



1—Remarkable display of Indian handicraft now exhibited in the Department of the Interior in Washington. 2—Boy scouts celebrating Washington's birthday at Mount Vernon. 3—Recent picture of Queen Wilhelmina of Holland and the prince consort, who have just celebrated their silver wedding anniversary at the royal castle of Leo.

NEWS REVIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS

New Tax Bill, as Fixed by Conferees, Now Is Law—Wet and Dry Conflict.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

APPROVED by the house and senate and signed by President Coolidge, the "revenue act of 1926" as fixed up by the conference committee is now a law. The house accepted the conference report by a vote of 354 to 28. The negative votes represented the opposition of the radicals to reductions of high surtaxes and estate taxes and the protest of another group that wished the estate tax completely repealed.

Republicans recorded in the negative were Representatives Beck, Browne, Lampert, Nelson, Peavey, Schafer, Schneider and Voigt of Wisconsin, Ramsey (Iowa), Anthony and Hoch (Kan.), Johnson, Christopherson and Williamson (S. D.), Simmons (Neb.), and Sinclair (N. D.).

Democrats were Representatives Drane, Green and Sears (Fla.), Allgood and Oliver (Ala.), Howard and Morehead (Neb.), and Gilbert (Ky.).

Others voting in the negative were Representatives Carrs, Kvale and Welford (Farmer-Labor, Minn.), and La Guardia (Socialist, N. Y.).

Representative McDuffie (Dem., Ala.), was recorded as present.

Ten senators voted against the bill, with 61 recorded in favor of it. The negative votes were cast by Senators Frazier and Nye (Rep., N. D.), Norbeck (Rep., S. D.), La Follette (Rep., Wis.) and Howell (Rep., Neb.), Walsh and Wheeler (Dem., Mont.), Blease (Dem., S. C.), and Trammell (Dem., Fla.), and Shipstead (Farmer-Labor, Minn.).

With the exception of Senator Trammell, who registered his protest against the continuance of the estate tax, the opposition was based chiefly upon reductions in high surtaxes and estate tax rates, repeal of publicity and other features which the more radical senators have attacked.

By the new law the government's income is reduced by about \$387,000,000 in 1926 and \$343,000,000 in 1927. Though the cut greatly exceeds that recommended by the treasury, Secretary Mellon is not worried for he believes that if business continues good the revenues will be sufficient. The President, too, is fairly well satisfied with the measure but counts on congress to be economical in appropriations for new expenditures.

An important feature of the new law is the creation of a permanent joint congressional committee of ten whose duty is to investigate the operation and effects of the present tax system, to investigate the administration of taxes by the bureau of internal revenue, to investigate measures and methods for the simplification of such taxes, to make a definite report to the senate and house embodying recommendations not later than December 31, 1927, and to report otherwise to the finance and ways and means committees and to the senate and house from time to time as investigations are made or recommendations decided upon.

THOUGH trained observers assert there is not the slightest chance for modification of the Volstead act at this session of congress, the wets are carrying on their campaign vigorously. Their "face the facts" conference in Washington was attended by more than 500 men and women from all parts of the country and was marked by Senator Edge's plea for a nation-wide referendum on proposals to legalize beer and light wines and to tighten the law against distilled spirits. In the house of representatives wet and dry members are advocating, respectively, examination of the books and activities of the Anti-Saloon league and the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment. William H. Stayton, executive head of the association, has announced that the organization is willing to have its books looked into if the league is ready to reveal its records, and if the

World League Against Alcoholism, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the board of temperance, prohibition and public morals of the Methodist Episcopal church, the Committee of One Thousand of New York, and the Flying Squadron of Indianapolis are willing to follow suit.

The house alcoholic liquor traffic committee, having failed to receive from the rules committee a recommendation that it be given authority to inquire into prohibition, plans to make the investigation on its own account.

SENATOR WHEELER of Montana has introduced a resolution calling for an investigation of the alleged activities of the Hungarian minister to the United States to bring about the recent exclusion of the Countess Karolyi from the country by the State department. The resolution asserts that the charge has been made that the countess' exclusion resulted from the "forging of certain documents" which tended to connect her with undesirable political organizations with which the United States was not on friendly terms. It charges that the Hungarian minister to the United States paid a private detective agency \$20,000 for inaccurate and false reports obtained through the "boundling" of the Count and Countess Karolyi while on a visit in this country prior to the trip on which she was excluded.

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE lets it be known that he is opposed to the development of military aviation on the scale advocated by Col. William Mitchell and his followers because in his opinion it would entail what he regards as an enormous and unjustified expense and also would foster the same spirit of militarism in this country as moved Germany to embark in the World war. Furthermore, he thinks it would cause a renewal of the old game of armament competition between nations. The President urges the passage of the bills introduced which carry into effect the recommendations of the Morrow aircraft commission.

The White House spokesman says Mr. Coolidge is extremely gratified by the performance of this congress up to date. He does not hesitate to pronounce it a record breaker in prompt disposition of the tax bill, the world court resolution, appropriation bills and other bills, and is not surprised that the leaders now expect to clean up work and adjourn the session by June 1. He regards it entirely feasible to dispose of agricultural and railroad labor bills, Muscle Shoals, war debt settlements, remaining appropriation bills, and the aircraft program without prolonging the session beyond that date.

THERE is another fight on between the President and the recalcitrant group in the senate, involving several questions. These are the ratification of the Italian war debt settlement, approved by the house; the resolution aiming at prosecution of Secretary Mellon's Aluminum Company of America, supported by most of the Democrats and by the radical Republicans; confirmation of the appointment of Thomas F. Woodlock to be a member of the interstate commerce commission, opposed by those who call him a "Coolidge Democrat," a reactionary and a "Morgan man"; and confirmation of the appointment of Wallace McCamant of Oregon to a federal judgeship. It is predicted that the President will win in the two first mentioned matters and probably lose in the last two.

MEXICO has replied to our government's protest against its new mineral and oil laws, reaffirming its position that these laws are not retroactive and confiscatory. According to reliable information, Secretary of State Kellogg has virtually warned the Mexican government that American recognition of the government of President Calles will be withdrawn, Ambassador Sheffield called home, and diplomatic relations broken off if Mexico persists in giving a retroactive interpretation to the new laws. Such retroactive construction would have the effect of confiscating our State department contents, not less than half of the \$1,000,000,000 of American investments in Mexico.

Great Britain also filed a protest

against the laws not long ago, and it is likely that if Washington withdraws recognition of the Calles government, the British will follow suit. English investments in Mexico amount to about \$800,000,000.

CHICAGO'S determined effort to rid the city of the Sicilian gun men is being aided by the federal immigration authorities and is bearing fruit. The police gathered in large numbers of the Italians and sorted out more than a score who could not show their right to be in the country and will be deported. Dozens of others have fled to other localities, where they are being rounded up. The imported Sicilians have been especially active in the murderous wars carried on by the rum runners, hi-jackers and illicit distillers and they are held responsible for numerous killings. The police raids were brought on by a recent disclosure in court that American-born citizens are afraid to serve on juries where Sicilians are being tried for crimes. The Chicago authorities and the supervisors of immigration declare they are prepared to go the limit and Washington will not be slow to issue the deportation warrants.

POPE PIUS XI has opened the way for negotiations between the Vatican and the Fascist government of Italy which may result in the settlement of the whole Roman question and bring about an accord between the Holy See and the Italian state. In a letter to Cardinal Gasparri the pope said he would not recognize the forthcoming church reform laws, soon to be passed by the Italian parliament, unless an official accord was reached with the Holy See. The pope added that no such accord can be reached while he is kept a "prisoner in the Vatican" by the "iniquitous conditions" imposed on the pontiff when the Italians occupied Rome in 1870 and destroyed the temporal powers of the pope.

DIPLOMATS of Europe are looking forward to a stormy session when the League of Nations council meets March 8 for the purpose of admitting Germany. Berlin has asked that Briand of France, Chamberlain of Great Britain and Stresemann of Germany hold a preliminary meeting March 7 to try to come to an understanding on the question of enlarging the council by taking in Poland, Spain and Brazil or any one of them. The Germans do not object to giving Spain a permanent seat in the council but will not stand for the admission of Poland. Chamberlain's role of peace-maker is difficult. He professes to believe the permanent council should be enlarged, but the British cabinet is said to be flatly opposed to such action at this time, holding that it would be a breach of faith to Germany and a betrayal of the Locarno pacts.

CROWN PRINCE CAROL of Rumania seems to have won his fight against Premier Bratianu and the latter's brother-in-law, Prince Babu Stribe, favorite of the queen, and his early return to Bucharest is expected. Bratianu's power is broken and he has tendered his resignation, while Prince Babu has been forced out of public affairs entirely. Carol arrived in Paris last week, accompanied by Magda Lupescu, and the official courtesies accorded him were significant. He probably will soon retract his renunciation of the throne, go home and become regent for his aged and sick father, King Ferdinand.

THOUGH one hesitates to help along the publicity campaign of the countess of Cathcart, it seems necessary to record that, having been allowed ten days of liberty in New York on her personal bond, she is now likely to be returned to Ellis Island and thereafter deported to England unless she wins in the habeas corpus proceedings started by her attorneys. The department of labor has refused a rehearing of the case, holding that it is now within the federal courts. The department would welcome a court interpretation of the "moral turpitude" provision of the immigration law. The defense is ready to show the offense of the countess is not a crime in South Africa, where she and the earl of Craven spent a year after their elopement.

SEA OTTER-EXTINCT?

Romance of America's Most Valuable Fur Animal

By JOHN DICKINSON SHERMAN

IS THE sea otter extinct? Has this most valuable of all American fur-bearing animals gone the way of the great auk and the passenger pigeon? The fate of the sea otter will not be officially known for a year or more. In 1927 there will presumably be a renewal in some form of the agreement for the protection of the fur seal which has been in existence since 1912 among the United States, Great Britain, Japan and Russia. The negotiations will presumably show whether or not the sea otter is extinct. If it is not extinct, an extraordinary international effort may be made to bring it back.

Why should it particularly concern the people of the richest and most powerful nation of earth whether or not it is extinct the sea otter—an animal of which nine out of ten have probably never heard?

Well, all good Americans should have a deep and abiding interest in the history of their country. And the history of the United States can no more be written without the sea otter than without the beaver.

It was the beaver, as everyone knows, that led to the exploration of the continent. It was the trapper and fur trader in pursuit of beaver skins who mapped the country and blazed the trails for the settler's covered wagon, and for the railroad and for the march of the American people across the continent. It narrowly escaped extinction, but is now safe in the national parks.

The extinction of the sea otter now seems to be an open question. The animal has apparently vanished from the eye of the white man. Yet natives at infrequent intervals report seeing it. And occasionally a pelt is marketed by poachers.

On the other hand, the sea otter is neither polygamous nor gregarious. So there are no rookeries as in the case of the fur seal. Moreover the sea otter is an aquatic animal and seldom visits the land except in the heavy storms of winter. In the spring and summer it goes out to sea for a hundred miles or so. It is here that the single cub is born, the mother usually resorting to a mass of floating kelp. So the sea otter is usually found in families, rather than in herds.

Now, here is why the history of the United States cannot be written without the sea otter:

Peter the Great of Russia, on his death-bed in 1725, issued a decree that Vitus Behring, a Dane in his employ, should cross Siberia to Kamchatka, build ships and search for the mainland supposed to lie east of Japan. The result was that in 1742 Behring's men returned from Alaska with furs of the sea otter, which they had used for coats and bedding, and found a ready market at \$200 a pelt. Thenceforth the sea otter grounds of the North Pacific were as important to

Russia as were the gold mines of Mexico and Peru to Spain. Within five years after 1742 there were 77 profit-sharing companies at work catching sea otter.

Out of this came directly the Russian occupation of the Northwest Coast as far south as San Francisco; the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 that checked Russia's vision of an American Pacific empire; the acquisition of the "Oregon Territory" and the purchase from Russia by the United States of Alaska in 1867 for \$7,000,000.

An English exploring expedition headed by Capt. James Cook sailed into Nootka Sound in 1778. The sailors bought sea otter pelts for trinkets and sold them for \$100 each in Canton—as the Chinese had no heat in their houses and knew nothing of woolen cloth. New England learned of this about 1785. Forthwith New England merchants established a flourishing and increasing triangular trade: New England notions to the Pacific Northwest; furs to Canton; teas and silks to New England.

New Englanders enjoyed a practical monopoly of this triangular trade. The Russians were barred from Chinese ports. The East India company had the exclusive right in England to trade with China, but could not send its vessels to the Pacific Northwest for furs. The South Sea company could get furs, but could not take them to China. So the Americans and Russians worked together, ignoring the Spaniard in the Californias.

Out of this came the Mexican War, the annexation of California, the gold rush of 1849, the transcontinental railroad of 1869 and the hastening of the American march across the continent.

The original habitat of the sea otter extended from Mexico to the Aleutian Islands. It was found in largest numbers off the coasts of Upper and Lower California and on the coast islands, including those of the Santa Barbara channel. San Francisco bay was also a favorite haunt.

After commercialized hunting began the white man took fleets of bidarkas (small skin canoes) on sailing ships to the hunting grounds, the natives living on the ship for months at a time. Another plan was to leave small colonies of native hunters from Alaska all along the coast.

So fast and furious was the pursuit of the sea otter and so indiscriminate the slaughter—its pelt is prime the year round—that the trade diminished rapidly after 1820. Later expeditions took only hundreds of skins where thousands had been the catch. In 1895 a catch of fifty pelts was the exception.

How many skins were marketed in

Year	Skins	Year	Skins
1864-65	31,800	1868-69	7,944
1865-66	37,445	1869-70	11,050
1866-67	34,281	1870-71	9,200
1867-68	36,647	1871-72	11,592

China is a matter of estimate. William Sturgis, one of the most successful of the New England traders, estimated the number at approximately 18,000 for the year 1801. For the eight years between 1804 and 1812 these figures are given:

The profits in the sea otter fur trade with China were enormous, though fluctuating greatly. Sometimes competition between the traders raised the price demanded by the Indians to high figures. Sometimes the Chinese market became glutted.

The average price for sea otter skins at Canton was somewhere around \$40. In 1785 prime skins brought \$120 each; in 1802, the price was \$20; three years later sales were easy at \$50. The record price for a pelt is said to be \$2,500, place of sale unknown.

Some astonishing stories of the early days are told—and they are apparently authentic. William Sturgis (previously mentioned) on one voyage collected 6,000 skins; he purchased in one half-day 500 skins with goods worth a dollar and a half in Boston. The same skins sold for \$40 each in the Canton market. Richard Cleveland, like Sturgis a well-known New England trader, bought 300 skins from the Norfolk Sound Indians for two yards of cotton cloth each; he sold them in Canton for \$23 each.

The prize story—and it is a pity that names are lacking—tells how a most fortunate trader secured \$8,000 worth of sea otter skins for a rusty steel chisel!

The sea otter, as seen from the accompanying reproduction of a painting by R. Bruce Horsfall in Nature Magazine, has a body suggesting that of the common seal. The animal is from three to four feet long, including a nine-inch tail, and weighs from 80 to 110 pounds. The flat, ear-like hind feet, suggest the flappers of the seal; the forefeet are very small. There is little or no neck and the head is blunt. It feeds on mussels, crustaceans and possibly on tender kelp growths.

The fur is generally of a deep liver-brown color, frosted with a scanty growth of long, silver-tipped stiffer hairs, and underlain with a beautiful soft woolly fur which gives the pelt its value. The skin of a mature animal is about five feet long and more than two feet wide. The fur is especially adaptable to a gilt or golden dye. In the old days it was thus colored by the Russians for use in court garments.

Apparently not, according to documentary evidence. Practically all the advertising I have seen shows very few persons but a child or two here and there and any number of large and husky ladies dressed in nothing much. I have reached the conclusion that when the latter are not lolling or strolling on the beach they probably are exercising their muscles by cultivating the soil or otherwise busy themselves with tasks that would be done by the men, if there were any there.—Kansas City Star.

THE ADAMLESS EDEN
 "As there are few or no men in Florida—" began J. Fuller Gloom. "No men in Florida?" we astoundedly echoed.

JAPANESE CLOTHING
 "The ordinary Japanese costume," says E. W. Clement in "A Handbook of Modern Japan," "may be said to consist of a shirt, a loose silk gown fastened at the waist with a silk sash, short socks with separate places for the big toes and either straw sandals or wooden clogs. For ceremonial occasions, a divided skirt and a silk hat adorned with the family crest are used; these are called respectively

bakama and haori. In winter two or three padded gowns are added, and in all seasons many persons go barefooted, barelegged and bareheaded. The female garb does not differ greatly from the male costume except that the sash is larger and richer and the gown is made of lighter fabrics."

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