

Week at Washington

Senator Tillman, who has been seriously ill with an affection of the throat, is improving.

Adjutant General Hall has received the following cablegram from Manila: "Major General Leonard Wood reports an attack on a reconnoitering force east of Cotabato by a strong party of Moros, made hostile by the passage of the anti-slavery law. The Moros' position was shelled and the Moros flanked and the outworks were taken. They were strong and well constructed. A cannon, twenty-one old Spanish guns, thirty-three lantakas and large quantities of ammunition and supplies were captured. There were no casualties on our side."

Secretary of War Taft appeared before the house committee on insular affairs and expressed his disappointment because of the uprising of the Moros. Referring to Mr. Taft's testimony, the Associated press says:

Secretary Taft told the commission that he had received a cablegram today from General Wade, stating that General Wood reported that on account of the anti-slavery proclamation the Moros of the Rio Grande de Mindanano district had risen, that this armed force had been met and defeated with no American loss, but with considerable loss to the Moros. A number of small cannon was captured from the Moros in the engagement.

"I am disappointed at this news," remarked Secretary Taft, "because I supposed that the Moros of that district were in a condition where that sort of thing was not possible."

The secretary, in answer to Representative Patterson (Tenn.), said that in his opinion the executive action already taken had put an end to the Bates' agreement, but congressional action "would make assurance doubly sure."

The secretary denied that the treaty recognized either slavery or polygamy.

"How about article 10?" asked Representative Williams (Ill.).

"There is no such article in the agreement," replied the secretary. "President McKinley eliminated that article before he approved the agreement."

"But slavery has existed," persisted Mr. Patterson (Tenn.).

"Whenever a slave has presented himself he has been freed, the Moros have not gone to war on account of slavery, neither has slavery been destroyed by force of arms by the United States, but the slave trade has been suppressed just as far as it has been possible. Slavery prevails wherever there are Moros," was the answer.

"For campaign purposes," interposed Representative Crumpacker (Ind.), "we might be justified in passing a resolution abrogating the treaty, providing it did not provoke a Filipino and Moro war in the house and senate."

"I don't profess to be an expert on campaign material, having been absent for four years," Secretary Taft laughingly replied.

Mr. Crumpacker immediately drafted a substitute for the Patterson bill, abrogating the treaty, providing that the action of the president and secretary of war, taken on March 2, 1904, unqualifiedly abrogating the Bates treaty be confirmed and approved.

Secretary Taft approved this, but the committee decided to defer its action on the matter, desiring to hear Secretary Taft on the railroad problem in the islands. Before leaving the subject, however, the secretary said that in his opinion there was not more than 400,000 Moros in the islands, although it had been supposed that there were a million and a half.

Secretary Taft then reviewed the

fiscal condition in the islands. He should be agreeably surprised, he said, if the islands got out without actual loss on the friar land proposition. Secretary Taft had not concluded when the committee adjourned. He will again be heard Wednesday.

It is reported that W. E. Stanicy has forwarded his resignation as a member of the Dawes commission.

An Associated press dispatch from Washington says: In the supreme court the government of the United States, through Attorney General Knox, applied for a writ of mandamus to compel Judge Francis J. Wing of the United States district court of the northern district of Ohio to take what the department of justice maintains is legal action with respect to certain Chinese exclusion cases.

This is the first time in the history of the supreme court that the government has sought a writ of mandamus against a federal judge.

In his application Attorney General Knox maintains that Judge Wing, in holding unconstitutional that part of the Chinese exclusion law which provides for the deportation of alien Chinese, after a hearing before a United States commissioner, is proceeding contrary to decisions of the United States supreme court and is preventing the deportation of Chinese who are unlawfully in the United States.

Referring to the house proceedings, an Associated press dispatch from Washington says: Mr. Griggs of Georgia got into an argument with Mr. Cooper of Wisconsin as to the authorship of the document and insisted, over the protest of Mr. Cooper, that it was prepared under the direction of General Bristow. He defended the committee of which he is a member in giving publicity to the matter, saying that the United States is too powerful and too great to convict any man by the suppression of facts. He said the members of the house, after threats to "tear the roof off the department, had turned tail and voted that the department should investigate the congressmen."

Mr. Burton (O.) delivered a carefully prepared speech on the increased national expenses and warned the house against extravagance.

Under the latitude of debate, Mr. Rucker (Mo.) attacked the protective tariff system of the republican party, while Mr. Fitzgerald (N. Y.) discussed labor legislation and the decisions of Judge Alton B. Parker on labor questions.

The right of the president of the United States to utilize the yacht's Mayflower and Sylph was questioned by Mr. Cochran (Mo.), who argued that there was no authority of law for it.

The statehood question has been taken up by the sub-committee of the house committee on territories, recently appointed to draft statehood bills for Arizona and New Mexico and Oklahoma and Indian Territory. The bill making a state of the first two was practically completed. The difficulty of adjusting the taxation and other questions with regard to the admission of Oklahoma and Indian Territory as a state are next to be taken up. When the second bill has been completed it is probable the two bills will be joined as a dual proposer for two states out of the four territories. The sub-committee is to continue its work daily.

The senate has passed the fortification appropriation bill. The torpedo boat provision was fought, but the amendment suggested by the committee was retained. The Hawaiian provision, which had been eliminated by

the committee was restored and the sum increased from \$200,000, as fixed by the house, to \$526,100. Several other bills were passed. One of these appropriates \$100,000 for a public building at Atlanta, Ga.

An Associated press dispatch from Washington says: The house committee on military affairs has agreed on four sites for permanent military camp grounds and authorized a favorable report on a bill for purchase. The provision also is made for the enlargement of the Chattahoochee and Chickamauga national parks by the acquisition of 10,000 acres of land at a cost of \$100,000. The camp sites selected are:

At or near Fort Sam Houston, Bexar county, Tex., where from 18,000 to 25,000 acres are to be acquired at a cost of \$125,000

Camp Douglas, in Juneau and Moultrie counties, Wis., 20,000 acres, at a cost of \$400,000.

Conewago valley in Lebanon, Dauphin and Lancaster counties, in Pennsylvania, 18,000 acres at a cost of \$900,000.

The J. N. Henry ranch, San Luis Obispo county, California, 22,000 acres at a cost of \$500,000.

The bill provides that no permanent military post shall be established on any of these sites.

Commissioner of Pensions Ware has promulgated the most important pension ruling in years. Referring to this ruling, the Associated press says: It directs that, beginning April 12 next, if there is no contrary evidence, and all other legal requirements have been met, claimants for pension under the general act of June 27, 1890, who are over 62 years old, shall be considered as disabled one-half in ability to perform manual labor and shall be entitled to \$6 per month; over 65 years, to \$8; over 68 years, to \$10, and over 70 years, to \$12, the usual allowances at higher rates continuing for disabilities other than age. The order follows:

"Ordered: In the adjudication of pension claims under said act of June 27, 1890, as amended, it shall be taken and considered as an evidential fact, if the contrary does not appear, and if all other legal requirements are properly met, that when a claimant has passed the age of 62 years, he is disabled one-half in ability to perform manual labor and is entitled to be rated as \$6 per month; after 65 years, at \$8 per month; after 68 years, at \$10 per month; and after 70 years, at \$12 per month.

"Allowance at higher rate, not exceeding \$12 per month, will continue to be made as heretofore, where disabilities other than age show a condition of inability to perform manual labor.

"This order shall take effect April 13, 1904, and shall not be deemed retroactive."

The order itself is preceded by a preamble, which, after citing the law, says the pension bureau has established with reasonable certainty the average nature and extent of the infirmity of old age; that thirty-nine years after the Mexican war, congress, in 1887, placed on the pension roll all Mexican war soldiers who were over 62 years old.

Commissioner Ware said today: "There has long been in the bureau a rule fixing a maximum age limit at \$12 for 75 years. This was made during Mr. Cleveland's administration, by Commissioner Lochren.

"The 65 years' minimum has been a long while in force in the bureau. The act of congress, which was passed in the latter part of January, 1887, and approved by President Cleveland, put all the Mexican veterans on the pension roll thirty-nine years after the end of the Mexican war. It would seem that to a soldier of the civil war, who fought vastly more and longer,

at least as good rule ought to apply.

"The order could not have been issued earlier because it is only now that the thirty-nine years, fixed by the congressional limit, has been reached. The civil war ended in 1865.

"There is an advantage and saving to the government in the use of this order, because every old soldier who has reached the age of 62 years is able to prove almost without possibility of doubt that he is one-half disabled from earning his support by manual labor. This being so, it seems unwise to put a soldier to the expense of time and transportation to go to a place where a medical board can examine him, to find out the fact, and on the other hand, it seems unnecessary for the government to keep boards established and then pay \$3 for the examination of a soldier, when the result of the examination can be so accurately foretold. Of the 200,000 examinations in the last year, if one-fourth of them were saved it would make a saving to the government of \$300,000 and perhaps an equal amount in time to the old soldiers who would have to go and be examined.

"I am not able to say what expense the bill would entail in the shape of additional payments."

It is believed in Washington that the senate committee will render a

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