

STRIFE IN SENATE IS NOT IMPORTANT

Seniority and Committee Plans Are Minor.

SENIORS STILL GET JOBS.

Older Incumbents Fare Pretty Well Despite Big Shakeup—New Men Have Asserted Themselves and Have Proved Power of Control—Curry Would Abandon Philippines.

By ARTHUR W. DUNN.

Washington, Jan. 14.—[Special.]—After all, this fight over committee assignments, the relegation of seniority to the rear and the dividing up of the important places so that all senators can get good committee assignments does not concern the policies of the Democratic party, which takes over the legislative and executive control of the government on the 4th of March.

The efforts of men to get a slice of good things instead of having most of them go to the seniors constituting one-third of the senators is about all there is to it. Committee places mean a certain amount of power, but the same men who have brought about the first reform could take any bill from a committee and fashion it to suit themselves.

More than that, the matter of dislodging the seniors has not been carried to a logical conclusion. Many of the seniors have obtained just what they wanted, and none of them has been deprived of the right to choose his place because he is a senior. Still it is a trend of the times. There has been something of a shakeup. The new men have asserted themselves and proved they have the power of control.

Here's "Treason."

Congressman George Curry of New Mexico says that the United States should get rid of the Philippines. The treason in that statement is because Curry was a rough rider, was governor of several different provinces in the Philippines under Roosevelt, was a Roosevelt man in the last campaign and has always been a firm admirer of the colonel. And the colonel would never give up the Philippines—never!

Nicaragua the Place.

"I still think Nicaragua is the place to have built the canal," remarked Congressman Mann, who knows more about the big ditch than any other civilian. He went on to explain why, saying that it was nearer, that it could have been constructed with as little trouble and that it seemed to be the natural route. Let it also be remembered that when the canal was located the house with but one dissenting vote on a roll call when more than 300 members voted supported the Nicaragua route.

The senate, after a very hot fight, by a majority of three chose Panama, and the house yielded without a struggle. And now comes Mann still insisting that the house was right at the time.

Mondell Practicing.

We rather suspect that Frank Mondell of Wyoming is practicing for the possible position of chairman of the committee on appropriations in case the Republicans should again control the house. Mondell has been in every fight on the different appropriation bills. He has taken the place of critic and assisted those who were scrutinizing the appropriations made by other committees than the appropriations committee last session, and he may be at the top after a few changes.

Shaw's Misgivings.

Former Secretary Shaw comes to Washington occasionally and nearly always says something worth while. "I sometimes think there are only two Republicans left," he remarked the last time he was here and added, "And though I am sure of myself I sometimes doubt Uncle Joe." The ex-speaker may have some doubt of Shaw, but both may be considered in the "regular" class for years to come.

Returns to the Fight.

Senator Swanson of Virginia is not discouraged because of the practical defeat of the good roads proposition by the senate last year. He has returned to the fight with a bill for \$25,000,000 to be expended upon roads. He will endeavor to have it made a part of the postoffice bill at the present session of congress.

Not In This Congress.

There is not much hope of the republic of Colombia receiving compensation for the loss of Panama in this or even the next congress. Though it may have been demonstrated that the United States government fomented and supported the revolution which made Panama an independent government, the feeling against that action has not reached the stage where we want to send the claim to The Hague tribunal for adjustment. "If they get enough claim agents interested," remarked an experienced member of the house, "and make the claim large enough and let it lie around long enough perhaps it may some day be paid. We are purposing to pay French spoliation claims more than 100 years old, and we are paying war claims that no one thought of presenting forty years ago, when the facts were available.

SMALLEST COUNTRY IN EUROPE TO CELEBRATE.

Moresnet, One and a Quarter Square Miles in Area, 100 Years Old.

The centenary of the Napoleonic wars calls attention to the existence of the smallest state in Europe, the autonomous republic of Moresnet, on the boundary between Germany and Belgium, which will soon celebrate the hundredth anniversary of its establishment.

Moresnet has an area of barely one and one-quarter square miles and a population of 3,500. It owes its existence to a boundary controversy for the control of a once important zinc mine. A boundary commission settling the frontiers of Holland and Prussia after the fall of Napoleon in 1814 was unable to agree upon the ownership of this tiny piece of land with its valuable mining rights and finally left the question for future settlement. Neither power was to occupy it, and it was to be administered jointly by the two states.

In practice the joint administration soon resulted in an administration by neither state, and the community became autonomous under the protection and tutelage of Prussia and Holland and later of Prussia and Belgium. In 1841 the two guaranteeing countries regularized this and formally gave the district its own independent administration.

It has no courts, but litigants can choose between the Belgian and Prussian tribunals in beginning litigation, which is subject to the laws neither of Germany nor of Belgium, but of the ancient Code Napoleon.

ST. PAUL'S REPORTED SINKING

Famous Cathedral in London in Bad Condition.

The alarming report on the stability of St. Paul's cathedral, in London, has intensified the agitation to prevent the construction of a subway near the famous building.

Sir Francis Fox, the great engineer, who recently examined the building, declares that the cathedral is actually moving and cracking, that the subway should on no account be permitted near the cathedral and that immediate remedial measures are imperative to secure the safety of the building.

He also says the heavy motor bus traffic near the cathedral is a serious evil, the weight on the foundations is excessive and the subsoil under the building is unstable, being heavily charged with water.

EDISON'S "SPEAKING MOVIES."

Inventor Will Soon Produce His Wonderful Kinetophone.

Improved motion pictures that talk will be introduced to the world in a few weeks by Thomas A. Edison. It has been demonstrated that the inventor's kinetophone, over which he has been working for the last four years, is now in readiness for public service.

The kinetophone is an instrument that produces the voices of the figures on a moving picture film in harmony with their actions. Thus an entire play or a musical comedy can be presented with appropriate vocal or orchestral accompaniment wherever a white screen can be raised against a wall.

The operas of "Faust" and "Il Trovatore," it is announced, have been chosen for the kinetophone's debut.

RUSSIAN SERFS ARE FREED.

Last Vestige of Oppressive Condition Abolished by New Law.

The council of the empire in Russia has adopted a law abolishing the last vestige of serfdom.

When the rescript of emancipation was issued in 1861 the Caucasus was excepted from its provisions on account of special conditions there, and temporary transitional measures were instituted pending the adoption of the most suitable method for giving the serfs their freedom. This transitional stage now, after half a century, has been terminated, though there was still opposition to its abolition.

Premier Kokovtsov personally appeared before the council of the empire to urge the adoption of the new law. It already had passed the duma.

WEDDING TRIP IN AN ICEBOX.

Newly Married Pair Travel in Refrigerator Car.

A wedding trip in a refrigerator car with the bridegroom and bride beating their way is the latest escapade related at Wilmington, Del. Henry Hoffman and Miss Daisy Ray, who were married recently, rode from Philadelphia to Reading, Pa., fifty-eight miles, in the icebox of a refrigerator car.

They were discovered by trainmen and were handed over to the police when the train reached Reading. Their pleas got their release, however, and enough money was raised to pay their fares to Shamokin.

Buffalo at Stock Yards.

The very unusual sight of a shipment of real American bison to the Kansas City stock yards for killing was witnessed the other day when seven head were consigned to the packers from the Buffalo Jones ranch at Las Vegas, N. M. The six bulls and one cow were butchered for beef and the meat sold in Kansas City. The hides, heads and hoofs of four of the bulls were shipped to New York, and the other three to Logansport, Ind., for mounting.

KENYON ATTACKS MAIL FRANKING

Would Abolish Annual Seed Distribution.

HE PROBES CAMPAIGN MAIL.

Free Postal Privilege For Government Officials Costs United States Millions of Dollars Is Discovery—Nevertheless Practice Is Expected to Continue—Free Seeds Also Popular.

By ARTHUR W. DUNN.

Washington, Jan. 15.—[Special.]—Senator Kenyon would be Jack the Giant Killer if successful in an effort he is making toward defeating the annual seed distribution and in reducing the amount of frankable mail. He has started out by asking for information as to the cost of sending out franked mail from political headquarters during the recent campaign and also the cost of carrying seeds free of charge, as well as the cost of the seeds to the government.

Thousands of tons of mail for political purposes are carried every year, but in a presidential year the amount is something tremendous. The postoffice department has made a rough estimate that the cost during 1912 was \$2,500,000.

Can't Be Stopped.

Seed distribution began when the old bureau of agriculture, having experimented with seeds, handed over its surplus to congressmen. The idea became so popular that now nearly \$500,000 is appropriated for the purchase of seeds to be distributed to the people as a gift. Senator Kenyon will not be able to stop either of these features of government, even if he makes it plain that they are abuses, or, as he calls them, "graft." Franking and seed distribution have come to stay.

Often have sincere reformers tried to have the seed appropriation eliminated, but to no avail. Less frequently has the franking privilege been attacked, but that is stronger than free seeds, as free mails benefit every member of congress.

Oldest's Farewell.

Congressman Olmsted bid a sort of farewell to congressional life when the Indian appropriation bill was up, making the Carlisle school for Indians the text of his observations. Commending the school to those he left behind, he passed on to a tribute to Samuel W. McCall of Massachusetts which ought to elect that man to the senate. Few men have received such an eulogy while living.

"When a member stands the test here," said Olmsted, generalizing, "when he is popular, looked up to and respected by the members after long service here, it may be taken for granted that he is well fitted for service in the senate.

Carter and the Minority Leader.

Congressman Carter and Minority Leader Mann enjoy each other. The Oklahoma man is nearly half Indian, but a keen and effective legislator. "I would like to ask the gentleman a question as a lawyer," said Carter one day. "Oh, you need not ask me a question as a lawyer," replied Mann. "I quit the practice of law long ago, and, besides, I never answer a question of law without a retainer." "Not being a lawyer myself," responded Carter, "I was simply seeking advice from a distinguished legal light."

A little later Carter was trying to get Mann to withdraw one of his numerous points of order. "If there is a chance to persuade the gentleman I should like to plead with him," said Carter. "I cannot say," replied Mann. "The gentleman has so often persuaded me against my better judgment that he might be able to do it again."

Fowler Is Modest.

"What would you do if you were secretary of the treasury?" asked Stephens of Texas, making an argument against some contention of Fowler of Illinois. The new member blushed. "If the incoming president," he said gravely, "should make me secretary of the treasury, which I know he will not do, then I would be in a better position to answer that question."

Too Much Travel Pay.

"The reformers," said a cynical member, "those who want to save money for the government, should strike at 'travel pay.' It is amazing to notice that millions of dollars are spent every year by the different departments of the government for 'travel pay.' We transport the army hither and yon, we send officials abroad to 'study' conditions which our consuls should report upon, we send officials on 'inspection tours' to report upon matters that should be in the hands of men on the ground, we send men up and down the country lecturing upon subjects of various kinds and teaching the people how to live, how to earn their livings, etc. Indeed, paternalism seems to have taken possession of the government."

Newspaper Men in the Senate.

During the week past two newspaper men were added to the already long list of journalists who now occupy seats in the senate. Ambassador Bryce once made a humorous speech about a Utopia governed by the press. If this thing keeps up we will have his theory in practice. It happens, unfortunately, that the newspaper men from Arkansas and Texas are to have only short terms as a matter of compliment.

FOR BETTER ROADS.

Harrisburg, Jan. 14.—The Committee on Highways of the Civic and Commerce Association of Minneapolis, Minn., has issued a report this year which states:

The trade district of Minneapolis is 750 square miles. A "Farmers' Census" was taken by rural letter carriers during January and February, 1911. They addressed 20 questions each to 4,069 farmers, who hauled to market in 1911, 560,000 tons of farm produce which sold for \$6,665,680, requiring 305,000 trips, consuming 292,000 eight-hour working days and covering 4,700,000 miles. Appalling losses due to bad roads of every conceivable nature were definitely disclosed, totaled as follows:

First is the loss of time, part due to slower progress, part to taking a longer route than usual, and part because smaller loads have to be hauled. The average wage of a man and team is 48 cents, and at this rate the loss of time in 1911 due to not taking the straightest route was \$62,000, and the loss of time due to slower progress was \$75,000, and the loss of time due to extra trips necessitated by smaller loads was \$159,000—a total loss in time in 1911 of \$296,000.

The total loss, probably far understated, owing to inability to market where the most money could be obtained or because of the spoiling of produce or injury to horses or wagons, in 1911, was \$221,000. Fertilizer to the value of \$121,000 is produced annually in Minneapolis. When the weather prevents farmers from working on the farm, it is profitable to haul manure, but not otherwise. The federal census supports the committee's conclusion that not more than 25 per cent. of available fertilizer is taken to the farms, so there was a loss from this cause in 1911 of \$91,000.

The total loss, then, to the farmers in the trade district of Minneapolis in 1911, of time, of money, of market and of manure, reached the appalling total of \$608,000.

Loss because of longer route ..... \$ 61,994.01  
Loss because of slow progress ..... 75,627.64  
Loss because of extra trips ..... 137,621.66  
Loss because of specific reasons ..... 221,374.16  
Loss because of inability to haul manure ..... 91,925.00

Total loss ..... \$608,728.15

Each farmer lost \$150. He lost \$1.70 for every acre that he farmed. He lost 13 cents every time he carried a ton of farm produce over one mile of bad roads. He lost 9 per cent. of his total crop. If he owned 100 acres, he grew thistles on 9. He paid as much for bad roads as he did for his hired help. He paid \$10 more for bad roads than he did for feed for his stock. He paid 25 times as much for bad roads as he did for commercial fertilizer. He paid a bad road tax of \$14.30 per 1,000—1 1/2 per cent. on his total investment.

What the farmer of this district lost last year because of bad roads would have bought all the crop produced in the district, or all the wheat, or the oat crop twice over, or all but 10 per cent. of the potatoes, or all the barley, rye, flaxseed, timothy seed, hay and forage combined.

It would replace the farm implements owned in the district every three years, the cattle every three years, the horses every four years, and all the other domestic animals combined every six months.

LIBRARIES AND HAPPINESS.

The great purpose of a public library is to promote and unite intelligence. It brings together the products of the wise minds of the world. It holds within its walls a collection of all the wise and witty things ever said; these it marks and indexes and offers to its friends.

It is in its community a sort of intellectual minuteman, always ready to supply to every comer something of interest and pleasure. It puts good books, and no others, into the hands of children. It tells about Cinderella and informs you on riots in Moscow. It offers you a novel of modern Japan and a history of Venice of the past. It knows about the milk in the cocoanut, the floods of the river Nile, the advantages of education, the evils of legislation, how to plan a home, why bread won't rise, and can tell more about the mental failings that give Jamaica and Venezuela trouble than most of our congressmen ever dreamed of.

Reading is the short cut into the heart of life. If you are talking with a group of friends about, for example, different parts of the United States, and some one happens to mention a city or town in which you have lived, note how your interest quickens, and how eager you are to hear news of the place or to tell of your experience in it. This is a simple every-day fact. The same thing you have observed a thousand times about any subject or talk with which you may be familiar. We learn about many things just by keeping alive and moving round! Those things we have learned about we can't help being interested in. That is the way we are made. If we knew about more things our interests would be greater in number, keener, more satisfying; we would talk more, ask more questions, be more alert, get more pleasure.

The lesson from this is plain enough: If you wish to have a good time, learn something. You like to meet old friends. Your brain, also, likes to come across things it knows already, to renew acquaintance with the knowledge it has stored away and half forgotten. The pleasures of recognition and association; the delights of renewing your friendships with your own ideas are many, easy to get, never failing. But if you wish to have interests and delights in good plenty you must know of many things. If you wish to be happy, learn something.

This sounds like advice to a student. It is not, it is a suggestion to the wayfarer. For this learning process may be as delightful as it is to gather flowers by the roadside in a summer walk.

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