

publics. Rt. Rev. Charles W. Currier, recently appointed bishop of Matanzas, Cuba, delivered a sermon of deep significance to those present. At the luncheon, where a large company sat down as the guest of the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Russell, rector of St. Patrick's, the peace note that had been sounded in the sermon of the mass was emphasized in speeches by Secretary Bryan and others. Toasts were also responded to by Cardinal Gibbons, Ambassador De Gama and Director General Barrett.

A new phase of the cost of living problem was brought to the attention of Secretary Houston, of the department of agriculture, when T. P. Gill, secretary of the Irish board of agriculture, told him that speculators in the large cities of the United States were actively buying up this year's short American potato crop and planning to hold out for high prices, counting on the existing quarantine against potatoes from many foreign countries to aid them.

The Interstate Commerce commission's accident bulletin just issued, for the quarter ending June 30, 1913, shows that, as compared with the returns of the corresponding quarter of 1912, there was a total increase of 140 in the number of persons killed and of 8,283 in the number of injured in railroad accidents of all kinds in the United States.

The senate confirmed the nomination of L. E. Pinkham of Massachusetts, to be governor of Hawaii.

The initial step of the democratic national administration toward legislation designed to meet the high cost of living situation and regulate interstate shipments of cold storage products and the manipulation of the price of food products was taken in the house of representatives, November 29, when an elaborate bill covering these matters was introduced by Representative McKellar of Tennessee. The measure was drafted after Mr. McKellar had held a series of conferences with Attorney General McReynolds, who has begun the cost of living investigation to ascertain whether there have been violations of the anti-trust law that may be prosecuted under existing statutes. Conferences were also held with Secretary Houston of the department of agriculture. The measure, which was referred to the committee on interstate and foreign commerce, covers the question along five general lines, and is intended to (1) prohibit interstate transportation of shipments of certain food products; (2) prohibit the transportation and sale of adulterated or misbranded food products; (3) regulate traffic in these products; (4) define and regulate cold storage; (5) regulate dealing in cold storage food products and to fix penalties for violation. Fixing prices or interfering in any manner with the ordinary rules of competition is also prohibited. Any person or firm offering for sale any cold storage product as a fresh product would be fined \$100 to \$1,000 and imprisoned from three to six months upon conviction.

Raw wool went on the free list December 1 under the provisions of the new tariff act. Figures on wool that has been held in bonded warehouses waiting admission free of duty are not available, but it is estimated that probably \$1,000,000 worth was in bond in New York alone.

A decision of far-reaching importance to owners of railroad securities was rendered by the United States supreme court, which upheld the uniform system of accounting prescribed by the Interstate Commerce commission for railroads. The effect of this

decision is that all railroads must adopt the same system of bookkeeping and that this system will be prescribed by members of the Interstate Commerce commission.

President Wilson withdrew from entry 45,720 acres of public land in Southern California, believed to be valuable for oil. In western Montana 120,000 acres of supposed coal lands were opened.

Budget estimates submitted to congress by the several government establishments were \$1,108,681,777.

Representative Park, of Georgia, introduced a bill in the house to provide for one-cent letter postage.

Victory for the administration forces in the first test of strength on the currency reform bill marked the session of the senate, December 15. The vote was 40 to 35, and tabled a substitute offered by Senator Hitchcock for section two of the administration bill proposing a system of four regional banks, with a possible increase to eight, the regional bank stock to be owned by the public. The defeat of this amendment practically assured the adoption of the Owen plan, which provides for from eight to twelve regional banks, with the stock owned by the national banks that may become members of the respective regional banks. The result of the test vote indicated the complete success of the administration measure within a short time.

The house voted down a bill to authorize experiments in carrying mail by aeroplane.

President Wilson has been confined to his room with an aggravated cold. Most of the time he has remained in bed on the advice of his physician, chiefly as a measure of precaution to insure complete rest and rapid recovery.

Among the decisions handed down by the United States supreme court, December 1, were the following: Upholding the application to mining companies of the corporation tax imposed by the Payne-Aldrich law; holding unlawful the practice of publishers who fix the retail price of books and require dealers to sell at that price on penalty of being shut out of the book market; upholding the Illinois child labor law which makes the employer responsible for minors under 16 years of age even when they have represented themselves as over that age; and upholding as no interference with interstate commerce, state laws levying occupation taxes on local agents of credit reporting companies.

The department of state evidenced its desire to house American representatives abroad in buildings furnished by the government in asking for \$150,000 for the purchase of a site and construction of an embassy building in Mexico City; \$140,000 for the purchase of a site and construction of a building for the legation at Berne, Switzerland, and \$150,000 for the construction of an embassy building on ground now owned by the United States at Tokio.

Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo estimates that he will need \$1,500,000 to collect the income tax. He says an increase is necessary, because the tax collection machinery will be perfected by the time the appropriation is made, and because investigations will be made to determine the cases of taxes withheld in previous years.

The budget estimates for the maintenance of the various government



NO REST FOR THE WEARY

—From the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

establishments, submitted December 1, are \$22,864,067 in excess of the appropriations for the last fiscal year, but their total falls \$39,255,066 below the estimates for that year. The estimates are as follows: Legislative establishment, \$7,533,331; executive establishment, \$30,089,268; judicial establishment, \$1,241,110; postoffice department, including parcel post, \$306,953,117; department of agriculture, \$19,061,332; foreign intercourse, \$4,447,042; military establishment, \$105,937,544; naval establishment, \$139,831,953; Indian affairs, \$10,208,865; pensions, \$169,150,000; public works, \$97,917,592; miscellaneous, \$84,393,213; permanent annual appropriations, \$131,196,407.

The first regular session of the 63d congress began promptly at noon, December 1. The extraordinary session of congress, the longest in history, was virtually ended November 29, when the house adjourned, though the senate held a short session the morning of December 1. The senate was still sitting in extra session when the vice-president by two raps of his gavel announced the termination of one session and the beginning of another.

The house committee on postoffices and post roads agreed to report favorably a bill appropriating \$200,000 for experimental village delivery service.

Postmaster General Burleson's proposals to increase the weight limits of parcel post packages in the first and second zones from 20 to 50 pounds, to admit books to the parcel post and to reduce rates in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth zones, were approved by the interstate commis-

sion. The maximum weight of parcels to all zones beyond the second was increased from 11 to 20 pounds. The approved changes in rates and weights to be in effect January 1, 1914, except for books. On March 16, 1914, the classification of articles mailable under the parcel post act will be extended so as to include books. The rate of postage on books weighing eight ounces or less will remain two cents for each ounce or fraction thereof, but on books in excess of eight ounces the regular zone rates will apply.

Legislation preliminary to government ownership of telegraph or long-distance telephone lines, or both, may be included in the annual post-office appropriation bill soon to be reported to the house.

Practical trial of government ownership of railway mail cars is proposed in a bill which the house post office and post roads committee has approved. This measure would appropriate \$100,000 for purchase and operation of several cars.

A delegation of more than two thousand men and women, representing every state and territory in the Union, presented to congress a resolution demanding an amendment to the federal constitution providing for the prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors.

A caucus of the democratic congressmen from Pennsylvania endorsed Congressman Palmer for governor of that state.

The Union Pacific announced an 86-hour schedule from New York to San Francisco, to prevent the Santa Fe from taking its mail contract.