

The Commoner

ISSUED WEEKLY

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The Fourth of July death list reads like a collection of a day's automobile accident news.

"Dirt is flying in Panama!" exclaims an administration organ. It looks more like money.

Some one should gently hint to the editor of the Congressional Record that congress has adjourned.

Despite the report of the Chicago investigating committee we refuse to believe that the packing houses are palm gardens and rose distilleries.

The Oyster Bay date line now starts off a lot of talk about what congress would have done if it had not been so busy doing something else.

Congress ground out 20,000,000 words, and then growled because the printers on the Congressional Record fell behind a little now and then.

By making loud claims concerning the rate bill the republican organs hope to conceal the fact that it took a democrat to steer it through congress.

A western senator complains that Secretary Hitchcock is in his dotage. The secretary is so "childish" that he actually believes land thieves should be jailed.

A man who claims to know says that the American cigarettes sent to London are the worst made. They must be longer than those shipped from other countries.

Attorney Jerome is acting in the Thaw case very much like a man interested in doing something to distract public attention from his conduct of the insurance cases.

A Wawoma, Cal., bandit held up and robbed five stages in one day recently. He is wasting his time in California. Such as he find greater opportunities in Wall Street.

Newport society has just enjoyed a "baby party," the guests dressing and acting like babies. The next should be a "dunce party," and then the guests can act naturally.

After deducting several hundred millions of dollars for this and that, the republican party managers manage to show that congress did not appropriate so very much money after all.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat is again talking about "50 cent dollars." Globe-Democrat readers who profit by that sort of mental pabulum will find plenty of that kind of pabulum in the Globe-Democrat.

WASHINGTON CITY LETTER

Washington, D. C., July 16.—From many standpoints the first, or long, session of the Fifty-first congress which came to a close June 30, was an interesting one. At the wind-up the republicans made a big blow as to what had been accomplished for the good of the country, and in characteristic manner claimed all the credit for the important legislation. As the statesmen of that persuasion were packing up their effects to leave the capital city, then literally baked by the intense heat that had prevailed for more than a week, they commenced to spread reports they hope will curry favor with the voters next November and possibly enable them to retain control of the lower, or popular, branch of congress. Of course, they will not for a moment admit that the wisest and most important legislation placed upon the statute books was due to the stout demands that have been made for years in democratic state and national platforms. But the records of this memorable session are easily available, and they tell the story for the guidance of the voters at the approaching election. The democratic congressional campaign committee will see that the facts are placed before the country. There will be not the slightest difficulty in proving conclusively that had not the democrats under the able and aggressive leadership of Senator Tillman, aided by Senator Bailey and other well known democrats, the railroad rate bill would have been a dead letter. A more gallant and unflinching fight was never made by a determined minority. From the time the conflict commenced until it was over Mr. Tillman had his armor on. And it certainly was not his fault that the Standard Oil company gained a point that the valiant South Carolinian did not want it to have. He was simply outvoted. However, before departing for his home, Mr. Tillman in looking back at what had taken place in the halls of legislation expressed the opinion that the rate bill was better than might have been expected, in view of the fact that the republicans have such a large majority in both the senate and house. It is a keen satisfaction to him and to those who battled with him for the rights of the people that the republicans had to march up and accept the democratic demands for the regulation of the interstate lines. Bitter as the dose was the leading republicans could not avoid taking it.

Friends and admirers of Senator Tillman will be rejoiced to hear that practically all opposition to his re-election as senator from his state for another term has disappeared. Several of the house delegation assert confidently he will have what is termed a "walkover." Mr. Tillman is now in his second term, which will expire March 4 next. His record during the past session was such that his constituents are said to be so well pleased with his course in congress that they will see that he has plain sailing at the coming primaries. South Carolina was one of the first states in the union to adopt a general primary plan to settle the question of choosing United States senators.

The republicans are going to make a big blow about the passage of the meat inspection, the pure food and the immigration bills that were passed at the recent session. They will, as usual, try to claim all the credit for the measures named. But the democrats held them to the mark and made a record of which the minority members are justly proud.

Mr. Tawney, of Minnesota, the chairman of the house appropriations committee, was put to his wit's ends trying to show that his party did not overstep the mark as many millions as it might have done. Shrewdly he attempted to show that the increase was not "outrageously large" as compared with the expenditures authorized during the fiscal year of 1906. Unfortunately for Chairman Tawney, Mr. Livingston, of Georgia, the ranking democratic member of the appropriations committee, has given to the country a counter statement. The Georgian is a veteran legislator and has served so many years on the committee, that he was able to compile figures to prove that as compared with the first McKinley administration a budget of \$800,000,000 in a single year is a piece of extravagance the American people will not sanction. After stating that in the first full fiscal year of the McKinley administration the aggregate appropriations were in round numbers \$528,750,000 as contrasted with the \$800,000,000 voted at the recent session Col.

Livingston gives the following facts which ought to prove very interesting reading matter for the taxpayers of the United States:

"Both of these fiscal years are years in which our country has been at peace with all the nations of the earth. The fiscal year 1898 carried no appropriations for the Spanish-American war, those appropriations being chargeable to the fiscal year 1899 and subsequent years. The year 1907 is more than six years away from the Spanish-American war. The comparison shows that we have appropriated at this session of congress for 1907 the sum of \$351,448,222.02 more than for 1898. By the elimination of \$42,447,201.08, appropriated this session for the construction of the Isthmian canal, which I agree is entirely fair, there yet remains the difference of \$309,001,020.94, as compared with the appropriations made for 1898. Therefore, this increase can not be explained away or charged to public improvements. Neither can it be justified by the claim that the increase is proportioned to the increased population of the country. This growth in appropriations sustains the contention heretofore made by me, and which I now reiterate, that the republican party stands for extravagance in public expenditures, in order to use that extravagance as a cloak for their more objectionable purpose of maintaining a high protective tariff to favor the trust combinations of manufacturers of the country. A reduction of expenditures, they well know, would compel a commensurate reduction in taxation, and to that extent a lowering of the Chinese wall of protection that now surrounds the great body of consumers, who constitute the larger portion of our population, and compel tribute from them to the favored classes. Much of this extravagance grows out of the practice prevailing with the present administration of appointing commissions to do what congress ought to do, and what congressmen are elected for and paid for, thus delegating the powers constitutionally belonging to congress to others who have no particular relations with or responsibilities to the public and do not render an accounting to the taxpayers of this country."

A movement has already commenced among Maryland republicans to induce Secretary Bonaparte to run for governor of that state next year.

ALFRED J. STOFER.

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