

**WASHINGTON NOTES**

**Beveridge and Dietrich, Lightweights—Colombian Treaty—Department of Commerce—Philippine Coinage**

Washington, D. C., Jan. 26, 1903.—(Special Correspondence.)—Senator Beveridge of Indiana, who disputes with Senator Dietrich of Nebraska the distinction of being the intellectual lightweight of the upper house of congress, is at the head of the coterie of republican leaders who, by dint of filibustering and long-winded discussion, still continue to prevent a vote on the omnibus statehood bill and thereby deprive New Mexico, Arizona and Oklahoma of the rights they deserve. On a test vote last Tuesday concerning the question of going into executive session to consider the Cuban treaty, the friends of statehood had 10 majority. Beveridge and his followers are in a contemptuous position before the country and have repudiated the platform pledges of their party, yet this "wasp of the Wabash" is so enamored of the lime-light that there is danger he may continue his tactics and thereby prevent a vote on the bill this session.

The treaty between the United States and the government of Colombia, which was signed Friday by Secretary Hay and Dr. Herran as the representatives of the two companies, was transmitted to the senate by the president and by the senate referred to the committee on foreign relations.

The treaty was read in executive session, but the injunction of secrecy was not removed.

By the terms of the treaty the United States agrees to make a cash payment of \$10,000,000 in gold to the Colombian government and after the expiration of nine years to pay a rental of \$250,000 per year.

The lease of the strip of land to be used for the canal and for canal purposes is practically made perpetual, the provision on this point being that the first lease shall be for 100 years and renewable thereafter in terms of 100 years at the pleasure of the United States.

The strip is to be ten kilometers, or about six miles, in width, and over this territory the United States is given police and sanitary jurisdiction, although it is explicitly specified that Colombia does not surrender sovereignty over it.

The United States is to have the privilege of free importation of vessels and material to be used in the construction of the canal.

The matter of judicial control is settled by a scheme of joint action, although it especially is assured that no citizen of the United States will be tried by any other than his own courts.

Control of the waters of the ports of Colon and Panama is vested in the United States just as far as may be necessary for the complete operation of the canal, and it is assured that our extra territorial jurisdiction will be unquestioned as to waters and streams pertaining to the canal. All port dues on vessels passing the canal are to go to the United States by way of offset for the annuity payments. The grant is made exclusive to the United States, and no taxes or rentals are to be charged in addition to the gross sums of \$10,000,000 cash and \$250,000 annuity.

Several things have conspired to bring about delay in the negotiations that have now been completed in the isthmian canal matter and await only senatorial approval to become effective. In the first place, the railroads of the country, fearful of losing their transportation monopoly, have for 20 years opposed all canal legislation. The cheaper rates of transportation by water are likely to prove disastrous competition, and the railway managers have had the ear of congress always, and at times, even the president. Roosevelt himself is charged with having listened to the siren song of the trans-continental lines, so powerful in politics and so unscrupulous in method. Later, the price received by Colombia for the concession is admittedly larger than was expected. While the Nicaraguan route was doubtless the popular choice, the selection of a route and the early commencement of the work will be welcome news to the people in general.

The house has passed the substitute for the senate bill creating a department of commerce and labor. Some democratic opposition was evinced thereto, for the reason as charged that labor was discriminated against in favor of capitalistic interests. The republican majority voted them down, however. Provision for a bureau of insurance was stricken out of the bill, and a clause inserted authorizing the president to transfer the interstate commerce commission to the new department. The head of the new department will be a secretary

and have a seat in the president's cabinet.

The director of the mint estimates the production of gold in the United States in 1902 at \$80,853,070, an increase over 1901 of \$2,186,370. He estimates the production of silver at \$31,040,025, an increase of \$3,352,084.

The Sultan of Sulu has fallen a victim of cholera, no doubt superinduced by the high living he has enjoyed for several years at the expense of this government. The information comes in a report to the war department. The sultan is he who has enjoyed a \$5,000 per year salary, and each of his chiefs a liberal stipend since 1898 by treaty made with General Bates of the United States army, now stationed at Omaha.

The sultan had 300 wives and any number of "lady friends," besides being a slaveholder, and this fact occasioned much comment over the country, in view of the premium placed upon it by the administration in the form of a salary. The officials of the war department have not yet indicated whose name will be substituted for that of the deceased sultan on the pay rolls of the United States.

The Philippine tariff bill, which recently passed the house, carried a uniform reduction of the tariff on Philippine goods coming into this country, making the rate only 25 per cent of the Dingley schedule.

The senate Philippine committee has amended the bill so as to provide for duty free on all Philippine products except sugar, tobacco, and the tariff on these two commodities has been fixed at 50 per cent of the Dingley rate. This change was made in deference to the demands of the sugar and tobacco trusts, whose representatives always receive a ready and successful hearing from the republican leaders.

The clique of republican house leaders received a decided rebuke again, Thursday, when the Philippine coinage bill reported by the committee was rejected, and the minority substitute adopted. Twenty-eight republicans joined with the united minority to accomplish this end. The committee reported a bill to establish the gold standard in the islands and to authorize the coinage of silver pesos of 416 grains, to be made legal tender at the rate of two pesos for one gold dollar. This was defeated, and the substitute was passed, 146 to 128, which provides that the lawful money of the United States shall be legal tender in the Philippines, and declares the coinage laws of the United States to be in full force there. It provides for the redemption of the Mexican and Spanish silver, not including any Mexican pesos imported into the islands after March 15, 1903, at their bullion value as declared from time to time by the Philippine commission, the silver coin authorized by the Philippine government act to be redeemed at the rate of two pesos for \$1 of United States currency. After six months no coin except that of the United States shall be legal tender, with the following proviso:

"That all debts, except those otherwise provided for in the contract, owing on the date when this act shall take effect or contracted within six months thereafter shall be payable in the silver coins now in circulation in the Philippine islands, or in the lawful money of the United States at the rate of exchange prescribed at the time by the Philippine commission."

The bill provides that the pesos coined under the Philippine government act and the Mexican and Spanish coin when redeemed or received for public dues on the above basis shall be coined in United States coin at the mint authorized to be established in Manila.

In the course of the debate Mr. Hill, of Connecticut, made the important statement in connection with what he said Wednesday, that Secretary Shaw had informed him yesterday morning that a Mexican gentleman was now in this city in the interest of an arrangement by which Mexico could adopt a currency system uniform and interchangeable with that of the United States.

It is believed that this action of the house will defeat all Philippine currency legislation for this session, as the leaders of the senate look upon the bill as it now stands with disfavor.

Governor Taft has been very urgent in his demands for a currency law, and republican leaders are blaming Secretary Shaw, who is credited with favoring the substitute measure adopted.

On Friday the house passed a bill giving Alaska a delegate in congress with all powers and privileges accorded a delegate from any of the territories.

Popular demand for some sort of anti-trust legislation has stirred the

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house committee to favorably report a bill, and discussion thereof will probably be taken up next week. It is a sort of mongrel measure, very mild in its provisions, containing nothing that will in the slightest degree affect the operations of the trusts, but aimed at lulling the people to repose and estopping agitation.

The senate (fearing some sort of drastic anti-trust legislation by the house, because of its supposed responsiveness to the will of the people) proposes to take the matter into its own hands. To this end, Senator Elkins, on behalf of the committee on interstate commerce, has introduced a bill, to be offered as an amendment to the department of commerce bill just passed by the house. Elkins' bill provides:

Anything done or omitted to be done by a corporation common carrier subject to the acts to regulate commerce even though done by an agent, shall be held to be a misdemeanor.

Willful failure to file rates by common carrier or to observe such rates to the letter shall constitute a misdemeanor.

It shall be unlawful to grant rebates or other favors in the making of rates that will result in discrimination in favor of one shipper or another. Heavy penalty provided.

All parties interested in rate benefits to be included in any suit filed. Courts are required to summarily inquire into such complaints as may be made.

Power given to compel attendance of witnesses and production of books.

Duties of United States district attorneys clearly defined.

The aggressive attitude assumed by Germany in the continued bombardment of Venezuelan ports and the murder of non-combatants has stirred up Washington official life and a popular demand is likely to be made that the authorities call Germany to account. When the offer to submit the matter to arbitration was accepted by Germany and Great Britain, at the behest of the United States, it was understood that only peaceful measures would be pursued against Venezuela. Germany, however, is practically at war with the little republic. It is known that the war lord of Europe has long cast covetous eyes upon South American soil, with consequent resentment at the good offices exercised by an observance of the Monroe doctrine to prevent this aggression. Now that the isthmian canal is to be built, Germany desires a naval station and coaling place near by to provide for any emergencies that might arise, and the idea is gaining ground that Venezuela is desired at this seat of war supplies.

The conviction is growing that the United States may yet regret the presence in the state department of so pronounced an anglo-maniac as John Hay, and the absence of a Blaine or

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Congressman Shallenberger is still manifesting his interest in irrigation matters. By an appeal to the authorities charged with governing the new government-controlled irrigation enterprises, he has secured a promise to begin work as early as practicable on artesian wells and like experiments in western Nebraska.

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