

WASHINGTON NEWS

The House has passed the River and Harbor bill, appropriating more than eighty-three million dollars for river improvements.

The president has signed the general service pension bill.

A Washington dispatch to the New York World says: The senate today had considerable fun at the expense of Mr. Depew, who butted in on the Indian Appropriation bill and made his first speech in two years. A provision had been inserted permitting some Indians in New Mexico to have a realignment of their lands. Senator Depew said this was general legislation and should be carried in an appropriation bill. He deprecated adding "riders" to appropriation bills. The item was eliminated.

Curiously enough, the next paragraph was a "rider" to pay the Seneca Indians of New York \$118,050 in

settlement of their account with the treasury department. Senator McCumber said this item was similar to that against which Mr. Depew had spoken. He asked Mr. Depew if his objection extended to the allowance for New York. Mr. Depew replied that his objection was to general legislation on appropriation bills and if the paragraph indicated was such it would meet with his approval. He hesitatingly said that he knew little about the Seneca appropriation.

Everybody in the senate grinned. The Seneca item was accepted.

Senator Warren of Wyoming, has reported the army appropriation bill. The bill carries \$81,500,000, an increase of \$9,000,000 over the amount as it passed the House. Two-thirds of the increase is for the artillery.

An amendment was reported providing that the Railroad Rate law shall not be held "to prohibit the allowance of reduced rates to the government for the transportation of persons or property, or to prohibit the transportation of officers and enlisted men in the service of the United States or their families, free or at reduced rates."

The committee met the demand for relief in the matter of heat and light by the adoption of a general provision "that hereafter the heat and light actually necessary for the authorized allowance of quarters for officers and enlisted men shall be furnished at the expense of the United States."

Senator Hale has presented to the senate detailed plans for the big battleship which in the language of one statesman "is intended to frighten the world." The Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Globe-Democrat says:

The plans call for a battleship 518 3-4 feet long, with beams of 85 feet 4 inches and draft of 29 feet 5 inches, with everything on board. The armament will consist of a main battery of ten 12-inch breech-loading rifles, mounted on five electrically controlled turrets on the center lines; two forward above the fore-castle deck, the second firing over the first; two aft on the main deck on the same level and one amidships, firing over the two after turrets. There are to be two submerged torpedo tubes. The second battery will consist of fourteen 5-inch rapid-fire guns, four 3-pounder saluting, four 1-pounder semiautomatic, two 5-inch field pieces and two machine guns of 30-caliber.

The secondary battery of fourteen 5-inch guns will be on the gun deck, forming two broadside batteries of seven guns each; the corner guns will be equipped for head and stern firing, respectively. Smaller guns will be located in commanding positions, so as to give a large, unobstructed range of fire.

The senate today passed a bill providing that no homestead entry on the public lands shall be canceled because of the failure of the entrymen thereon to thereafter reside on the land during the months of December, January, February and March. In computing the homestead proofs no credit is to be given for the period of actual absence.

Representative Murphy of Missouri, introduced a bill today to repeal the act admitting Oklahoma to statehood on the grounds that the constitutional convention of Oklahoma and Indian territory had failed to comply with the conditions of the joint statehood act.

Mr. Murphy's bill follows: Whereas, The constitutional convention of the proposed state of Oklahoma, now in session at Guthrie, Okla., failed and refused after organization to declare, on behalf of the people of the said state, to adopt the constitution of the United States as required by the act of congress; and

Whereas, By such failure the said convention is authorized to form a

constitution and state government for said proposed state; and

Whereas, Said constitutional convention is attempting to evade the act of congress by making distinction in civil and political rights on account of race and color; and

Whereas, Said convention has squandered the people's money appropriated by congress in unnecessary political bickerings, thereby leaving no fund to hold an election for the ratification or rejection of the proposed constitution; and

Whereas, The said convention has wholly disregarded and ignored the disbursing officer of the government as provided by congress; and

Whereas, The said convention has demonstrated its unfitness and incapacity to frame a constitution for said proposed state; therefore, be it enacted

That the act entitled "A act to enable the people of Oklahoma and of Indian territory to form a state government," etc., approved June 16, 1906, be and the same is hereby repealed.

Murphy is a republican.

COMMONER ANNIVERSARY

On Saturday evening, February 9, the employes of The Commoner met for the sixth consecutive time to celebrate an anniversary of the paper's founding. The celebration this year was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Bryan, Fairview, and was attended by nearly fifty employes together with members of their immediate families. A trip around the world "by proxy" was enjoyed, Mr. Bryan acting as guide and showing to the employes the many quaint, curious and handsome souvenirs collected while abroad. Anecdotes and incidents of the tour were hugely enjoyed during the two hours consumed by the journey. Light refreshments were served at the proper hour and the time for taking the last car in came all too quickly.

Every year upon the date of the first issue of The Commoner the employes gather to celebrate the event. The date was January 23, but it was delayed three weeks this year upon request of Mr. Bryan, who wanted the employes to meet at Fairview. His recent Pacific coast trip took him away on the anniversary date, hence the postponement only added to the interest of the occasion and the sixth anniversary celebration was unanimously voted to be just what each of the preceding ones had been—"the best of them all."

Romance of Language

"Influenza" was originally an Italian word for "influence," and, among other things, for the "influence" of the stars, which manifested itself balefully in epidemics of disease. Hence, "Influenza di febbre scarlattina," for instance, meant an "epidemic of scarlet fever." And so, when eighteenth-century Italy was prostrated by the sneezing, snuffling scourge and passed it on to England, it was naturally spoken of as "the" influenza—"the" epidemic; though on the way through France it acquired also the name of "la grippe," in allusion to its ferocious way of seizing its victims.

Two centuries ago little girls called

their toy babies "poppets" or "puppets" instead of "dolls." Probably "popsy-wopsy" is simply another form of the word. "Puppet" is descended from the French "poupee" and the Latin "pupa," a little girl or doll, from both of which have come other English words. "Poupee" has given "puppy," so called because the tiny dog was naturally petted as a plaything; and the Latin word survives in the sense of a chrysalis, and has a descendant in the "pupil" of the eye, the "baby" that any one may see reflected in it.

"Helpmeet" has had a curious history which began with the biblical account of the creation, when "the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." That is to say a fit assistant. But the two words have become curiously combined into a "helpmeet," and they are constantly used as one. Moreover, the confusion is increased by the corruption of the words into "helpmate," and Macaulay writes of the waiting woman who was "generally considered as the most suitable help mate for a person."—Chicago News.

A Companion

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