

STRICT NEUTRALITY

This Will be Enforced Toward Russia and Japan

UNCLE SAM FRIEND OF BOTH

Will Show No Discrimination Whatever Between Parties in Case of Hostilities—'Will be War' Says Ota.

Naval officers are somewhat embarrassed as to the best disposition to be made of United States warships on the Asiatic station in view of the imminence of war between Russia and Japan. The policy of the administration is to observe the strictest neutrality and to keep hands off except in the single contingency of infringements upon American treaty rights. When Admiral Evans' fleet was ordered back to its station from Honolulu it was arranged that the cruiser squadron should stop at Midway Island, where there is a cable station, to receive any instructions the department might desire to send. These instructions were simply for Admiral Evans' fleet to await instructions at Guam.

It is expected that Admiral Evans will reach Guam in a few days and report his arrival to the department. Inquiry at the navigation bureau developed the fact that up to the present time the admiral has received no special instructions for his guidance in the event of hostilities in the far east. It is now the purpose of the department to cable to the admiral a special set of instructions to meet the present conditions in the east and those instructions will be delivered to him at Guam according to the present program. It is stated at the department that they will show no discrimination whatever as between the parties to any possible hostilities, but the admiral will be expected to so dispose his force as to maintain the appearance of strict neutrality as between the belligerents.

"War between Russia and Japan is inevitable. Whether now or later, it is bound to come, and if it does come it is my earnest belief that Japan, unaided will whip her enemy," said Hajime Ota, imperial commissioner from Japan to the world's fair, soon after his arrival in St. Louis. Ota left Japan a month ago.

TWENTY PERSONS KILLED

Head-On Wreck on Rock Island 14 Miles West of Topeka, Kas.

TEL.—ONE—N. N. N. The Rock Island, California & Mexico express, which left Chicago at 11:30 p. m. for the west, collided head-on at 14 miles west of Topeka, Kas., with a cattle train. Twenty persons were killed and nearly every person on the train injured. A relief train left Topeka for the scene of the wreck, returning to that city with the dead and wounded.

The train, which left Kansas City at 10 o'clock, was twenty minutes late, and at the time of the accident was running at the rate of thirty miles an hour.

The train carried many persons from Oklahoma who had taken advantage of the homesteaders' excursion rates. It also carried through sleepers and chair cars for San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The wreck was one of the most serious that has happened on the Rock Island system in years. Between Kansas City and Topeka the Rock Island uses the tracks of the Union Pacific.

Rented Before He Was Senator

When the indictment charging Senator Charles H. Dietrich with alleged bribery in connection with the Hastings, Neb., postoffice appointment is called the defense will refuse to admit that Dietrich had become a United States Senator when the alleged transactions took place. The charge is made in the indictment that Senator Dietrich negotiated with Fisher as early as January of the year in which the legislature elected Dietrich to the position of senator. General Cowin, who represents Senator Dietrich, contends that there could be no violation in the building lease charge, basing his contention on the same ground as in the bribery charge. This question probably will be the first to be adjudicated when court convenes.

Failed to Incite Revolution

During the absence from Port au Prince, Hayti, of President Nord, who went to Gonaves to take part in the celebration of the centenary of the independence of Hayti, General Monplaisir attempted to raise a revolt against the president, but the movement failed. The general's son and an accomplice were killed. Numerous arrests were made.

Russians and Japs' Heads Together

It is believed at Tokio that the Russian response has been handed to the government, but the secret of its delivery has been jealously guarded and the nature of the reply remains undisclosed. Minister of Foreign Affairs Komura called upon Baron de Rosen, the Russian minister to Japan, with whom he remained an hour and later he visited Premier Katsura, when an extended conference was held. There is every indication now that further negotiations will take place, although it is expected Japan will refuse to transfer the discussion of affairs to St. Petersburg if this is proposed.

Turks Not Living Up to Pledge

The Bulgarian government has sent a note to the porte, complaining of the non-fulfillment of its promises concerning reforms in Macedonia. Bulgaria urgently requests the porte immediately to take the necessary measures to end a condition of affairs which is so prejudicial to the interests of both countries and points out that the application of the proposed reforms should be easy, owing to the fact that the revolutionists are not hampering the government at present by any interference.

NEW FIRE ORDINANCE

Details of Conditions to be Met Before Chicago Theatres Are Opened

Radical changes in the direction of public safety in theaters will be required under the Chicago ordinance now being drafted by the city council special committee in theaters, which was appointed as a consequence of the Iroquois theater holocaust.

There must be no more than eight seats between aisles; all aisles must have a minimum width of two feet eight inches and must gradually widen from the point farthest from the exit; fireproof passageways, ten feet wide, straight, and separate from all other exits, must lead from each auditorium, balcony or gallery to places of safety. The ordinance creates fireproof foyers, into which almost an entire audience may flee for refuge in time of trouble.

Two fireproof exits must be provided for each floor in any event. Should a building fail to meet the requirement of facing on one public street and at least two alleys or public spaces, the ten-foot fireproof passageways are to supply the deficiency.

The authorities have ordered the closing of forty-nine halls as unsafe.

TO PROTECT AMERICANS

San Domingo Will be More Careful in the Future

With a firm hand the Washington government from now on will protect American life and property in the island of San Domingo. This decision follows a rather startling report received from Commander Dillingham.

It is said that the administration has as yet adopted no permanent policy for the conduct of affairs in San Domingo beyond that which it always has pursued in protecting American life and property. The statement is authorized that the conduct of Commander Dillingham, while following only general instructions, is entirely endorsed and approved by the government, and it is believed that his intelligent handling of the situation will have a powerful influence toward restoration of order in the island.

It is realized by the administration that the Dominican problem must be taken up and disposed of in a way that will put a stop to what was described by a European ambassador as "an insufferable nuisance which the civilized world looks to the United States to clean up."

Cuban Lottery Scheme Vetoed

President Palma, of Cuba, signed his veto of the lottery bill, which, as announced, he prepared last month in expectation of the passage of the bill.

The president, in stating the reasons for his veto, holds that a lottery is a lowering and corrupting device and that the government would be culpable in taking money of the people obtained through such a scheme, no matter what the end at which the lottery aimed. President Palma has been assured that the bill cannot be re-passed over his veto. At all events there will be little time for any discussion over the bill, as congress proposes to adjourn this week until March.

The object of the lottery bill was to pay the veterans who had fought for Cuba in the war against Spain.

Columbia's Protest Answered

Secretary Hay has completed his final revision of the answer to be made by the American government to the protest filed by General Reyes, Colombian envoy, against the action of the United States regarding affairs on the isthmus of Panama. The communication is a long one and sets out in detail the position of the administration on the various points raised and the grievances recited by General Reyes in his note submitted to the state department in December. The reply has been given earnest consideration by the president, by Secretary Root, who assisted in its preparation during the time Secretary Hay was ill, and by Secretary Hay himself. This paper together with General Reyes' note, it is expected, will be sent to congress next week.

Uniform United States Judicial Code

Representative Warner of Illinois introduced a bill of seven hundred sections, providing a judicial code for the United States. This is the second part of a general revision of all federal laws enacted to the present time, now considering by a committee on revision of the laws, of which Colonel Warner is chairman. This bill embraces all laws concerning the jurisdiction and practice of United States courts and all judicial acts and amendatory acts thereof, providing for the removal, appeal or transfer of causes.

Many of the provisions heretofore urged by the American bar association, respecting the organization and jurisdiction of federal courts are included. The bill definitely defines districts and divisions, thereby avoiding confusion resulting from changes in counties by the states. New legislation is proposed, reducing the work of the supreme court, improving the jury system, bettering civil and criminal procedure, and improving procedure on error and appeal.

Banishing Men at Cripple Creek

C. H. Reimer, business associate of James F. Burns, president of the Portland Mining company, at Cripple Creek, Colo., was arrested by a military squad and lodged in the bull pen. K. C. Sterling, chief detective of the Mine Owners' association, who investigated the arrest, said that after being detained for a time Reimer would be banished from the district.

Placer Mining Methods Followed

Methods of the California placer mines are being used by the Chicago police in recovering valuables lost in the Iroquois theatre fire disaster. Three big wagonloads of dirt and ashes were taken from the theatre floor and were conveyed by the police to the basement of a store near by. A placer mining outfit, including sieves and pans, was erected and City Custodian Creiger started a search for valuables among the rubbish.

THE GRAFT IN STEEL

The Navy Department "Stood In" With Steel Combine

NO CHANCE FOR FAIR BIDS

seems Impossible for the Government to Receive Legitimate Bids for Supplies of Any Description

In view of the recent testimony of Charles M. Schwab before the courts that the Carnegie and Bethlehem steel companies had always had an understanding with the navy department as to the price of armor before their bids were submitted, the house committee on naval affairs authorized an additional question on this point to be submitted to Rear Admiral O'Neill, who in his testimony before the committee last week stated that he believed that there had been an understanding between these two companies regarding their bids.

Admiral O'Neill now has his testimony before him for revision and the committee requested that he include in it a full statement as to the navy department's side of this matter and to state specifically whether Mr. Schwab's statement is true so far as it refers to the navy department.

The committee heard Rear Admiral Endicott, chief of the bureau of yards and docks, regarding estimates for appropriations for his bureau.

RUSSIA WILL BE LIBERAL

Will Respect Rights of Other Nations in Manchuria

The Russian government has informed the powers that it will respect fully the rights any nation has in Manchuria under treaty with China. This declaration is made without reservation.

Russia gives formal expression to this policy now in consequence of the controversy with Japan, one of whose persistent contentions has been for a definition of Russia's policy in Manchuria and an acknowledgement of Japan's privileges in trade.

Russia's reply has been in substance, as follows:

"We can not discuss Manchuria with you any more than we could Australia or the Philippines. Manchuria belongs neither to us, nor to you. It does not lie within the jurisdiction of either of us to dispose of the future of Manchuria.

Russia, however, is willing to observe the treaty rights of all the powers in Manchuria and now engages to do so.

Russia, it is added, thus removes from the negotiations one of the points upon which Japan counted for the moral support of other powers and whereon she especially had the sympathy of the United States and Great Britain.

STOPPED RUSH TO CANADA

An Immigration Agent's Successful Work for the Southwest

G. M. McKinney, general emigration agent of the Southern Pacific, has made a report to the traffic officials of the Harriman lines which gives the results of eighteen months of one of the most wonderful emigration campaigns in the history of railroads. The efforts of the bureau, which has headquarters in Chicago, have been directed toward colonizing with Americans three localities served by the Harriman lines, viz., the northwest, represented by Oregon, Washington and Idaho; the far west, represented by southern California, and the southwest, represented by Texas and Louisiana.

During the life of the bureau probably \$200,000 has been expended, but the result has been literally to stem the tide of immigration from the far northwest Canadian territories into the west and southwest and to locate there thousands of people from the thickly settled portions of the east. Within two years Mr. McKinney has organized a force of more than 1,200 competent, energetic colonization agents, who are bending their efforts to Texas and Louisiana alone.

Stockmen are Kicking Hard

The new rule of the railroads in refusing return passes for stock shippers raised a storm of protest at the annual meeting of the Farmers' Shipping association at Superior, Neb. The shippers adopted resolutions instructing their manager to take up with the railroads at once, and see if it is possible to have the rule rescinded. The shippers agree on their part not to ask for passes, except when it is absolutely necessary for a man to accompany the stock. The shipping association has over 300 members and handles the business of nearly all the cattle and hog raisers of northern Jewell county, Kansas, and southern Nuckolls county, Nebraska. During the past year the shipments have gone exclusively to Kansas City via the Burlington.

Want to Know About the Trusts

The house committee on judiciary authorized a favorable report on the resolution introduced by Mr. Stephens of Texas calling on the attorney general for information as to how the \$1,000,000 appropriation to prosecute the trust cases, made in the last congress, had been expended.

To Settle Missouri-Nebraska Boundary

A conference between S. B. Jefferys, assistant attorney general of Missouri; F. N. Prout, attorney general of Nebraska, and Judge W. H. Kelliger, also of Nebraska, was held to discuss the report of the commissioners in the Missouri-Nebraska United States supreme court case involving the question of state possession of a large tract of land lying between Nemaha county, Nebraska, and Atchison county, Missouri. The tract consists of about 15,000 acres of land, formerly practically valueless, but which in recent years has become excellent farming land.

BOODLER KRATZ AT HOME

The St. Louis Condemned Man Has Arrived from Old Mexico

Charles Kratz, former member of the city council, indicted on a charge of bribery, who jumped a bond of \$20,000 in March, 1902, and went to Mexico, returned to St. Louis in charge of Detective William Desmond and Sheriff Bernard Diekmann. Kratz was indicted in the latter part of 1901 for the alleged acceptance of a bribe while a member of the city council. He had served in the city council since 1897. It is alleged that he held one of two keys to a safety deposit vault of the Mississippi Valley Trust company, where it is alleged \$60,000 had been deposited by the Suburban Street Railway company for alleged distribution among the combine members of the council to secure the passage of a bill granting the suburban company the right to extend its tracks over certain streets of the city. After Kratz went to Mexico, where he engaged in business at Guadalajara, various attempts were made to secure his return to this country for trial. It was not, however, until recently, when the efforts of Circuit Attorney Folk were supplemented by President Roosevelt and the national government, that Kratz's return on a requisition was secured.

HEADED OFF INJUNCTION

Union Pacific Lays Track at Night in Fremont, Nebraska

By hustling around and laying a block of track between 6 and 12 o'clock Sunday morning, the Union Pacific railroad stole a march on Mrs. Nancy Turner at Fremont and headed off a possible injunction suit. A gang of thirty men was sent from Omaha with ties and rails for constructing the track. They arrived about 5 o'clock and inside of an hour the work was well started. Before Mrs. Turner knew what was going on, the job was more than half finished, and it was then too late to take any legal action toward stopping the work.

The section of track laid is outside the limits of the city and is intended as part of the spur the Union Pacific will build to the canning factory that has recently located there. The city granted a permit to the railroad to construct the spur along Washington street as far as the municipal boundaries, and the county conferred the same privilege for the rest of the way. Mrs. Turner's land fronts on Washington. The railroad company anticipated that she might seek to prevent the track from being laid along her premises, and accordingly decided to rush the work in advance of any action on her part. The track already constructed is an isolated piece, but will be connected up later.

Winter Wheat in Fine

Nebraska winter wheat is in good condition, according to the reports being received by the state industrial and crop bureau and the irrigation department. The fields are well covered with snow in the northern and in some sections of the southern part of the state. While the winter has been a comparatively open one in most sections the weather has at no time been cold or severe enough to freeze the young grain and the moisture carried in the ground from the wet fall has been sufficient to insure an early and healthy growth in the spring. No complaints of dryness are to be heard, except among stock and grain market operators, who are prone to take a pessimistic view of matters apt to affect the markets. Farmers are cheerful and look forward to an early spring.

New Revenue Law Money

Receipts under the new revenue law have already begun to come into the state treasury, and the hearts of the state auditor and treasurer are glad as a consequence. The first money to be received comes from the New York Life insurance company and was sent to Deputy Auditor Pierce of the insurance department and was turned into the treasury. The amount was \$8,330.68, 2 per cent of the gross premiums paid the company by policy holders in Nebraska during the year 1903 as provided by the revenue law. During the year 1903 the New York Life insurance company received from its policy holders in Nebraska the sum of \$415,534.00, of which amount \$8,330.68 is 2 per cent. In making the remittance the insurance company includes its annual statement for the period named but makes no comment on the validity of the law.

Reason for Raising Railroad Rates

Representatives of large steel companies testifying before the interstate commerce commission today in regard to an advance in freight rates on grain from Missouri river points to Chicago by western railroads, contradicted statements made before the commission by railway traffic managers. The railroad men declared that the reason for the advance in rates was on account of a heavy advance in the price of railroad material. This statement was repudiated by representatives of firms that furnish such material, no marked advance in the price of material having been made according to the testimony of the material men.

Columbia Looking for Secession

News received at Colon from Cartagena is to the effect that the authorities there are much concerned as to the integrity of the islands of San Andres and Providence, lying north of Colon, is being known that the sympathy of the inhabitants is more in favor of Panama than of Colombia.

Wm. J. Bryan at New Haven

William J. Bryan went to New Haven, Conn., to attend some legal business in connection with the Bennett estate and to be the chief guest at the banquet of the New Haven democracy in observance of Andrew Jackson day. Mr. Bryan spoke at the banquet his subject being "A Conscience Campaign," and at the Hyperion theatre later when he delivered the first Philo S. Bennett course of public lectures, his topic being "The Value of an Ideal."

TOM PLATT UNEASY

He Defines Outlook for 1904 With Great Earnestness

DANGER IN BEING SATISFIED

Republican Victory Depends Upon Keeping Before the People Incapacity of Democratic Party

A complimentary dinner in honor of Senator Thomas C. Platt was given at the Shoreham hotel, Washington, by the New York republican delegation in congress from the Empire state. The principal speech of the evening was made by Mr. Platt, who spoke in part as follows:

"There is neither factional nor personal disturbance in the New York delegation to embarrass or impede its work. The signs of the approach of a great political year are already numerous, and some of them indicate the return of the democratic party to a sane and dangerous condition. Fortunately we are already assured of courageous, intelligent and popular leadership. The government under President Roosevelt has been strong and wise, but it often happens in politics that a political party which has had a long lease of power is never so much in danger as when nobody has anything in particular to complain of, for it is then that many people vote not with regard to great principles, but to small and trivial events and circumstances. We shall need, therefore, throughout the coming campaign to keep constantly before the people the often proved incapacity of the democratic party to conduct public affairs and the menace to business which proceeds from its very constitution.

"The newspapers relate that Mr. Bryan denies that he is a socialist, but the spirit of socialism is rampant in his party and its influence will appear at the moment when any democratic president sets foot in the White house. It will make little difference who he is or where he comes from. He must yield to the spirit of his party and be its instrument or he must break his party and be the rock on which it splits in pieces."

UFFOCATED TO DEATH

Thomas Crawford of Havelock Dies in Cushman Motor Fire

Charred body of Thomas B. Crawford was dragged by firemen from the burning office of the Cushman Motor company at Twentieth and N streets, Lincoln, circumstances indicating the probability that death had come from suffocation before the flames had harmed the body. Crawford was employed as night watchman by the Cushman Motor company. It was after the fire had been practically extinguished and the smoke had partially cleared away that the dead man's form was distinguished lying on the floor in the middle of the room.

Crawford left a son, Orval Crawford, who lives at 1452 O street, and two daughters, Mrs. W. H. Stahl and Miss Jewell Crawford, who reside at Havelock. Mrs. Stahl is the wife of a Havelock dealer in cigars and confectionery.

Union Pacific Will Buy the Alton

According to reliable authority in Chicago, the Alton will be sold to the Union Pacific. This was the object of the Kuhn-Loeb circular asking for the deposit of stock to facilitate in the sale of the road. The response to the request for the deposit of stock has been so general as to insure the success of the deal.

Judge Fawcett Appointed

The supreme court has appointed Judge Jacob Fawcett of Omaha as a commissioner on the supreme bench caused by the resignation of Judge Barnes, who took the oath of office as a member of the court proper at this sitting of the court. Judge Fawcett's term of office is for an indefinite period, as six of the commissioners are to be retired this spring. Judge Fawcett is one of the leading jurists of Douglas county and Omaha and is a republican of long standing. His appointment meets with the general approval of the Douglas county bar.

Says 110,000 Bales of Straw

A government contract for 110,000 bales of wheat and oat hay, or about 5,400,000 tons has just been let to merchants of San Francisco for a total price of \$100,000, for use in the ... This is said to be the largest single lot of hay ever sold on the Pacific coast.

Knapp Will Get New Trial

Alfred A. Knapp, self-confessed murderer of five persons, now in the penitentiary at Columbus, Ohio, awaiting execution for murder of his wife, was granted a new trial by Judge Swing. The principal ground on which the error in allowing Knapp's written confession of five murders to be read to the jury.

Montreal Royal Club Burned

Fire gutted the Mount Royal club, the most exclusive club of Montreal, Can. One fireman was killed by falling timbers and another was badly injured. A young lady who acted as stenographer to the secretary, was also injured. The loss is about \$100,000. Colonel Lardet, the secretary of the club, sustained injuries from which he died later. Miss Oman, the bookkeeper, had her leg broken and was injured internally.

IS EAGER TO QUIT KANSAS

C. F. Dewey Has Commissioned the Selling of the Big Ranch

All the land agents in northwestern Kansas have been commissioned by C. F. Dewey, the Chicago millionaire who owns Oak ranch in Rawlins, Cheyenne and Sherman counties, to sell his property. This marks the end of the bitter range war which has been waged between the settlers and the cattlemen of the northwestern part of the state. It was generally believed that the Deweys would continue the war after the case against Chauncey Dewey, the son of the owner of the property, for the alleged murder of three members of the Berry family last June, should be settled by the courts.

The ranch is one of the largest in the state. It is believed that the Deweys can dispose of their holdings at a profit, as the greater part of the land was purchased at a time when the settlers were despondent over poor crops.

The Deweys have said nothing about their plans for the future, but it is understood that they will not leave the state and will continue in the cattle business.

COLDEST EVER IN NEW YORK

Below Zero in New York City and 35 Along Hudson River

When the government thermometer reached four below zero in New York, all local local January cold records since 1875, when six below was recorded, were beaten. Thermometers in various outlying parts of the city went several degrees lower and in the suburbs from 8 to 12 below zero were reported. At 9 o'clock the official thermometer had gone up to 2 below zero and the absence of wind was some relief.

At Fishkill at 5 o'clock the thermometer register 36 degrees below zero. Along the Newburg bay section of the Hudson river it registered variously from 2 to 36 degrees below.

Twenty-five degrees below zero, the lowest temperature in twenty-eight years, was recorded at Albany.

In exposed places in Troy and its suburbs, it was 32 degrees below and at other points 22 below, the coldest in the history of the city and vicinity.

TWO PER CENT LESS FAIL

This is the Smallest Number Recorded for Thirteen Years

There were 9,768 failures reported to Bradstreet in the calendar year 1903, with liabilities of \$154,277,093 and assets of \$81,060,475. This marked a decrease in number of just 2 per cent from 1902 and of 8 per cent from 1901. With the exception of 1899, the increase over which was 1.4 per cent, the year 1903 shows the smallest number of failure casualties reported since 1887. Liabilities, however, owing primarily to the increase in suspensions of financial institutions, but also because of the considerable number of heavy manufacturing concerns suspending, were larger by 45 per cent than those of 1902, and the heaviest in fact, since 1897.

There were 966 failures, involving \$8,328,262 of liabilities and \$3,662,197 of assets, in the Dominion of Canada in 1903, a decrease of 12 per cent in number on a practically identical total of liabilities.

Harriman Will Succeed Burt

It was semi-officially stated in Omaha that E. H. Harriman will become president of the Union Pacific railroad to succeed Horace G. Burt, whose resignation was recently announced. A general manager will be named who will be the actual head of the affairs of the road, with headquarters in Omaha. The road will be operated by a method similar to that in vogue on the Southern Pacific road. Mr. Harriman's incumbency, it is stated, will be one year, at the end of which period his permanent successor, if any, will be named.

President Burt, when asked if it were true that Mr. Harriman would succeed him as president of the Union Pacific system, said he had no official information to that effect, nor had he been informed of any intended action of the board of directors. Another official at the Union Pacific headquarters, however, expressed the belief that Mr. Harriman would in the future direct the affairs of the road, and that the active head would be a vice-president or general manager.

Suddenly Stricken Blind

Availle seated at the dinner table, B. A. Ward, a well known York citizen, suddenly started his family by the announcement that he had become blind. Medical attention was immediately given by Mr. Ward, but it has not yet been ascertained whether or not the defect of the eyes is of a permanent nature. Mr. Ward had no preliminary warning of anything of this kind, as his eyes have never caused him trouble before. Mr. Ward is foreman of the Nebraska Newspaper Union of that city. A short time ago, Carl Zimmerer, another York citizen, was also deprived of the use of his eyes.

No Use for Arbitration

The state board of arbitration of Illinois called on the Bloomington street car company and the employees in an effort to settle the strike. The services of the board were refused by the company. A West Washington street car was attacked and the windows broken. No arrests were made.

Stratton's Mine Not Sailed

In the case of the Stratton-Independence Mining company of London against the executors of the estate of the late Winfield S. Stratton, the Cripple Creek millionaire, claiming six million dollars damages for the alleged "salting" of the Independence mine before its sale to the English company, Judge Riner, in the United States court at Denver, decided for the defendants. Attorneys for plaintiffs will present a bill of exceptions.

A luxury is something that only a lucky man can afford.