

DOINGS OF OUR NATIONAL BODY OF LAWMAKERS

Monday, April 2.

Washington, April 2.—The amendment to the house railroad rate bill agreed to at the White house Saturday by friends of the bill, providing for a limited review of orders of the Interstate Commerce commission, was offered in the senate today by Long, of Kansas, but he was not able to get the floor to make his speech. The principal speech was made by Fulton, of Oregon, who spoke for the bill. It was a legal argument bearing upon the constitutional questions involved, and interruptions were so frequent that the speech amounted to a debate on law points, where the speaker divided time with the a majority of the lawyers of the senate. Nelson, of Minnesota, and Heyburn, of Idaho, made brief speeches on the bill.

Washington, April 2.—Chief among the measures passed by the house today was the so-called "personal liability" bill, which has been favored by the army of railway employees throughout the country, and which practically had a unanimous report from the committee. Members of the house showed great interest in the measure, and had a division been called for, the bill would have had an almost unanimous vote. Another measure changing existing law, which excited a filibustering opposition, was the bill permitting the fortification of sweet wines and levying a tax of 3 cents a gallon on all wines thus fortified. A number of bills were passed under suspension of the rules.

The personal liability bill makes each party responsible for its own negligence. It also renders void any contract intended to restrict the liability of the employer for the negligence of employees.

Saturday, March 31.

Washington, March 31.—This being war claim day in the house, only those directly interested in the legislation in the private calendar were in attendance. The house during the four hours it was in session considered and passed 179 bills, many, however, sending the particular claim to the court of claims for adjudication.

Previous to taking up the calendar a bill was passed granting to the Capital City Improvement company, of Helena, Montana, the right to construct a dam across the Missouri river in Montana.

A bill to pay the claim of the French Trans-Atlantic Cable company for \$77,712, growing out of the cutting of cables during the Spanish war, was passed.

Another bill recalling the war with Spain which attracted little or no attention was that appropriating \$13,694 to the Ferro Carriles Railroad company, of Porto Rico, for mail service performed by this company during the military occupation by the United States. The bill was passed.

Friday, March 30.

Washington, March 30.—The house today passed the legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill, carrying \$30,000,000, after considering the measure two weeks. The feature of today's proceedings was the elimination of the age limit of clerks, a provision which created much discussion and which incited the fight against the bill. The bill as passed carries nearly \$700,000 less than the last appropriation bill for similar purposes.

Thursday, March 29.

Washington, March 29.—The senate today listened to speeches on the railroad rate bill by Clay, Carmack and Newlands and passed a bill which provides for the reorganization of the medical department of the army by authorizing the appointment of officers to take the place of contract surgeons. All the senators who spoke on the rate bill indicated a purpose to support it, but Clay expressed the hope that it would be so amended as to afford a limited court review of the orders of the Interstate Commerce commission. Hale criticized the military medical bill, saying it showed a tendency to increase the army, which was not desirable in time of peace.

Culberson presented and had the clerk read a memorial from the Cattle-raisers' association of Texas, urging the passage of the railroad rate bill as it came from the house.

A bill was passed authorizing the erection of three life saving stations on the coast of Washington between Cape Flattery and Gray's harbor.

The senate adjourned until Monday.

Square Deal in Alaska.

Washington, April 2.—The secretary of the interior today sent to congress a draft of a bill which he recommends to be passed providing that, whenever mineral entries are made in Alaska, six months' notice shall be given instead of 60 days, as at present. Under existing laws it has become a common practice, particularly in remote mining districts, for entrymen to hold off until the mails are virtually closed by bad weather and then forward their notices to Juneau. In this manner persons wishing to institute a contest are precluded.

Washington, March 29.—Today was a busy day for the house, considerable progress having been made on the executive, legislative and judicial bill. The committee on appropriations suffered a defeat, the committee of the whole, by a vote of 58 to 22, expunging a paragraph from the bill which was alleged to be properly part of the postoffice appropriation bill. An increase of \$10,000 over the appropriation carried by the bill was voted for confidential agents of the interior department to aid in ferreting out land frauds.

Wednesday, March 28.

Washington, March 28.—Knox made his first set speech in the senate today. He spoke on the railroad rate question, and dealt almost exclusively with the legal features of the problem. When he concluded the senate entered upon the consideration of the conference report on the bill regarding the final disposition of the affairs of the five civilized tribes of Indians and much objection was expressed to many of the changes. Several senators, including La Follette, Clark, of Wyoming, and Tillman, expressed disapproval of the conference provision authorizing the secretary of the interior to lease land.

Washington, March 28.—The president today transmitted to the house the report of Assistant Secretary of State Herbert H. D. Peirce, regarding the consular service in the Orient.

The visit of Mr. Peirce included many cities, but his severe criticism is reserved for ex-Consul General McWade at Canton, and Consul Williams at Singapore. The charges against McWade, ex-consul at Canton, are drunkenness, employment of a felon, issuance of fraudulent Chinese certificates, extending protection to Chinamen who claim to be American citizens, persecution of American citizens for purposes of revenge, and corruption in office.

The charges against Goodnow are 82 in number, some serious and some light. Some are sufficient to support suits at law and give evidence of corruption in office. The opinion of the better element was unfavorable to him in Shanghai.

Tuesday, March 27.

Washington, March 27.—Tillman and McCumber divided the time of the senate today, the North Dakota senator devoting himself to the railroad rate question exclusively and the South Carolina senator discussing various questions. Tillman made a special inquiry concerning the status of his resolution relative to the use of national bank funds in politics, and incidentally spoke of District Attorney Jerome's recent utterances and of Judge Humphrey's decision in the beef trust cases, declaring in the latter matter that the decision against the attorney general had merely repeated what he had said in the case of ex-Secretary Paul Morton.

Foraker defended Judge Humphrey and Tillman declared that he had not meant to attack the judge, but the law. McCumber picked innumerable flaws in the rate bill, predicting that, if enacted into a law, it would fail entirely to meet the demands of the public. He said, however, he would vote for the bill if properly amended.

Washington, March 27.—The house today witnessed a most unusual scene, the speaker rising on the floor in the midst of a spirited discussion on reciprocity and tariff revision and disclaiming responsibility for differences between minority members. It was toward the close of the debate on the urgent deficiency bill, which appropriated, among other things, for the forthcoming conference at Rio de Janeiro. The bill was passed.

On motion of Tawney, the legislative and judicial bill was taken up, when Prince, of Illinois, and Hardwick, of Georgia, resumed the tactics inaugurated last week by raising a point of order against every paragraph in which there was a departure from existing law. A half dozen points of order were made and sustained affecting the officers of the subtreasuries at New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans and St. Louis.

Washington, March 30.—General Luke E. Wright today took the oath of office as ambassador to Japan. He ceased to be governor general of the Philippines today. Henry C. Ide, of the Philippines commission, the present acting governor, will continue until April 2, when the will be inaugurated governor general.

Asks for Large Damages.

Washington, April 3.—The president has received a letter of 20 closely written pages from O. J. Markell, of Oreville, O., who threatens to sue the government at once if he is not paid \$500,000 as damages for the blighting of the writer's literary prospects through various persecutions. Markell says that while in government employ he was nagged and tantalized by his fellow clerks and as an instance states that whenever his back was turned some clerk would exclaim, "damn you, I can lick you."

HALF MILLION TO STRIKE.

Coal Miners of Whole Nation About to Suspend Work.

Indianapolis, March 30.—The joint meetings of the bituminous coal operators and miners of the central competitive district, composed of Western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, and of the Southwestern district, composed of Missouri, Kansas, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Indian Territory, last night reached a final disagreement on the wage scale to go into effect at the expiration of the present scale on April 1, and the conference of the central district adjourned sine die, while the joint scale committee of the Southwestern district decided to report a disagreement to the joint conference of that district today. It is expected that this conference will at once adjourn sine die without an agreement.

The action of the two conferences will directly cause the suspension of work after Saturday by 178,000 miners unless something unforeseen, like submission of the differences to arbitration, should intervene, and indirectly will affect 206,500 more miners, not including its effect on 150,000 miners in the anthracite field, who were last night ordered to suspend work Monday. A national convention of the miners will be held today to decide whether miners will be allowed to sign the advance scale demanded and today refused by all operators with a few exceptions, and to go to work where the advance is offered. Operators employing 25,000 miners in the central competitive field have openly offered to pay the advance during the joint conference sessions.

The wage scales of all miners, both anthracite and bituminous, will expire Saturday, except those in Tennessee and Alabama, where the scale will expire in September. One national official of the United Mineworkers said:

"It is a foregone conclusion that all the miners whose scales expire Saturday will cease work until officially notified by the national and district officers that new contract arrangements have been made governing their scale."

PROGRAM FOR CONGRESS.

Pan-American Committee Prepares Subjects for Action.

Washington, March 30.—A program of subjects to be considered at the Pan-American congress to be held in Rio Janiero, Brazil, beginning July 21, was agreed on today by the committee of the congress having that matter in charge, of which Secretary Root is chairman. In addition to Mr. Root the committee is made up of the ambassadors from Brazil and Mexico and the ministers from Chile, the Argentine Republic, Cuba and Costa Rica.

The subjects include sanitary and quarantine regulations, uniformity of patent laws, international recognition of diplomas of practitioners of the learned professions, questions affecting commercial intercourse and an international railroad.

It is expected that what is commonly known as the Drago doctrine, which is opposed to the forcible collection of private debts by one nation from another, a doctrine adhered to by the United States, will come up for consideration in some form.

IOWA WILL INVESTIGATE.

Legislature Orders Inquiry Into Violation of Insurance Law.

Des Moines, Iowa, March 30.—As a result of practically unanimous action by both houses of the Iowa legislature today, an investigation of insurance companies is to be undertaken in this state during the present summer, similar to that which was conducted in New York last fall. The resolution which awaits the governor's signature provides for the appointment of a commission to inquire into rumored abuse of Iowa insurance laws by state and Eastern companies, to conduct an inquisitorial investigation whenever in the commission's opinion it is desirable, and report to the legislature of next year what changes should be made in the laws to prevent a recurrence of any abuses that may exist.

Road Tied Up for Two Weeks.

Los Angeles, March 30.—The local railroad situation resulting from floods in Southern California and vicinity is even worse than has yet been described. It is given out from the office of General Manager Wells, of the Salt Lake route, that the washouts between Caliente and Las Vegas are so serious that the roadbed cannot be repaired short of two weeks to admit the passage of trains. The Southern Pacific also reports further trouble today. Another washout has occurred somewhere in the San Joaquin valley.

Referendum on Statehood.

Washington, March 30.—That the senate and house will reach a compromise agreement on the statehood bill, which will permit Arizona and New Mexico each to decide for themselves the question of their admission as one state, seems a correct solution from present indications.

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