

Week at Washington

The Supreme court of the United States reversed the peonage case of Samuel Clyatt vs. The United States in favor of Clyatt, who was charged with "returning" to involuntary servitude two negroes named Gordon and Ridley. The opinion was handed down by Justice Brewer, and while it upheld the constitutionality of the law for the punishment of peonage, it held that as the record failed to show that the negroes had ever before been in custody the charge of "returning" them could not be sustained.

In order to finish their work within a week, the members of the senate have agreed to assemble at 11 o'clock daily hereafter to discuss questions of interest.

A complete reorganization will be made of the working force of the Panama canal commission. The changes will be in line with the president's suggestion that unnecessary officials of high grade be dispensed with and that a larger measure of authority be conferred upon the actual workers upon the canal project. The changes will be announced in about a week.

President Roosevelt addressed the National Congress of Mothers which held its tri-ennial convention at Washington.

Minister Bowen, reporting from Caracas, March 14, said: "A suit has begun by the Venezuelan government against the French Cable company to annul its concession and seize its property." The state department officials know nothing of the merits of this case, but it is assumed that the action taken is similar to that in the case of the Bermuda Asphalt company, where the Venezuelan government declared that the company had forfeited its concession by failing to live up to its undertakings to exploit other resources of the country besides asphalt, and to open certain rivers to navigation. No copy of the concession to the French Cable company is on file at the department, so that it is not possible to learn wherein the company has failed to meet the terms of the concession. The outcome of this case is looked forward to with some apprehension, for should the French government demand indemnity from Venezuela for its treatment of the cable company, its action might still further complicate the attempt to effect a settlement of the pending issue between the state department and Venezuela respecting the seizure of the properties of the Bermudez Asphalt company.

The navy department has been informed that Miss Helen Stuart Wilson of Seattle, Wash., has been selected to christen the armored cruiser Washington, which is to be launched at the yard of the New York Shipbuilding company at Camden, N. J., next Saturday.

Owing to the fact that Ambassador Conger will occupy his new post as ambassador to Mexico for only a few months, after which he will retire to become a candidate for governor of

his state; Francis B. Loomis will be appointed to succeed Mr. Conger. It will be several months, however, before an official announcement of the change will be made.

A delegation of the Ute Indians from the Uintah reservation in Utah arrived in Washington yesterday. They are not satisfied with the provisions for the proposed opening of their reservation and have gone to make inquiry about it.

Former Postmaster General Wynne has declined to accept a gift of a solid silver punchbowl tendered him by his former subordinates in the post-office department. He insists that to accept it would be to violate the law prohibiting government employes from making gifts to their superiors.

An Associated Press dispatch, dated Washington, D. C., March 14, says: "The American military officers with the Russian army, as observers, are Colonel Havard, medical corps; Major Macomb, artillery corps, and Captain Judson, artillery corps, and while the war department is not positive, it is believed that the latter two are the two American officers referred to in the cable dispatches as among the foreign observers captured at Mukden. It is said here that naturally the Japanese would not be willing that the observers be permitted to rejoin the Russian army. In all probability they will be accorded every courtesy by the Japanese commanders and given safe conduct to Tokio. It is thought that the fall of Mukden will result in the return of at least the two American officers to Mukden."

A rather lively proceeding which occurred in the senate March 15 is described by the Associated Press in this way: "Mr. Teller (Colo.) introduced a resolution of inquiry asking the state department for all information concerning relations with the Dominican government between July 1, 1904, and March 1, 1905. The reading of the resolution had scarcely begun when Mr. Cullom objected to further reading, saying that the matter pertained to executive session business and should not be read in open session. "The senate can not take me off the floor," declared Mr. Teller. "I deny the right of the senator to interrupt the reading of the resolution." Mr. Cullom maintained that he had a right to inquire into the nature of the resolution to ascertain if it belonged to open session or to executive business. "You can not prevent the reading of the resolution," asserted Mr. Teller warmly. Mr. Kean suggested to Mr. Cullom that he move to proceed to the consideration of executive business, but Mr. Teller had the floor and was still insisting that his resolution should be read. "Commence at the beginning and read it all," directed Mr. Teller and the clerk did so. The resolution follows: "Resolved, That the secretary of state is hereby directed to send to the senate for use in executive sessions copies of the instructions given to Commodore Dillingham and Minister Dawson, or either of them, regarding Dominican affairs, and copies of all correspondence and telegrams relating to Dominican affairs, or relating to any proposed agreement, protocol or treaty between the United States and San Domingo from July 1, 1904, to the 1st of March, 1905." "I object to its present consideration," Mr. Cullom promptly said. "That is the right of the senator," said Mr. Teller. "I wanted this resolution to go upon the public records. The infor-

mation asked may be sent to the senate for use in executive session if the president so desires. It is a part of the public records, and not a part of the secret archives of the government. I know that any senator or representative can have access to it, but I want it for the use of the senate." The senate then went into executive session."

On March 15 the president sent to the senate the nomination of Peter V. DeGraw of New Jersey as fourth assistant postmaster general, to succeed Mr. Bristow.

An Associated Press dispatch, dated Washington, D. C., March 16, says: "Senator Morgan occupied practically the entire time in the discussion of the Santo Domingo treaty in executive session of the senate today. He made a sensational speech, in which he charged that William Nelson Cromwell of New York, who was prominently connected with the sale of the Panama canal property to the United States, was the prime mover in a scheme to influence the United States in the financial affairs of the Dominican government. He asserted that Mr. Cromwell was actuated by a desire to frustrate a plan of a Mr. and Mrs. Reader, natives of Alabama, who are operating under the name of the Reader syndicate, to get certain concessions from the Dominican government and to promote the interests of a syndicate he represented, which it is alleged holds a mass of claims against Latin-American republics, including a large part of the debts against the Dominican government. The alleged disclosures were debated all day and the senate is divided as to whether Senator Morgan made a case. The democrats insist that he did, while the leaders among the republicans declare that the charges were made up of a mass of matter which contained no conclusive evidence that Mr. Cromwell had used any undue influence. The speeches were made behind closed doors. Senator Morgan held his audience to the conclusion of his remarks. The tentative program of the senate continues to be adjournment without date on Saturday without permitting the Dominican treaty to come to a vote. It is probable that it will be recommitted."

An Associated Press dispatch, dated Washington, D. C., March 16, says: "In order to allay any misapprehension relative to the policy of the administration with respect to the future of the Philippines, Secretary Taft today made public the text of a letter which he wrote to John N. Blair of New York, bearing directly on that subject. The secretary states very plainly that the policy of the administration is the definite retention of the Philippines, 'for the purpose of developing the prosperity and the self-governing capacity of the Philippine people.' What shall be done when the Philippines have reached a condition when they can safely be trusted with their own government, the secretary believes to be a question which doubtless will have to be settled by another generation than the present."

General Joseph Hawley, for twenty-four years United States senator from Connecticut, died at Washington March 17. Death came peacefully after a stupor lasting with but slight interruptions since Wednesday afternoon. The body will be taken to Hartford, Conn., for burial, but the time for the funeral services has not been fixed. General Hawley's active career in the senate came to an end in December, 1902, when failing health compelled him to relinquish his active work. In February of 1903 he was in the senate chamber for a short time, that being his last visit to the capitol. He was 78 years old.

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