt's Letter to Lawmakers.

The following are the chief points brought out in the message of the president to the second session of the sixtieth congress:

The financial standing of the nation at the present time is excellent, and the financial management of the nation's interests by the government during the last seven years has shown the most satisfactory results. But our currency system is imperfect, and it is earnestly to be hoped that the currency commission will be able to propose a thoroughly good system which will do away with the existing defects.

As regards the great corporations engaged in interstate business, and especially the railroads, I can only repeat what I have already again and again said in my messages to the congress. I believe that under the interstate clause of the constitution the United States has complete and paramount right to control all agencies of interstate commerce, and I believe that the national government alone can exercise this right with wisdom and effectiveness so as both to secure justice from, and to do justice to, the great corporations, which are the most important factors in modern business.

The railways of the country should be put completely under the interstate commerce commission and removed from the domain of the anti-trust law. The power of the commission should be made thoroughgoing, so that it could exercise complete supervision and control over the issue of securities as well as over the raising and lowering of rates. As regards rates, at least, this power should be summary. The power to investigate the financial operations and accounts of the railways has been one of the most valuable features in recent legislation. Power to make combinations and traffic agreements should be explicitly conferred upon the railroads, the permission of the commission being first gained and the combination or agreement being published in all its details.

Rates must be made as low as is compatible with giving proper returns to all the employes of the railroad, from the highest to the lowest, and proper returns to the shareholders; but they must not, for instance, be reduced in such fashion as to necessitate a cut in the wages of the employes or the abolition of the proper and legitimate profits of honest shareholders.

Telegraph and telephone companies engaged in interstate business should be put under the jurisdiction of the interstate commerce commission.

Interstate commerce is now chiefly conducted by railroads; and the great corporation has supplanted the masses of small partnerships or individuals. The proposal to make the national government supreme over, and therefore to give it complete control over, the railroads and other instruments of interstate commerce is merely a proposal to carry out to the letter one of the prime purposes, if not the prime purpose, for which the constitution was founded.

There are many matters affecting labor and the status of the wage-worker to which I should like to draw your attention, but an exhaustive discussion of the problem in all its aspects is not now necessary.

The congress should without further delay pass a model employers' liability law for the District of Columbia. The employers' liability act recently declared unconstitutional, on account of apparently including in its provisions employes engaged in intrastate commerce as well as those engaged in interstate commerce, has been held by the local courts to be still in effect so far as its provisions apply to the District of Columbia. There should be no ambiguity on this point. If there is any doubt on the subject, the law should be re-enacted with special reference to the District of Columbia.

I most earnestly urge upon the congress the duty of increasing the totally inadequate salaries now given to our judges. On the whole there is no body of public servants who do as valuable work, nor whose moneyed reward is so inadequate, compared to their work. Beginning with the supreme court, the judges should have their salaries doubled. It is not befitting the dignity of the nation that its most honored public servants should be paid sums so small compared to what they would earn in private life that the performance of public service by them implies an exceedingly heavy pecuniary sacrifice.

It is earnestly to be desired that some method should be devised for doing away with the long delays which now obtain in the administration of justice, and which operate with peculiar severity against persons of small means, and favor only the very criminals whom it is most desirable to punish. These long delays in the final decisions of cases make in the aggregate a crying evil, and a remedy should be devised. Much of this intolerable delay is due to improper regard paid to technicalities which are a mere hindrance to justice. In some noted recent cases this over-regard for technicalities has resulted in a striking denial of justice, and flagrant wrong to the body politic.

Real damage has been done by the manifold and conflicting interpretations of the interstate commerce law. Control over the great corporations doing interstate business can be effective only if it is vested with full power in an administration department, a branch of the federal executive, carrying out a federal law; it can never be effective if a divided responsibility is left in both the states and the nation; it can never be effective if left in the hands of the courts to be decided by law suits.

If there is any one duty which more than another we owe it to our children and our children's children to perform at once, it is to save the forests of this country, for they constitute the first and most important element in the conservation of the natural resources of the country. There are, of course, two kinds of natural resources. One is the kind which can only be used as part of a process of exhaustion; this is true of mines, natural oil and gas wells, and the like. The other, and of course, ultimately by far the most important, includes the resources which can be improved in the process of wise use—the soil, the rivers, and the forests come under this head. Any really civilized nation will so use all of these three great national assets that the nation will have their benefit in the future.

All serious students of the question are aware of the great damage that has been done in the Mediterranean countries of Europe, Asia and Africa by deforestation. The similar damage that has been done in eastern Asia is less well known.

The lesson of deforestation in China is a lesson which mankind should have learned many times already from what has occurred in other places. Denudation leaves naked soil; then gullying cuts down to the bare rocks; and meanwhile the rock waste buries the bottom lands. When the soil is gone men must go; and the process does not take long.

What has happened in northern China, what has happened in central Asia, in Palestine, in north Africa, in parts of the Mediterranean countries of Europe will surely happen in our country if we do not exercise that wise forethought which should be one of the chief marks of any people calling itself civilized. Nothing should be permitted to stand in the way of the preservation of the forests, and it is criminal to permit individuals to purchase a little gain for themselves through the destruction of forests when this destruction is fatal to the well-being of the whole country in the future.

Action should be begun forthwith during the present session of the congress, for the improvement of our inland waterways—action which will result in giving us not only navigable but navigated rivers. We have spent hundreds of millions of dollars upon these waterways, yet the traffic on nearly all of them is steadily declining. This condition is the direct result of the absence of any comprehensive and far-seeing plan of waterway improvement. Obviously we cannot continue thus to expend the revenues of the government without return. It is poor business to spend money for inland navigation unless we get it.

Inquiry into the condition of the Mississippi and its principal tributaries reveals very many instances of the utter waste caused by the methods which have hitherto obtained for the so-called "improvement" of navigation. A striking instance is supplied by the "improvement" of the Ohio, which, begun in 1824, was continued under a single plan for half a century. In 1875 a new plan was adopted, and followed for a quarter of a century. In 1902 still a different plan was adopted, and has since been pursued at a rate which only promises a navigable river in from 20 to 100 years.

Such shortsighted, vacillating and futile methods are accompanied by decreasing water borne commerce and increasing traffic congestion on land, by increasing floods and by the waste of public money. The remedy lies in abandoning the methods which have so signally failed and adopting new ones in keeping with the needs and demands of our people.

I urge that all our national parks adjacent to national forests be placed completely under the control of the forest service of the agricultural department, instead of leaving them as they now are, under the interior department and policed by the army. The congress should provide for superintendents with adequate corps of first-class civilian scouts or rangers, and, further, place the road construction under the superintendent, instead of leaving it with the war department. Such a change in park management would result in economy and avoid the difficulties of administration which now arise from having the responsibility of care and protection divided between different departments.

I had occasion in my message of May 4, 1906, to urge the passage of some law putting alcohol, used in the arts, industries, and manufactures, upon the free list; that is, to provide for the withdrawal free of tax of alcohol which is to be denatured for those purposes. The law of June 7, 1906, and its amendment of March 2, 1907, accomplished what was desired in that respect, and the use of denatured alcohol, as intended, is making a fair degree of progress and is entitled to further encouragement and support from congress.

The pure food legislation has already worked a benefit difficult to overestimate.

It has been my purpose from the beginning of my administration to take the Indian service completely out of the atmosphere of political activity, and there has been steady progress toward that end. The last remaining stronghold of politics in that service was the agency system, which has seen its best days and was gradually falling to pieces from natural or purely evolutionary causes, but, like all such survivals, was decaying slowly in its later stages.

I again renew my recommendation for postal savings banks, for depositing savings with the security of the government behind them. The object is to encourage thrift and economy in the wage-earner and person of moderate means. In 14 states the deposits in savings banks as reported to the comptroller of currency amounts to $3,590,245,402, or 98.4 per cent of the entire deposits, while in the remaining 32 states there were only $70,398,543, or 1.6 per cent, showing conclusively that there are many localities in the United States where sufficient opportunity is not given to the people to deposit their savings. The result is that money is kept in hiding and unemployed. It is believed that in the aggregate vast sums of money would be brought into circulation through the instrumentality of the postal savings banks.

In my last annual message I commended the postmaster general's recommendation for an extension of the parcel post on the rural routes. The establishment of the local parcel post on rural routes would be to the mutual benefit of the farmer and the country storekeeper, and it is desirable that the routes, serving more than 15,000,000 people, should be utilized to the fullest practicable extent. An amendment was proposed in the senate last session, at the suggestion of the postmaster general, providing that, for the purpose of ascertaining the practicability of establishing a special local parcel post system on the rural routes throughout the United States, the postmaster general be authorized and directed to experiment and report to the congress the result of such experiment by establishing a special local parcel post system on rural routes in not to exceed four counties in the United States for packages of fourth class matter originating on a rural route or at the distributing postoffice for delivery by rural carriers. It would seem only proper that such an experiment should be tried in order to demonstrate the practicability of the proposition, especially as the postmaster general estimates that the revenue derived from the operation of such a system on all the rural routes would amount to many million dollars.

The share that the national government should take in the broad work of education has not received the attention and the care it rightly deserves. The immediate responsibility for the support and improvement of our educational systems and institutions rests and should always rest with the people of the several states acting through their state and local governments, but the nation has an opportunity in educational work which must not be lost, and a duty which should no longer be neglected.

I strongly urge that the request of the director of the census in connection with the decennial work so soon to be begun, be complied with and that the appointments to the census force be placed under the civil service law, waiving the geographical requirements as requested by the director of the census. The supervisors and enumerators should not be appointed under the civil service law, for the reasons given by the director. I commend to the congress the careful consideration of the admirable report of the director of the census, and trust that his recommendations will be adopted and immediate action thereon taken.

It is highly advisable that there should be intelligent action on the part of the nation on the question of preserving the health of the country. Through the practical extermination in San Francisco of disease-bearing rodents our country has thus far escaped the bubonic plague. This is but one of the many achievements of American health officers, and it shows what can be accomplished with a better organization than at present exists.

The dangers to public health from food adulteration and from many other sources, such as the menace to the physical, mental and moral development of children from child labor, should be met and overcome. There are numerous diseases which are now known to be preventable which are, nevertheless, not prevented. The recent international congress on tuberculosis has made us painfully aware of the inadequacy of American public health legislation. I therefore urgently recommend the passage of a bill which shall authorize a redistribution of the bureaus which shall best accomplish this end.

I recommend that legislation be enacted placing under the jurisdiction of the department of commerce and labor the government printing office.

All soldiers' homes should be placed under the complete jurisdiction and control of the war department.

Economy and sound business policy require that all existing independent bureaus and commissions should be placed under the jurisdiction of appropriate executive departments. It is unwise from every standpoint, and results only in mischief, to have any executive work done save by the purely executive bodies, under the control of the president; and each such executive body should be under the immediate supervision of a cabinet minister.

I advocate the immediate admission of New Mexico and Arizona as states. This should be done at the present session of the congress. The people of the two territories have made it evident by their votes that they will not come in as one state. The only alternative is to admit them as two, and I trust this will be done without delay.

I call the attention of the congress to the importance of the problem of the fisheries in the interstate waters. On the Great Lakes we are now, under the very wise treaty of April 11 of this year, endeavoring to come to an international agreement for the preservation and satisfactory use of the fisheries of these waters, which cannot otherwise be achieved.

But the problem is quite as pressing in the interstate waters of the United States. The salmon fisheries of the Columbia river are now but a fraction of what they were 25 years ago, and what they would be now if the United States government had taken complete charge of them by intervening between Oregon and Washington. During these 25 years the fishermen of each state have naturally tried to take all they could get, and the two legislatures have never been able to agree on joint action of any kind adequate in degree for the protection of the fisheries. At the moment the fishing on the Oregon side is practically closed, while there is no limit on the Washington side of any kind, and no one can tell what the courts will decide as to the very statutes under which this action and non-action result. Meanwhile very few salmon reach the spawning grounds, and probably four years hence the fisheries will amount to nothing; and this comes from a struggle between the associated, or gill-net fishermen on the one hand, and the owners of the fishing wheels on the river.

The federal statute regulating interstate traffic in game should be extended to include fish. New federal fish hatcheries should be established. The administration of the Alaska fur seal service should be vested in the bureau of fisheries.

This nation's foreign policy is based on the theory that right must be done between nations precisely as between individuals, and in our actions for the last 10 years we have in this matter proven our faith by our deeds. We have behaved, and are behaving, toward other nations as in private life an honorable man would behave toward his fellows.

The work on the Panama canal is being done with a speed, efficiency and entire devotion to duty, which makes it a model for all work of the kind. No task of such magnitude has ever before been undertaken by any nation, and no task of the kind has ever before been better performed. The men on the isthmus, from Colonel Goethals and his fellow commissioners through the entire list of employes who are faithfully doing their duty, have won their right to the ungrudging respect and gratitude of the American people.

I again recommend the extension of the ocean mail act of 1891 so that satisfactory American ocean mail lines to South Africa, Asia, the Philippines and Australasia may be established. The creation of such steamship lines should be the natural corollary of the voyage of the battle fleet. It should precede the opening of the Panama canal. Even under favorable conditions several years must elapse before such lines can be put into operation. Accordingly I urge that the congress act promptly where foresight already shows that action sooner or later will be inevitable.

I call particular attention to the territory of Hawaii. The importance of those islands is apparent, and the need of improving their condition and developing their resources is urgent. In recent years industrial conditions upon the islands have radically changed. The importation of coolie labor has practically ceased, and there is now developing such a diversity in agricultural products as to make possible a change in the land conditions of the territory, so that an opportunity may be given to the small land owner similar to that on the mainland. To aid these changes the national government must provide the necessary harbor improvements on each island, so that the agricultural products can be carried to the markets of the world. The coastwise shipping laws should be amended to meet the special needs of the islands, and the alien contract labor law should be so modified in its application to Hawaii as to enable American and European labor to be brought thither.

Real progress toward self-government is being made in the Philippine islands. The gathering of a Philippine legislative body and Philippine assembly marks a process absolutely new in Asia, not only as regards Asiatic colonies of European powers, but as regards Asiatic possessions of other Asiatic powers; and, indeed, always excepting the striking and wonderful example offered by the great empire of Japan, it opens an entirely new departure when compared with anything which has happened among Asiatic powers which are their own masters. Hitherto this Philippine legislature has acted with moderation and self-restraint, and has shown in practical fashion to realize the eternal truth that there must always be government, and that the only way in which any body of individuals can escape the necessity of being governed by outsiders is to show that they are able to restrain themselves, to keep down wrongdoing and disorder. The Filipino people, through their officials, are therefore making real steps in the direction of self-government.

I again recommend that American citizenship be conferred upon the people of Porto Rico.

In Cuba our occupancy will cease in about two months' time. The Cubans have in orderly manner elected their own governmental authorities, and the island will be turned over to them. Our occupation on this occasion has lasted a little over two years, and Cuba has thriven and prospered under it. Our earnest hope and one desire is that the people of the island shall now govern themselves aright, so that peace and order may be secure. We will gladly help them to this end; but I would solemnly warn them to remember the great truth that the only way a people can permanently avoid being governed from without is to show that they both can and will govern themselves from within.

The Japanese government has postponed until 1917 the date of the great international exposition, the action being taken so as to insure ample time in which to prepare to make the exposition all that it should be made. The American commissioners have visited Japan and the postponement will merely give ampler opportunity for America to be represented at the exposition.

As regards the army, I call attention to the fact that while our junior officers and enlisted men stand very high, the present system of promotion by seniority results in bringing into the higher grades many men of mediocre capacity who have but a short time to serve.

The cavalry arm should be reorganized upon modern lines. This is an arm in which it is peculiarly necessary that the field officers should not be old. The cavalry is more difficult to form than infantry, and it should be kept up to the maximum both in efficiency and in strength, for it cannot be made in a hurry. At present both infantry and artillery are too few in number for our needs. Especial attention should be paid to development of the machine gun. A general service corps should be established. As things are now the average soldier has far too much labor of a non-military character to perform.

Now that the organized militia, the national guard, has been incorporated with the army as a part of the national forces, it behooves the government to do every reasonable thing in its power to perfect its efficiency. It should be assisted in its instruction and otherwise aided more liberally than heretofore. The continuous services of many well-trained regular officers will be essential in this connection.

I approve the recommendation of the general board for the increase of the navy, calling especial attention to the need of additional destroyers and colliers, and, above all, of the four battleships. It is desirable to complete as soon as possible a squadron of eight battle-ships of the best existing type. The North Dakota, Delaware, Florida and Utah will form the first division of this squadron. The two vessels proposed will form the second division. It will be an improvement on the first, the ships being of the heavy, single caliber, all big gun type. All the vessels should have the same tactical qualities, that is, speed and turning circle, and as nearly as possible these tactical qualities should be the same as is in the four vessels before named now being built.

Two hospital ships should be provided. The actual experience of the hospital ship with the fleet in the Pacific has shown the invaluable work which such a ship does, and has also proved that it is well to have it kept under the command of a medical officer. As was to be expected, all of the anticipations of trouble from such a command have proved completely baseless. It is as absurd to put a hospital ship under a line officer as it would be to put a hospital on shore under such a command. This ought to have been realized before, and there is no excuse for failure to realize it now.

Nothing better for the navy from every standpoint has ever occurred than the cruise of the battle fleet around the world. The improvement of the ships in every way has been extraordinary, and they have gained far more experience in battle tactics than they would have gained if they had stayed in the Atlantic waters. The American people have cause for profound gratification, both in view of the excellent condition of the fleet as shown by this cruise, and in view of the improvement the cruise has worked in this already high condition. I do not believe that there is any other service in the world in which the average of character and efficiency in the enlisted men is as high as is now the case in our own. I believe that the same statement can be made as to our officers, taken as a whole.

Wilfley Resigns Judgeship.

Washington, Dec. 11.—The resignation of Laebbeus R. Wilfley of Missouri, judge of the United States district court for China, has been accepted by President Roosevelt. The present has appointed Judge Rufus H. Thayer of this city as Wilfley's successor.

Bonds in Great Demand.

Washington, Dec. 9.—Announcement was made today by Secretary of the Treasury George B. Cortelyou that 831 bids have been received on the $30,000,000 issue of Panama bonds. The bids aggregate $102,808,800. The 150 successful bidders will purchase the bonds at prices ranging from $102.28 to $105.

EVANS DEFENDS AMERICAN NAVY

Says Our Ships Are Equal to British of Same Date.

Admiral Answers Critics With Much Vigor—Latest Type Beat Dreadnaught—Armor is Well Placed—Says Only Blunder is Due to Line Officers.

New York, Dec. 15.—The latest battleships built by this country are vastly superior to England's Dreadnaught is emphatically stated by Rear-Admiral Robley D. Evans in a magazine article written by him, wherein he strongly defends the American navy, and replies to criticisms of it.

"I do not for a moment claim that the Indiana and her sister ships are equal to the Dreadnaught of the English navy," says Admiral Evans, "only that she is the equal of the English ships designed at the same time. But I do claim that our latest ships are vastly superior to the Dreadnaught and I believe that every fighting man who has given the subject intelligent consideration will agree with me."

The admiral urges the superiority of the 13-inch gun over the 12-inch gun and asserts that the change to the lesser caliber to conform to England's type was a most serious blunder. This is chargeable, he says, to the seagoing officers of the navy and not to any staff corps.

Regarding the waterline armor belt, he says:

"I am sure, after many weeks of close observation, that the lower edge of the armor belt is too high rather than too low." It had been strenuously contended by critics that the low location of the belt was a vital point of weakness. "As the upper edge of the belt is always even with or above the level of the protective belt," continues Admiral Evans, "the danger to be apprehended from a projectile penetrating above the belt, beyond the wrecking effect of such projectile, is that due to the amount of water that may enter the hole. It is the damage that may be done by such projectiles entering below that may cause the ship to sink by exploding magazines or boilers, but this is improbable. It will require many 12-inch shells on the waterline or on any other to disable or sink such a ship, if the officers and men know their business and want to fight."

CASTRO IN RAGE.

Declares Act of Holland Outrage on Civilization.

Berlin, Dec. 15.—"The seizure of the coast guardship Alix by the Dutch cruiser Gelderland is no less than naval brigandage. It is an outrage on civilization. By that act Holland has put herself outside the pale of decency. I do not know what Venezuela will do about it."

In this caustic language President Castro of Venezuela commented today on the warlike move made by Holland Saturday, the news of which was not conveyed to him until he reached this city this afternoon.

Castro declares that his visit to this city is to consult Dr. Israel. He asserts that whoever says he is not sick is telling a lie.

The Venezuelan president has engaged the first floor, containing thirty rooms, at the Hotel Esplanade, and his bill will be a trifle over $250 a day. He has engaged for the use of himself and his party ten motor cars, at a cost of $500 daily. He is surrounded by a small army of detectives and followed by a retinue of gaily attired flunkeys. Representatives of the foreign office greeted Castro today. They have been ordered to show him every courtesy.

Examiner on Double Duty.

Chicago, Dec. 15.—Cassius C. Jones, chief state bank examiner, assigned to Cook county, has suddenly resigned his place rather than face the scandal which his superiors say will be stirred up if letters written to him by city bank officials are made public. The charge made against Jones is that he was privately employed by these banks as an examiner while he was doing the same duty for the state. The banking act says no employe of a bank shall be appointed as a bank examiner to inspect the institution by which he is employed.

Takes Up Boll Weevil Fight.

Jackson, Miss., Dec. 15.—Starting from this city today, a "boll weevil" special train will be run by the Illinois Central railroad over its main line and branches through the counties of Mississippi that are threatened by the boll weevil pest. The tour of the special train will occupy the entire week. Literature will be distributed and exhibits showed to illustrate the ravages of the boll weevil and the best method of fighting the pest. Incidentally it is intended to impress upon the farmers the advantage of diversifying their crops.

Anniversary of Washington's Death

Fredericksburg, Va., Dec. 15.—The Masonic lodge of this city yesterday sent a delegation of its members to Mount Vernon to place a memorial wreath on the tomb of George Washington, on the occasion of the one hundred and ninth anniversary of the death of the first president. It was in the Fredericksburg lodge that General Washington was made a Mason, and for many years past the lodge has regularly observed the anniversary of his death.

Ceylon Entertains Fleet.

Colombo, Ceylon, Dec. 15.—The United States and Ceylon paid their respects to each other today through official visits between Rear Admiral Sperry, of the battleship fleet, and Sir Henry Edwards McCallum, governor of Ceylon. The American warships are coaling for their journey through the Indian ocean to the Suez canal.

Grafters Denied New Trial.

Harrisburg, Pa., Dec. 12.—Judge Kunkel yesterday overruled a motion for a new trial for Snyder, Sanderson, Mathues and Shumaker, the officials and contractors who were convicted on the charge of conspiring to defraud the state in the matter of the state capitol contract.

ABANDON FAMOUS HOTEL

Directors Will Close Chicago Auditorium Soon.

Chicago, Dec. 15.—Plans for abandoning the great Auditorium hotel have been decided upon by the board of directors of the Congress Hotel company, operating the Auditorium and the Annex. All the business of the two big hotels on Michigan boulevard is to be concentrated in the Annex, which recently was enlarged to double its former capacity.

President Southgate asserted that the Auditorium hotel had been losing money for years. He asserted that it did not pay 1 per cent on the money invested, and that it was poor property compared with the new Annex which, he asserted, was paying its stockholders $250,000 a year.

From the earnings account for the year shown at the Chicago Auditorium association stockholders' meeting, it is seen that the hotel paid last year in rentals $153,701. The theater paid $67,000 and office building $64,780, while interest and dividends brought in $9,015 more, making a total of $295,077.57. The cost of the building amounted to $262,103, leaving a net income for the year of $32,974, from which was deducted $17,168 as depreciation on equipment.

WORST ACCIDENT ON CANAL

Thought Other Bodies May Still Be Buried Under Debris.

Colon, Dec. 15.—The explosion yesterday at Bas Obispo was the most serious accident in connection with the building of the Panama canal since the United States took control. A thorough investigation has been ordered, and already officials are taking evidence and endeavoring to ascertain the cause of the premature discharge.

Thirteen bodies have been recovered, but it is believed that a score or more are still under the masses of rock and earth that were thrown up. The death list would have been appalling had a train conveying 500 laborers passed a few minutes later. This train had just passed through the cut, and was barely out of view when the explosion occurred.

For a space of 800 feet in length and 400 feet in width the Bas Obispo cut presents a graphic picture of the terrible effects of the explosion. The whole hillside has been devastated, the dynamite rending the earth and tossing boulders in all directions.

A 90-ton steam shovel lies a wreck, crushed under the weight of falling rock. Every one of the crew was killed. All the tracks in this section were torn to pieces and are now covered with tons of debris.

A long time will be necessary to take away the great heaps of earth.

REOPEN SAND ISLAND CASE.

Washington Legislators Will Confer With Governor Mead.

Tacoma, Wash., Dec. 15.—State Senator Stewart, of Cowlitz county, and Senator McGowan, of Pacific county, and Representative Burke, of Wahkiakum county, passed through Tacoma today on their way to Olympia to interview Governor Mead and Attorney-General Atkinson relative to a reopening of the Washington-Oregon boundary line case recently decided by the United States supreme court.

It is contended that the decision takes away from the State of Washington Sand island and Puget island, territory that always belonged to this state. Revenues to the state have been seriously reduced, it is maintained, and the fishing interests of the state have been greatly affected.

It is believed by those interested that if Governor Mead and Attorney-General Atkinson will intervene on behalf of the state the supreme court of the United States may be induced to give this state a rehearing upon new evidence that will be submitted.

Dead Men Tests Illegal.

Albany, N. Y., Dec. 15.—Prison officials in this state will not lend themselves to any experiment seeking to revive a man executed in the electric chair, such as has been discussed in New Jersey. Superintendent C. V. Collins said today that he would consider such an experiment illegal, and permission would have to be secured from the legislature before he would consent to revive a man after he had been electrocuted in order to prove the theory that the electric current does not kill, and that it is the physician's autopsy knife that really causes death.

After Cattle Rustlers.

Reno, Nev., Dec. 14.—Captain W. L. Cox, superintendent of the naval state police, with a picked squad of men, working in harmony with Sheriff Emerson, of Lassen county, California, left yesterday for Pyramid lake on an expedition to drive out and arrest if possible the cattle rustlers who have been making depredations in that region recently. The rustlers have been stealing horses and cattle in Northern Nevada and California, and it is expected will make a fight to resist capture if overtaken.

Pope Hopeful of France.

Rome, Dec. 15.—There was an impressive ceremony at the vatican today upon the occasion of the reading of the beatification decrees conferred upon 36 French missionaries, who met the death of martyrs in China and upon Joan of Arc. The reading of the decrees took place in the presence of the pope and many high prelates. The pope expressed the deep conviction that France, through divine intercession, would return to the bosom of the church, saying the intercession of the new saints strengthened him in this belief.

Indian Editors Arrested.

Calcutta, Dec. 15.—Great excitement prevails here, owing to developments in the agitation against the government. The most prominent Bengali leader in Eastern Bengal, Dutta, was arrested Saturday and conveyed to an unknown destination. Another prominent nationalist leader Mitra, editor of the Sanjibani, has been arrested at Calcutta, while the editor of another native paper has been sentenced to transportation on the charge of sedition.

Japan Starts New Line.

Tokio, Dec. 15.—At a dinner given today to the new Japanese minister to Chile, it was announced that the Toy Ysin Steamship company will start a new line of steamers between Japan and South America, commencing January 1, with three steamers on a regular schedule.

NEWS NOTES GATHERED FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF OREGON

HARNESS HARNEY RIVERS.

Nevada Capitalists Plan Power Plants in Southeastern Oregon.

Burns.—There is good prospect of important development of electrical power in Harney valley in the near future that will set things humming. George S. Nickerson, a well-known civil engineer, whose headquarters at present are in Winnemucca, Nev., has been taking measurements for several months along the Donder and Blitzen river in the northern slopes of Stein mountains, the result of his investigation and calculations being that a man representing heavy capital has filed in the county clerk's office a claim to a water right on that stream of 4,800 cubic inches, or 120 cubic feet per second, the intention being to build dams, flumes, etc., and develop an immense power for generating electricity to supply the entire Harney valley with light and operating force.

Gas Stops Drillers.

Ontario.—The gas pressure encountered at the Ontario oil well continues. It has been flowing 60 hours and increases in volume steadily. The drillers were forced to stop work on account of the tons of water thrown into the air continuously. The well is now capped, but the water is being forced out between the casings to a height of 12 or 14 feet. The directors of the company will meet to decide what course of action to pursue. They will probably apply for a gas franchise Monday for heating and lighting Ontario and other towns in the country. An attempt will be made to continue drilling for oil, as the well may furnish both if drilled to a sufficient depth. Gas was found in the fine sand 20 feet below blue shale. The drillers believe the main head of gas and oil is probably a few hundred feet below.

Japanese in Wasco County.

Boyd.—A company of Japanese is farming 1,700 acres of choice Wasco county land, five miles from Boyd, on upper Fifteen Mile creek. The company purchased the land, after looking over various parts of the county carefully during the past summer and has just been turning the sod and planting grain, orchards and vegetables. The Japanese have not superintended the farming, but have assisted in the labor, preferring to have white men do the overseeing and actual work.

Subdivide Polk Land.

Monmouth.—One of the largest farm deals ever made in this part of Polk county was made here this week by J. H. Moran. It consisted of two large and finely improved farms, one of 337 and the other of 320 acres, all in one body, facing the county road for two miles. This tract will be divided up into small farms, affording better opportunity to settlers with limited means. The purchasers are E. V. Carter, a banker of Ashland, and William Addison, also of Ashland.

10-Acre Tract Sold.

Shelburn.—George W. Nelson, of Yamhill county, has purchased a 10 acre tract near here from G. Vernon. The price paid was $200 an acre. Other sales nearly as good have been made in this vicinity the past month, showing the healthy condition of the real estate market in this section. The firm of Osborn & Son, of this place, is erecting a two-story building near the depot. The ground floor is to be occupied as a store, while the upper story will be a lodge hall.

Park for Eugene.

Eugene.—Eugene will have a splendid park at the Southern Pacific depot grounds by spring. The promotion department of the Commercial club has just completed arrangements with General Manager O'Brien, of the Harriman lines in Oregon whereby the club is allowed to begin the work of beautifying the grounds and laying off the park, which will be several acres in extent. Plans for the improvement have been adopted. Twelve hundred yards of loam will be needed to surface the grounds so that shrubs, trees and grass will grow.

Douglas' New City.

Oakland. — Superintendent Fields and other Southern Pacific officials, accompanied by an official of the Sutherlin Land & Water company, went to the new townsite at Sutherlin Monday to locate the ground on which the new station is to be built. Work will commence at once on the station building, which will be constructed of concrete and finished inside with natural Oregon fir. The railroad company will also begin construction on a passing track

Put Stamp Mill in Mine.

Oregon City.—The Willow creek mines, located near Hailey, Idaho and owned by local capitalists, will be equipped with a ten-stamp mill which was purchased in Portland last week by Superintendent Rambo, and will be shipped into the mines. In the Stuart lode a vein of platina has been uncovered and free gold-bearing quartz has been reached in one of the claims.

Bridgeport Ditch Work Stops.

Bridgeport.—The Bridgeport Land company has had a large force of men and teams busy since July building the main canal and laterals for the irrigation of Bridgeport orchards. It has closed down that part of the work, as the ground was frozen and the weather too chilly. Carpenters are still busy at flume work. The canal and laterals required for this 3,000-acre irrigation project will be completed in the spring.

Heavy Snow Reported.

Pendleton.—Farmers and ranchers coming to town from the southern end of the county bring news of a heavy snowfall, which is greatly appreciated. Though the balance of the county has been favored with two heavy rainfalls recently the part of the county south of Pilot Rock has had hardly sufficient moisture to lay the dust. The fall of snow therefore is welcomed.

Cut Court Expenses.

La Grande.—Hereafter the county court will expedite matters by requiring the county judge to act as a committing magistrate and take from the justice of the peace all hearings of a preliminary nature in criminal cases. The reduction in expenses will be material.

EASTERNERS TO SETTLE.

Influx Continues to Ideal Colony at Wolf Creek.

Grants Pass.—A number of families have arrived here from the east to make their homes with the Ideal colony, being established at Wolf Creek, in Wolf creek valley, in the northern end of Josephine county. The colony is being founded under the direction of Rev. W. G. Smith. A large farm, or rather several big farms, were purchased and subdivided into smaller tracts, and the members of the Ideal colony will turn their attention largely toward the growing of fruit, for which the climate and lands of Wolf creek valley are well adapted. Only Christian people are sold tracts inside the colony, and no saloons or places of vice will be allowed. The site of the colony is one of the most picturesque sections of southern Oregon, and is on the main line of the Southern Pacific.

WILL ENLARGE CAPITOL.

Additions to West Wing Proposed by Commissioners.

Salem.—Secretary W. N. Gatens, of the capitol building commission, has been instructed to secure architects' plans for two additions to the statehouse. The proposed additions, if constructed, will be placed on either side of the west wing of the statehouse, and will be two stories high. The floor space will be about 20x40 feet. The additions are urgently needed, as office room at the statehouse is crowded. The plans will be submitted to the legislature. The principal question is whether the addition will mar the appearance of the whole building.

Protest Rate Raise.

Salem.—A. G. Burdick, president of A. G. Burdick & Co., dealers in dried fruits, complains of the raise in rates on prunes from $1 to $1.10, in effect January 1. Mr. Burdick says the increase will shorten the life of an industry that is already doomed. Growers, according to Mr. Burdick, are selling their fruit on a narrow margin as it is, and many have uprooted their trees to plant a more productive crop. If the increase announced goes into effect many more will dig up their trees, he declares, and another legitimate industry for development of the Willamette valley will be killed. Mr. Burdick's complaint follows a similar one filed by the Willamette Valley Prune association of Salem.

Oil Indications.

Grants Pass.—Considerable excitement prevails in Sams valley, near Gold Hill, over the striking of what appears to be a genuine oil stratum. The discovery is reported to be far better than the "indications" that have been found from time to time on various southern Oregon oil prospects. This is made on properties that are being deeply developed by a substantial company. The lands were recently taken over by Colonel Munday, of St. Louis, and R. P. Little, of southern California. They are preparing to install a large drilling plant.

Property Values in Yamhill

McMinnville.—Nearly one-fourth of the taxable property of this county is contained within the corporate limits of the ten cities and towns in the county. They contain property of the assessed value of $3,046,087, which is listed as follows: McMinnville, $1,332,079; Newberg, $598,104; Carlton, $286,856; Sheridan, $280,415; Dayton, $135,895; Yamhill, $135,076; Amity, $92,442; Lafayette, $73,814; Willamina, $56,930; Dundee, $54,476. The total valuation for the entire county for this year is $12,235,570.

Dallas to Be Boomed.

Dallas.—The business men of Dallas met last week and organized a commercial club, which they have named the Dallas Development league, for the purpose of financing and carrying out a plan to advertise the resources of Dallas and vicinity in the eastern states, and to attract tourists and settlers to this place. Hon. U. S. Loughary was elected president, H. G. Campbell secretary and W. G. Vassal treasurer.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Bluestem, 96@97c; club, 91c; fife, 90@91c; red Russian, 88c; 40-fold, 91c; valley, 91c.

Barley—Feed, $26.50 per ton; brewing, $27.

Oats—No. 1 white, $31@31.50 per ton.

Hay—Timothy, Willamette Valley, $14 per ton; Eastern Oregon timothy, $16@17; clover, $12; alfalfa, $13; grain hay, $12.50@13.

Fruits—Apples, 60c@$1.25 per box; pears, $1@1.25 per box; grapes, $1@1.50 per crate; quinces, $1@1.25 per box; cranberries, $13.50@14 per barrel; huckleberries, 10@15c per pound; persimmons, $1@1.25.

Potatoes—75@85c per cwt.; sweet potatoes, 2@2½c per pound.

Onions—$1@1.10 per 100 pounds.

Vegetables—Turnips, $1@1.25 per sack; carrots, $1; parsnips, $1.25; beets, $1.25; horseradish, 8@10c per pound; artichokes, 90c@$1 per dozen; beans, 10@14c per pound; cabbage, 1½@1¾c per pound; cauliflower, 75c@$1 per dozen; celery, $3.50 per crate; cucumbers, $2@2.50 per box; eggplant, 11c per pound; lettuce, $1@1.25 per box; parsley, 30c per dozen; peas, 12½c per pound; peppers, 15@20c per pound; pumpkins, 1@1½c per pound; radishes, 30c per dozen; spinach, 2c per pound; sprouts, 9½@10c per pound; squash, 1@1½c per pound; tomatoes, 50c@$1.75.

Butter—City creamery, extras, 36@37c; fancy outside creamery, 32½@35c per pound; store, 17@20c.

Eggs—Oregon selects, 42½@45c; Eastern, 30@35c per dozen.

Poultry—Hens, 13@13½c per pound; spring, large 12@13c; small, 13@14c; mixed, 12@12½c; ducks, 14@15c; geese, 9@10c; turkeys, 16@17½c; dressed turkeys, nominal.

Veal—Extra, 9@9½c per pound; ordinary, 7@8c; heavy, 5c.

Pork—Fancy, 7½@8c per pound; large, 6½@7c.

Hops—1908, choice, 7½@8c; prime, 6@7c; medium, 5@6c per pound; 1907, 2@4½c; 1906, 1@1½c.

Wool—Eastern Oregon, average best, 10@14c per pound, according to shrinkage; valley, 15@16c.

Mohair—Choice, 18c per pound.