

WASHINGTON.

Workings of the Interstate Commerce Law—Amendments Proposed by Mr. Cullom.

Restricting Immigration—Surplus Distribution—Senator Farwell's Banking Bill.

[Washington telegram.] Senator Cullom says that he intends to introduce a bill at the first opportunity amending the interstate commerce law in some important particulars. I asked him what he thought about the report of the commission.

"I have read it carefully," he replied, "and in the main its findings are sound. I think the commission has shown itself to be more capable than the public anticipated it would be when it was first organized. The decisions of the Commissioners have been about as near right as the decisions of courts ordinarily are, and I am satisfied that they are more in the interest of the people than they would be if the question involved in them had been decided by ordinary judicial tribunals, for the reason that the Commissioners are not restricted by rules of evidence from getting at the truth."

"Then you are satisfied with the results of the law as far as it has gone?"

"Yes. The value of the Commission has been demonstrated beyond controversy, as well as the importance of the law, and its defects are not so great as I anticipated. It was merely an experiment, but, though I am an interested observer, I judge that it has been generally satisfactory. I knew it was not a perfect bill, and had a great many misgivings when it passed, but it has run easier and been much more effective than I anticipated, which, it is only fair to say, was largely due to the industry of the Commission and the common-sense application of its provisions. It has not proved oppressive, but has been as beneficial to the railway companies as to the public."

REGULATING IMMIGRATION.

There seems to be a very strong sentiment in favor of restricting immigration, and half a dozen or more bills have been introduced into the Senate for that purpose, nearly all of them being in the line as that proposed by Senator Palmer. Among others was one from Mr. Farwell, of Illinois, which provides that every immigrant coming to the United States, before he is allowed to land, shall produce a certificate of good character from the United States Consul of the district from which he comes, as evidence to show that he is capable of self-support. It looks very much as if some such bill would become a law at this session, and it is certain to be passed by the Senate, although it will meet with greater opposition in the House.

MR. FARWELL'S BANK BILL

Mr. Farwell has introduced a bill, which has already been published and widely commented on, authorizing national banks to deposit railway, State and municipal bonds instead of United States bonds to secure their circulation. Speaking of this bill and the criticism upon it, Mr. Farwell said that he believed it proposed the only "method by which the country can have a circulating medium after the payment of the public debt, and that the safeguards thrown around the bill are unquestionably sufficient, because the committee to pass upon the bonds furnished as a security for circulation will consist of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Treasurer of the United States and the Comptroller of the Currency."

Mr. Farwell has also introduced a bill to remove the tax on oleomargarine and to require the manufacturers of that article to place upon every package a label showing its character.

Mr. Farwell introduced another bill to repeal the tax upon domestic and the duty upon imported tobacco; also to repeal the tax on sugar, and give a bounty of 1-5 to 2-5 cents per pound on cane and beet sugar manufactured in the United States.

Another bill introduced by Mr. Farwell provides for the recalling and recoining of the standard silver dollar into a coin containing 541 grains. The holders of silver bullion may have it coined on the same terms that gold bullion is now coined.

TO DISTRIBUTE THE SURPLUS.

Senator Aldrich, of Rhode Island, has introduced a very important financial measure, which is the result of several conferences between the Secretary of the Treasury and himself. This bill is intended to distribute the surplus in the Treasury, and gives the Secretary absolute authority to expend the surplus both by the purchase of United States bonds at market rates and by the anticipation of interest on bonds at any time. With such authority as this the Secretary of the Treasury would be able to relieve any stringency in the financial market by opening the doors of the cash-room.

EUGENE HIGGINS WILL GO.

Mr. Eugene Higgins, chief of the appointment division, says that the report that he will shortly retire from the public service is true. He will shortly tender his resignation to Secretary Fairchild, but has not as yet fixed upon the exact date. He wanted it distinctly understood, however, that his retirement was entirely voluntary, and was in no way due to the efforts of people who have shown so much dissatisfaction at his retention in office.

The principal reason for the proposed step, Mr. Higgins said, was his desire to better his condition in life by going into business for himself. While not desiring to pose as a martyr, it was a fact that he retained his present office at a personal sacrifice much longer than he intended. Another reason why he had not resigned before was that he was being assailed on all sides, and he could not bring himself to retreat under fire.

All the statements made by Mr. Higgins as to the voluntary nature of his retirement are confirmed by those officials who are in a position to know, and it was added that the Secretary is entirely satisfied with his management of the appointment division, and has never had cause to regret his appointment.

High License in Pennsylvania.

Philadelphia special: "High license will go into effect January 1 in Pennsylvania. In the large cities the minimum fee is fixed at \$500 per annum, and each saloonkeeper has to give two bonds, signed by different sureties, in the sum of \$2,000 each, for the proper conduct of his saloon under the laws and ordinances. The terms of the bond obligate the sureties to pay

all fines and penalties or damages that may be levied against the saloonkeeper for violation of the laws governing the sale of liquor."

THE WORLD OF SPORT.

Matters of Major and Minor Importance in Base-ball Circles.

The All-important Umpire Question—Bob Carruthers.

[CHICAGO CORRESPONDENCE.]

Robert Carruthers, the famous pitcher of the Browns, has returned to Chicago from St. Louis, but at last accounts had yet not signed a contract to pitch for Brooklyn next season. When asked by a Chicago reporter, however, which club he would probably play with next season he said:

"I think with Brooklyn."

"Would you rather go there than to Cincinnati?"

"No. My preference is Cincinnati, but Von der Ahe will not release me to Cincinnati."

How do you know?"

"He told me so. He said that he would refuse any offer Cincinnati might make, and that \$20,000 would be no inducement."

"Then you will go to Brooklyn?"

"Yes. I think I will sign there within the next three days. I would have signed in St. Louis had it not been for my mother's strenuous objections, and I, of course, could not disregard her wishes."

"Why does she object to your going to Brooklyn?"

"I guess she thinks the company down there is a little too fast for my health. You know I am far from strong," said Bob, with a grin.

"Von der Ahe won't have much of a team left, will he?"

"Oh, yes. He showed me a list of the men that he expected would make up his regular team next year. They are King, Hudson, Knouff and Devlin as pitchers; Milligan and Boyle, catchers; Comiskey, Nicholson and Latham on bases; Robinson at short; O'Neil, Mann and Holliday in the outfield. Then he has two or three good new men."

"What show will St. Louis have next season?"

"Not the walk-over we had this year. If I could go down to Cincinnati I think Mulane, Smith and myself could do our share toward making the rest of them hustle to keep up with Cincinnati. But I guess I won't be there. If Byrne sticks to his \$5,000, Von der Ahe sticks to his expressed determination not to let me play in Cincinnati, and my mother gives her consent to my going East, I will put my name to a Brooklyn contract before many hours."

A question of growing importance among professional base-ball clubs is that of securing good and capable umpires. It is being demonstrated more and more every year that the smooth progress of a game depends more upon the manner in which an umpire renders his decisions and enforces the rules than upon any one else connected with the game. Several base-ball men were discussing this question the other day in Spalding's Chicago store, and among them was Harry Palmer, the Chicago base-ball writer. "The position of an umpire," said Palmer, "is a championship game between clubs of such reputation and importance as that enjoyed by those of either of the big organizations is without doubt the most important to be filled upon ball field. A competent man can handle almost any class or grade of players in such manner as will insure the smooth progress of the game, while an incompetent, rattle-headed, or unscrupulous man can create chaos, disorder, and disgraceful quarrels with all.

"One thing that makes me hot," continued Palmer, is the failure of club managers to back up and sustain the action of umpires in demanding respect from players and enforcing the rules upon the field. I believe that there was many fine imposed last year which was never collected or heard from afterward. A player who receives a high salary and plays an important position may get the big head, for instance, and once he attains that degree of mental deformity it is safe to bet that he never loses an opportunity to bluster and bully and make a spectacle of himself for the benefit of the grand stand—and, I may add for the information of these fellows—much to the *disgust* of the grand stand."

"Me? he will say to the umpire, 'Me? Jess wait till de game is over, cull, an I'll settle wid you.' Now, if I was an umpire, I would fine a man so fast and heavy that he would shut up and crawl back to his position with mighty little of his bluster left if he gave me any such talk as that. More than that, I would tell the club management that if they did not sustain me in my action they could have my resignation, and after that I would lose no time after the game in hunting up my man and giving him all the chance he wanted to 'settle wid me.' I am in favor of giving the umpire *absolute* control upon a ball-field. Let there be no appeal from their decisions by any man on either side—captain, or any one else. Make it compulsory for the umpire to fine a man not less than \$10 nor more than \$25 for questioning a decision, and put it out of the power of the club to remit that fine, save where it can be proved beyond all doubt that it had been unjustly administered. Of course, any player would have the right to appeal and the right to demand investigation, after the game was finished, but under no circumstances should he be permitted to open his lips in protest of a decision while a game is in progress."

The firm of A. G. Spalding & Bros. last week gave the largest order for bicycles ever given by any house in America. Their order was for 1,500 Victor bicycles, valued at \$195,000.

Chicago is to have the wealthiest and toniest toboggan club in this country or Canada. A party of millionaires have just organized the "Onaway Toboggan Club," and will erect a magnificent private club slide near the north end of Lincoln Park. The slide will be the finest ever built in America, and will be 1,500 feet long, with handsome club-houses, lookout-houses, and waiting-rooms adjoining. The hundred members will be admitted. The club costumes will be especially rich in design and color, and the famous "Star" toboggan will be used.

Charles Snyder, the veteran catcher of the Cincinnati Club, but now with the Clevelands, has returned to his home in Washington to spend the winter. He looks the picture of health.

CHEAP TELEGRAPHY.

Senator Cullom's Bill to Establish a System of Government Wires.

Four Million Dollars Asked of Congress to Construct the First Ten Lines.

Senator Cullom of Illinois has introduced a bill to establish the "United States Postal Telegraph" as a part of the postal system of the United States. Following is a summary of the measure:

It calls for an appropriation of \$1,000,000, and provides for the construction of the following trunk lines: One from Washington to Portland, Me., via Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, Jersey City, New York, Brooklyn, New Haven, Hartford, Providence, and Boston; one from Washington to Minneapolis, via Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Toledo, Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, LaCrosse, and St. Paul; one from New York City to Cleveland, via Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo; one from Pittsburg to Topeka, Kan., via Columbus, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Indianapolis, and Kansas City; one from Toledo to Detroit; one from Washington to Galveston, via Richmond, Charlotte, Columbia, Augusta, Atlanta, Montgomery, and New Orleans; one from Chicago to New Orleans, via Indianapolis, Louisville, Nashville, Memphis, and Vicksburg; one from Chicago to St. Louis, via Peoria and Springfield; one from Chicago to San Francisco, via Des Moines, Omaha, Cheyenne, Salt Lake City, and Carson City; and one from Cheyenne to Denver.

Postal telegraph offices are to be opened at each of the ten points, and the intermediate points at which the lines connect, the telegraph offices are established. Branch lines are to be constructed from time to time, the intention being to connect the lines with all cities where the postal free-delivery system prevails, but no additional facilities are to be provided in States already connected with the trunk lines until postal telegraph offices have been established in every State and Territory. The system is to be constructed in straight lines, as near as practicable, but regard is to be taken of cities which will afford the best telegraphic facilities to the public.

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