

WASHINGTON NOTES

Free Coal—Vest Resolution—Statehood Bill—Dolliver's Leadership—Land Leasing—Chandler and 20 to 1

Washington, D. C., Jan. 19, 1902.—(Special Correspondence.)—Free coal is now an established fact and the duty that was placed on this product in the Dingley bill as a concession to the coal barons and the railroads has been removed. It is true that the various schedules of which the Dingley bill is made up were drafted and enacted as concessions to some large and wealthy interests (that might be expected to respond when campaign funds were needed) and all of these have been allowed to stand. But the widespread suffering and distress brought about by the coal strike and the famine in the supply aroused public sentiment to a degree that the republicans did not dare ignore it. The time may come when other highly protected articles will become as dear to the people as is coal, and it is only fair to presume that public sentiment will again compel the republicans to allow some measure of relief unincumbered by the sacred fetish of the tariff. It is more than passing strange, however, that the people will continue in power a party whose rule is responsible for such conditions and which never permits relief to the people until its rule is threatened. The average republican will insist that the tariff is sacred and howl prosperity until he is black in the face. The fact that he does not know where his next meal is to come from makes no difference to him. That's the way he's been taught.

The Vest resolution introduced in the senate last week to place hard coal on the free list passed both houses—in the senate unanimously, and in the house 285 to 5. The five opposition votes were all republicans, one of them being Mondell of Wyoming. The democrats sought an opportunity to amend the bill so as to provide for free coal for all time, but were not permitted, therefore no limitation as to time was made.

During the controversy Senator Tillman made a characteristic speech declaring the president and attorney general were responsible for the coal famine by reason of their unwillingness to enforce the Sherman act, which would have restrained the coal-owning and coal-carrying railroads from plying unmolested their nefarious trade.

The senate has passed the militia bill, with an amendment striking out the section providing for a reserve force of trained men. The house will likely concur.

The statehood bill still remains the regular order of business in the senate with no prospect of early settlement. Some fifteen senators have served notice of their intention to speak thereon, and it is feared that because of the shortness of the session the republican leaders will be able to talk and filibuster it to death.

The house this week passed the army appropriation bill, and engaged in discussion of the diplomatic and consular appropriation bill.

Senator Dolliver has gone on record as the leader of the tariff revisionists among republicans and delivered quite an extended speech Wednesday on the "Iowa idea," in which he severely criticised eastern republican senators so firmly wedded to a high tariff as to defeat the reciprocity treaties with other countries. It would appear that there is still considerable division over this subject among republicans, with both sides endeavoring to do the popular thing.

No action will be taken by the house committee on military affairs on the canteen question at this session, and no consideration is being given to any measure proposing the restoration of the canteen to army post exchanges.

The naval appropriation bill carries a little less than the amount appropriated last session, and authorizes the construction of three large battleships and one cruiser, two steel training ships, and one wooden training brig. On the land leasing question, the Nebraskans in congress have submitted to the state legislature a letter asking their views on the matter in question. There is some division on the matter among the members. Mr. Shallenberger pioneered the opposition to the syndicate bill, proposed by Senators Millard and Dietrich, and is backed up by the receipt of numerous petitions and letters and by public sentiment in general.

During the discussion of the army bill in the house, Grosvenor of Ohio, republican, and Champ Clark of Missouri, democrat, engaged in a rough-and-tumble discussion of the future prospects of the democratic party which occasioned much amusement and generous applause on the floor

and in the well-filled galleries.

Grosvenor charged that the democratic party was dead beyond a hope of resurrection, and indulged in some sarcastic comment.

Mr. Champ Clark replied to Mr. Grosvenor in a characteristically breezy speech. He took up the election figures to show, as he said, that the democrats had at least an "even chance" in 1904. In the course of his remarks he had a sharp altercation with Mr. Bartholdt, of Missouri, over the local political situation in his state. While Mr. Clark was arguing that the change of a few thousand votes in certain states would give the democrats the presidency, Mr. Wachtler, of Maryland, interposed with this question: "While you are making those changes," he asked, "do you suppose we will be sitting with our hands on our laps."

"No," retorted Mr. Clark, "you will have your hands in the treasury up to the arm pits, just where they always are." (Democratic applause and laughter.)

While Mr. Clark was talking about the congressional gerrymanders in northern states, he crossed swords in turn with a dozen republicans, and each side cheered on its speakers.

Clark is contesting with John Sharpe Williams of Mississippi for the minority leadership of the fifty-eighth congress and has the backing of the west.

The Hoar resolution, recently passed by the senate, to change the date of the inauguration of the president and vice president to the last Tuesday in April has been voted down by the house judiciary committee, as were also several other propositions providing for various dates. This action precludes any possibility of a change being made at this session. A change seems to be desired, but a majority cannot agree on what the change shall be.

The president is now having trouble with the national industrial council of the ex-slaves association, claiming to control 320,000 colored voters. This council has asked the president to consider the feasibility of taking from charity institutions in the south about 200,000 negroes, thus relieving southern taxpayers of supporting them. The president indicated that he could not view the matter in a favorable light, whereupon the leaders of the council declared that the president had done the black race great injury in the south by appointing so many negroes to office, thereby stirring up white prejudice and encouraging negroes to idleness and office-seeking, while at the same time denying protection to aged colored men. All this is to be regretted. Any action that would take away from the republicans a sure asset like the colored vote can be viewed in no other way than a national calamity.

Congressman Shallenberger has received and accepted an invitation to deliver an address to the law school of the Georgetown national university on February 14.

A glance at the record shows that congress has passed 10,000 private pension bills in the last 40 years, a circumstance responsible for some acrimonious debate last Friday in the house.

Secretary Hay has at last supplied Senator Morgan with a statement of the expenditures made on account of the isthmian canal commission. The statement shows that each member has been compensated at the rate of \$1,000 a month, with all expenses added, since 1899. For all the good accomplished, most people will feel the pay to have been at least ample.

The senate bill fixing and increasing the salaries of United States judges has been favorably reported to the house and will likely pass, being a very considerable increase all along the line. A decision was reached yesterday by giving the chief justice of the court of appeals \$6,500, \$6,000 to each of the associate justices of the court of appeals, and \$6,000 to each of the justices of the district supreme court, being an increase of \$1,000 over the present salary for supreme court judges, but no increase for associate justices of the appellate court.

The salaries for other courts, as provided in the bill, are as follows:

United States supreme court—Chief justice, \$13,000; associate justices, \$12,500 each.

United States circuit judges, \$7,000. United States district judges, \$6,000. Court of claims—Chief justice, \$6,500; associate justices, \$6,000 each.

Reform measures seem to be gaining renewed impetus with every turn of the wheel. A few years ago the advocate of government ownership was termed a fanatic and yet this principle bids fair to be enacted into law within a few years at most. As an instance of just what headway the matter has reached, Congressman Jenkins, of Wisconsin, chairman of the house

judiciary committee, has introduced a resolution in the house suggesting the advisability of an inquiry into the question of government control of coal mines and all lines of coal transportation. If, in the opinion of the committee, the power exists to take this step, the resolution authorizes the committee to prepare a bill declaring the necessity and to exhaust the power of congress in this respect. The resolution reads:

"Resolved, That the committee on judiciary be and is hereby directed to investigate and report to this house with all convenient speed the opinion of that committee as to the power of congress to declare that a necessity has arisen for taking possession of all coal, coal beds, and coal mines in the United States, and all lines of transportation agencies, instruments, and vehicles of commerce necessary for the transportation of coal, and that if in the opinion of that committee the power exists, and a necessity for the exercise of such power has arisen, that the committee forthwith report to this house a bill, declaring the necessity, providing fully and in detail the occasions, modes, conditions and agencies for said appropriation that will fully and completely exhaust the power of congress in that regard."

The resolution was referred to the committee on rules for the purpose of squelching it, which will be done. The introduction of the same is enough, however, to show the growth of the sentiment, and will be hailed with delight by reform workers everywhere.

Congressional circles are somewhat stirred by recent utterances of prominent men on the question of imperialism and the money question. President Roosevelt has decided to send General Wood to the island of Mindanao, Philippines, to establish a colonial government such as that of the English in India, so it is authoritatively announced from the White house. This has prompted Dr. Schurman, formerly of the Philippine commission, to declare the islands should be granted immediate independence.

Ex-Senator Chandler advocates the remonetization of silver at the ratio of 20 to 1 by the nations of England, France, Germany and the United States. In discussing the matter in an authorized interview he said:

"Silver is the metallic money of more than half the human race, and has been slowly sinking toward its value as a metal only and not as money; as gold would so fall if it were demonetized. Four thousand millions of silver is becoming—has practically become—merchandise instead of money, which it had been from the dawn of civilization down to 1874. This demonetization is bringing poverty and distress to half the people on the globe. Remonetize and the misery will cease and China can easily pay."

"Moreover, it is best for the United States to be wise in time. When the present bubble of fictitious capitaliza-



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"To lessen the evils of these bad times coming, silver should be remonetized by a renewed consensus of the nations."

The Cuban reciprocity treaty has been favorably reported from the senate committee. H. W. RISLEY.

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