

Review of the Second Session of 62d Congress

Results Not Imposing, Though Some of Them Are Important. More Actual Working Time Put In Than Any Other Session.

By JAMES A. EDGERTON.

SPEAKER CHAMP CLARK is authority for the statement that the second session of the Sixty-second congress put in more actual working time than any session in history. Anyway, it lasted long enough. That motion is passed unanimously. Any session that starts in December and keeps it up till dog days should be canned. It gets on the nation's nerves. Moreover, when we are in the middle of a presidential campaign we cannot be bothered by a congressional side show. Things become warm enough without a hot air mill working overtime.

The concrete results of all this labor are not imposing, although some of them are important. Several tariff bills were successful in the house, but came into violent collision with a large body in the White House. Two of them passed both houses, but were vetoed, which discouraged the senate from enacting any more. The lower house succeeded in passing the two over the president's veto, but the senate balked. So died the hope of tariff revision in this congress. The tariff board was killed by a rider on an appropriation bill. The senate tried to bury the corpse of Canadian reciprocity that "Our Lady of the Snows" had done to death, but the house evidently thought that the cadaver might be resurrected and refused to let the funeral take place.

The session just closed did a large business as a canning factory, having tied the little tin emblems of its regard to the Russian treaty, to Senator Lorimer and to the tariff board, as already set forth. Efforts were also made to can General Leonard Wood and the commerce court, but the president interposed.

What Was Done.

The really important measures enacted into law were as follows:

The Panama canal bill, exempting American coastwise vessels from paying tolls and barring from the big ditch ships owned by railroads or trusts. This has made John Bull and the transcontinental railroads unhappy, likewise several New York newspapers.

An experimental parcels post, admitting packages to the weight of eleven pounds and charging for them by the zone system. The express companies are not giving three cheers, but Uncle Sam does not seem to notice their lack of enthusiasm and is going right ahead preparing to carry merchandise on and after the 1st of January.

A constitutional amendment providing for the popular election of United States senators passed both houses of congress by the requisite two-thirds vote and now goes to the state legislatures, three-fourths of which must ratify before the amendment is adopted. This might have been included among the canned goods, as it will undoubtedly tie the little cylindrical emblems to the cottails of several senators.

A children's bureau was created whose duty it will be to gather statistics as to child labor, care of defectives, children's diseases, education and other matters relating to child life.

An amendment to the campaign publicity law was enacted providing for publicity in congressional elections before as well as after election. A bill to extend the act's provisions to presidential elections passed one house and will be taken up in the short session.

The eight hour day was established for all government work.

Fur sealing on the Pribilof Islands was prohibited for five years.

The Sherwood dollar a day pension bill was passed in a modified form.

Wireless Regulations.

Bills regulating wireless telegraphy and providing that all vessels carrying more than fifty passengers should have two operators were enacted into law.

A form of civil government was provided for the territory of Alaska.

Army transports were required to have sufficient lifeboats to carry all those aboard.

The people of China were congratulated on the establishment of a republic.

A federal employees' compensation act was passed, but an attempt to establish a seven year tenure for government clerks in Washington failed.

Provision was made for seven year enlistments in the army, four years in active service and three years in a newly created army reserve.

A three year homestead act was passed to encourage settlement of the west, and relief was afforded homestead entry men on reclamation lands.

A prohibitive tax was placed on the manufacture of white phosphorous matches.

The advertisement and sale of patent medicines was restricted.

Citizenship was conferred on certain natives of the Philippines.

Moving picture films depicting prize-fights were prohibited.

Provision was made for a standard barrel for apples.

An industrial commission was created.

One new battleship and various minor naval vessels were authorized.

er of the houses and which may be pressed through at the next session were that creating a department of labor and putting a labor man into the cabinet; one applying the excise tax to individuals, making it practically an income tax; one extending agricultural education to the universities, and one giving the right of trial by jury in certain cases of contempt of court.

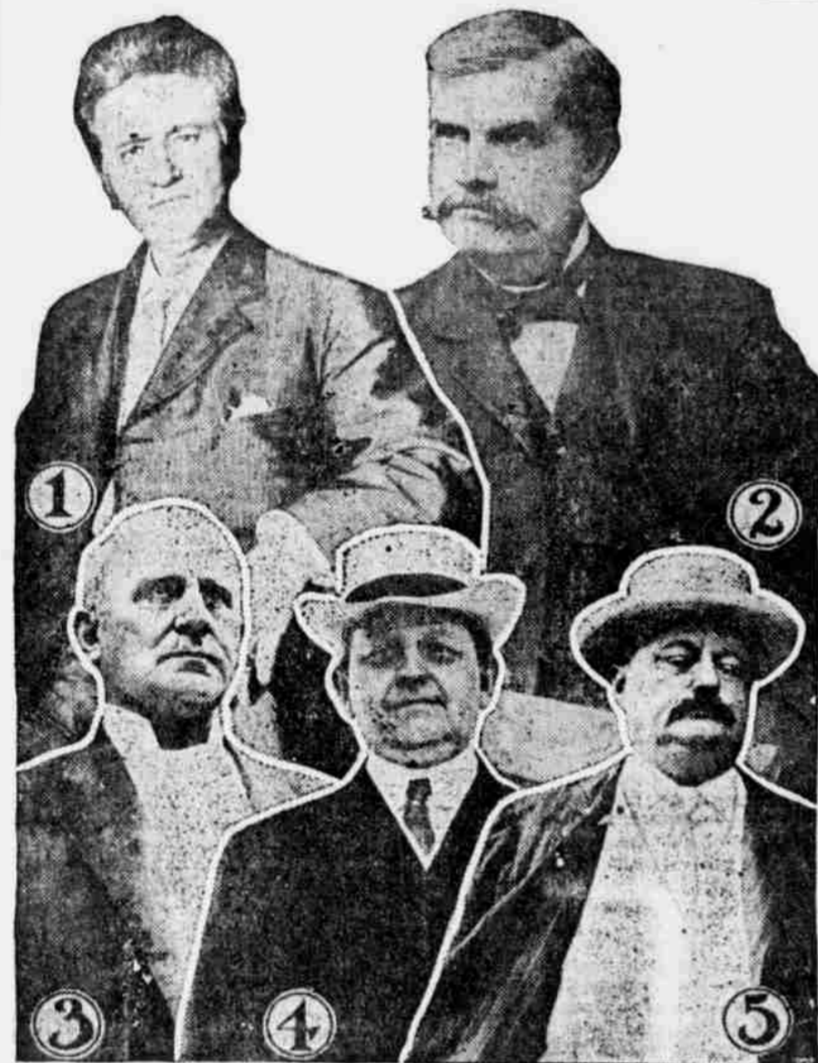
If I have overlooked anything the reader is at perfect liberty to hunt it out of the Congressional Record. I cannot turn all of this article into a catalogue. Sufficient has been mentioned, however, to show that congress has not spent all of its time in emitting words.

Nevertheless its output of language has been something prodigious. Somebody of a statistical turn of mind has figured out that the invaluable and never read Congressional Record for this last session contains 18,000,000 words—count 'em, 18,000,000—thus putting it all over the record of any other session in the history of this somewhat

rose started, and now everybody is doing it. La Follette got into the game and so amended the resolution authorizing the inquiry that nearly anything relating to presidential nominations or elections since 1900 can be investigated, especially if they appertain to Colonel Roosevelt. But, there, I came very near talking politics, a thing against which I have registered a solemn oath.

Taking it by and large it was some session. Chairman Fitzgerald of the house appropriations committee says it did not spend as much money as the corresponding session of the Sixty-first congress, and old Uncle Joe Cannon, who was once upon a time chairman of the same committee, says it did. There you are. Take your choice. Anyway it spent something like \$1,000,000,000. I have not the remotest idea how much money that is, yet I rattled it off as though I knew all about it. I only have heard repeatedly that this is "a billion dollar country," which causes me to wonder whether I ought to give three cheers or swear at the taxes. It's a billion dollar country when the Republicans are in power and a billion dollar country when the Democrats are in power, so it must be that we are stuck at that figure for keeps. Well, we have a bigger crop than ever this year, so perhaps the farmers, mill hands and other common folk can make money as fast as the statesmen spend it, so we can maybe manage to worry along.

Extending the Monroe Doctrine. This session gave a new and wider interpretation to the Monroe doctrine. As a result of the Magdalena bay incident, in which a certain Japanese company is reported to have gained fishing rights along the west coast of Mexico,



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1, SENATOR LA FOLLETTE; 2, SENATOR WILLIAMS; 3, SPEAKER CLARK; 4, REPRESENTATIVE UNDERWOOD; 5, SENATOR PENROSE.

loquacious country. No wonder the members wanted to adjourn. Of course all these words were never really spoken. They were placed in the Record under "leave to print." But if even a major fraction of that ocean of talk went over the congressional dam since last December, it is a wonder that the whole United States is not swamped in the verbal overflow.

We must not overlook the investigations. These extended all the way from Lorimer to the steel trust, incidentally taking in the sugar trust, the beef trust, the money trust, the Titanic disaster, the various departments of the government and presidential campaign funds since 1900. The committee investigating the steel trust made its report, or, rather its reports, for several of the minority members went it alone. This inquiry has borne fruit in a government case against the Steel corporation. The sugar trust committee recommended a reduction of the sugar tariff. The money trust inquiry stirred up the Brazilian coffee scandal and has other things yet in store, there now being an effort to get access to the books of the national banks. The beef trust probe has only started, but may be depended on to turn up something later. Meanwhile the price of meat continues to rise. The investigation of the departments at Washington turned up a few good newspaper stories, especially in the bureau of chemistry, but now that Wiley is out the bureau of chemistry interests us no more.

The Titanic Inquiry.

Then there was Senator William Alden Smith's personally conducted probe into the sinking of the Titanic that caused merriment in England, established that an iceberg consists of rock, dirt and likewise of ice and really found out more than the more dignified and ponderous inquiry in England. It has been quite a year for investigations, and the end is not yet. The latest probe uncovered a powder magazine, and there have been fireworks ever since. This was the celebrated and sizzling inquiry into campaign funds since the year 1. Pen-

Senator Lodge introduced a resolution, which was adopted, declaring this government's opposition to the obtaining by other governments of strategic harbors or bases of operation for military use in the western hemisphere.

In the early part of the session the Taft arbitration treaties with England and France were so amended in the senate as to render them ineffective.

New Mexico and Arizona were admitted to statehood, and their senators and representatives sat in this session for the first time, although the legislation admitting the two new states was passed at an earlier date.

Among measures of importance failing to get through were the constitutional amendment increasing the presidential term to six years and making the president ineligible for re-election, the bill providing for the physical valuation of railroad property, and the immigration bill.

Every session is guilty of sins of omission and commission, and has other faults. Every session also does a few good things, some more, some less, according to the viewpoint. In these particulars the late lamented was not largely different from the rest. Well, it is over and before another session gathers, a new president of the United States will have been elected, likewise a new congress. Thus the people will have given a verdict on the deeds of the two houses and that is the verdict which will stand, whatever we as individuals may say. But in the passage of the amendment for direct election of senators, the parcels post, campaign publicity and other things, it must be admitted that we are making progress.

Yearly Cash Prize to Perfect Girl.

M. Carret, rich, eccentric and once a member of the French chamber of deputies, but who retired from politics many years ago to live in an Alpine cave in Savoy, died recently. A will has been found in which he leaves his wealth to his native town on condition that each year a prize of \$2,000 be awarded to the girl in the department of Savoy who is physically and morally most perfect.

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STOCKHOLDERS' NOTICE.

At a meeting of the directors of the Honesdale Dime Bank, held on July 25, 1912, the following resolution was unanimously adopted: "Resolved, That we recommend the stockholders of the Honesdale Dime Bank to increase the capital stock of the said bank from \$75,000 to \$100,000."

In accordance with the above resolution a meeting of the stockholders is called to convene at the bank on Thursday, the 10th day of October, 1912, between the hours of 3 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the

said day, to take action on the approval or disapproval of the proposed increase.

Note: In the event of the stockholders approving the increase recommended, the Board of Directors will fix the price for which the said stock shall be sold at \$200 per share.

BENJ. F. HAINES,

Secretary.
Honesdale, Pa., Aug. 5, 1912.
63w9.

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