

Week at Washington

A Washington dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald, under date of March 8, says: "In the executive session Senator Bacon offered a number of amendments to his resolution directing the foreign relations committee to inquire into the protocol of an agreement entered into between the United States and Santo Domingo on January 31, 1903, by which the United States took charge of certain custom houses in order to pay the claims of the San Domingo Improvement company of New York. These amendments made the resolution general in character by striking out the preamble and all reference to any specific case. As re-modeled, the resolution directs the committee to examine and to report to the senate whether it is competent, under the constitution of the United States, for any agreement, convention or protocol, not made by and with the advice and consent of the senate, but solely through the executive branch of the government, to be made with a foreign government, to bind such governments and to constitute a constitutional agreement, under which the United States shall be authorized and empowered to take possession of custom houses of such foreign government and to its creditors; and, furthermore, to hold said custom houses until the moneys awarded under said arbitration shall have been fully collected, and to hold the custom houses by the authoritative and forcible power through its officers, employes or agents, either civil or military. Another article has been added to the resolution, which directs an examination and report as to whether it is competent, under any agreement, not made by and with the advice and consent of the senate, to bind the United States and such foreign government in the liquidation and settlement of any debt of the United States or one of the citizens, and if such an agreement may be constitutional to report its character and limitations."

Mr. Hemmenway, late chairman of the house committee on appropriations, and Mr. Livingstone, acting member of the minority on the same committee, issued statements on March 8, relating to appropriations for the session of congress just closed. The statements as to the total appropriations for the session agree, being \$818,478,914 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1906, as against \$781,172,375 for the previous year. Mr. Livingstone makes a comparison of the four years of the last Cleveland administration and the four years of the administration just closed, showing that in 1893-96 the appropriations were \$2,016,343,753 and during the years 1903-06 they were \$3,153,334,292.

Mr. Hemmenway says: "Under the operation of the latter statute and the provisions of the sinking fund law the public debt has been reduced since August 31, 1865, at which time it reached its highest point, \$2,756,431,571 to \$1,280,255,997 at the close of February, 1905, or more than \$416,000,000 in excess of the liberal requirements of the sinking fund law. During the four fiscal years (1893-96) of President Cleveland's last administration there was applied to the sinking fund only \$13,400,047, or an average of little more than \$3,000,000 per annum. During the eight fiscal years (1897-1904) of the administrations of Presidents McKinley and Roosevelt, the aggregate

amount applied to the sinking fund was \$237,516,669, or an average of nearly \$30,000,000 per annum. Another permanent annual appropriation, which does not affect the ordinary receipts and expenditures of the government, is for the redemption of circulating notes of national banks that are retiring or reducing circulation. These redemptions are made out of deposits of national banks required by law for that purpose, and the estimated amount that will be paid out of these deposits for these redemptions during the fiscal year 1906 is \$30,000,000."

Speaking of the appropriations, Mr. Hemmenway says: "I am advised by those most competent to judge that the deficiency in the revenues of the government for the current fiscal year will not exceed \$18,000,000. This deficiency is brought about by unforeseen expenditures in two directions—namely, \$13,000,000 on account of new ships for the navy and also in the probable excess of \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000 expenditures for the postal service over the postal receipts for 1905."

Mr. Livingston, after giving various expenditures, says: "Contrasting Mr. Cleveland's second administration as to appropriations with that of Mr. Roosevelt, we find that a strenuous government, dominated by the policy of a 'big stick,' costs under Mr. Roosevelt \$220,412,329 more for the army, \$258,184,157 more for the navy, \$19,477,563 more for fortifications, and for the three combined military purposes \$498,074,050 more than did the same objects under Mr. Cleveland's last four years of office, a sum large enough to erect a public building in every city and town in the country, with enough to spare to improve every harbor and waterway, necessary for the promotion of our commerce; or it would have been sufficient to construct 200,000 miles of perfect roadways throughout the whole land."

Washington dispatches make the "authoritative announcement" that Secretary Shaw will retire from the cabinet at the end of his four years' term, which will be in February, 1906.

Commissioner James R. Garfield of the bureau of corporations has instituted a "rigid investigation" of the oil trust in Kansas and contiguous states. The report will be made directly to President Roosevelt, and whether it will be made public will lie within the discretion of the president.

The following report on foreign trade on farm and forest products, compiled by the division of foreign markets, was received by the department of agriculture: Balance of trade in farm products in each year from 1901 to 1904 was in favor of exports. There was a distinct gain in 1898, when the export balance increased to \$555,000,000, a gain of \$257,000,000 over the preceding year, and for six successive years, beginning with 1898, the annual export balance for farm products exceeded \$410,000,000. The statement shows that the domestic exports of farm or agricultural products for the year 1904 were \$19,000,000 less than in the preceding year and \$6,000,000 less than the annual average for 1899 to 1903. The total value of 1904 was \$859,160,264. The exports of forest products in 1904 aggregated \$63,500,430 and were an increase of \$11,000,000 over 1903 and \$36,000,000 more than the annual average for 1894 to 1898. For the period 1890 to 1904 the total value of domestic exports of farm products aggregated \$11,000,000,000. The total imports of farm products in 1904 were

\$461,434,851, an increase of \$5,000,000 over 1903 and of \$54,000,000 over the annual average for 1889 to 1903 and of forest products, \$79,619,296. The value of imports of forest products exceeded the previous year by \$8,000,000 and the annual average of 1899 to 1903 by \$19,000,000. The value of the cotton exports increased \$55,000,000 from 1903 to 1904, although the quantity exported in 1904 was 479,000,000 pounds less than in 1903. A decline of \$72,000,000 in domestic exports of grain and grain products is attributed to a diminution in quantity without a corresponding price. Meat and meat products declined from \$187,000,000 to \$174,000,000. The farm imports in 1904 included \$73,000,000 of sugar and molasses, \$71,000,000 in animal fibers, \$70,000,000 in coffee, \$52,000,000 in hides and skins and \$45,000,000 in vegetable fibers. Lumber exports aggregated \$19,000,000, an increase of \$7,000,000 over the previous year. Naval stores exported increased from \$13,000,000 in 1903 to over \$16,000,000 in 1904. Alcoholic liquors imported declined \$500,000.

The second message of President Roosevelt, relative to the Santo Domingo treaty declares that the interests of Santo Domingo demand immediate action by the senate at the earliest moment. The message says the treaty offers the only method for preventing collection of fraudulent claims and of protecting just claims of foreigners and Americans alike and urges Santo Domingo's need of the aid of a powerful and friendly nation.

The report of Commissioner Garfield on the beef trust case will not prevent an investigation of the trust by a grand jury in Chicago. On the contrary, the investigation will be carried out as originally planned.

President Roosevelt has signified his dissatisfaction with the Panama canal commission and has given the members of congress his opinion of the affair. He had hoped that congress, at the close of the last session, would enact legislation under which he could reconstruct the commission so as to place the building of the canal on a better basis than it now is.

An Associated Press dispatch, dated Washington, March 6, says: "Two and a half million acres of timber land will be saved to the government by the operation of a short act to which President Roosevelt affixed his signature during the last moments of the Fifty-eighth congress. The act prohibits the selection of timber lands in exchange for lands which have been included within forest reserves. It was in 1897 that the lieu law was enacted. It had no restrictions, simply entitling persons holding lands in forest reserves to make selections elsewhere in exchange for their forest reserve lands. In 1900 these lieu selections were limited to surveyed lands. Since the passage of these acts nearly 2,000,000 acres of forest reserve lands have been exchanged for other lands and almost universally has the exchange been made for timbered lands outside of forest reserves. Nearly half of this land so exchanged is owned by the land grant railroads. A report to congress from the commissioner of the general land offices places the amount of lands still held by these roads in forest reserves at 2,500,000 acres and the prohibition in the act in question, that hereafter lieu selections must be made from untimbered lands, is calculated to save just that much timbered land which is outside of forest reserves."

After a seven-minute session, the senate adjourned at 12:07 p. m., March 9, out of respect to Senator Bate.

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