

BIG NAVAL INCREASE.

FOUR NEW BATTLESHIPS TO BE BUILT.

Liberal Allowance Made to Increase the Fighting Strength of the United States—Cuban Debate in the Senate Nearing an End.

Washington, March 18.—The naval appropriation bill for the next fiscal year will contain the most liberal allowance for the increase of the navy carried by any bill since the war. Four battleships and fifteen torpedo boats was the decision of the committee on the question of new vessels, which had been the principal point of discussion. The democrats fought hard to secure six battleships, but the republicans stood well together and carried their point. The motion for six battleships was made by Mr. Cummings (N. Y.), and was lost by a vote of 6 to 7, but one republican voting for it.

The four battleships will be of 11,000 tons each and the cost is not to exceed \$3,700,000 each, exclusive of armament, which is thought to be an ample provision, as other ships of the same class have been built in recent years well within that figure. Five of the torpedo boats are to have a speed of 26 knots and to cost within \$85,000 each; the other ten are to have a speed of 20 knots and their cost limit is \$800,000 each.

AMENDING TARIFF LAW.

Action Taken by the House to Correct the Act of 1890.

Washington, March 18.—The house devoted Tuesday to the bill to amend the administrative tariff act of 1890, and passed it without substantial amendment. The purpose of the bill is to strengthen the act of 1890, some weak spots having been developed during the six years it has been in operation. The bill was drawn after extensive hearings, and the advice and assistance of the treasury department, the board of general appraisers, importers and others with practical experience on the subject. One of the most important changes makes increased duties and penalties for undervaluation commence at the point of undervaluation, and not at 10 per cent above the undervaluation as provided by the present law.

THE PACIFIC RAILROADS.

Consultation of Committees to Be Had on the Subject.

Washington, March 18.—In about ten days there will be a meeting or consultation between the two steering committees of the senate to see if time can be given for the consideration of a bill for the settlement of the Pacific railroad debt. The request for time will come from the committee on Pacific roads and if it appears from the views of the two managing committees that time will be afforded the committee on Pacific roads will make an effort to report a bill at a very early day and bring it up for consideration. If the steering committees do not agree that there will be time to consider the bill then all legislation looking to the adjustment of the Pacific roads problem and the government debt will be postponed for this session and go over until the short session.

RIVERS AND HARBORS.

Several Changes Made in an Important Bill.

Washington, March 18.—It is expected that the river and harbor bill will be reported to the house within a few days.

The first estimate of the bill was about \$12,000,000, but it is now understood that the bill will not of itself appropriate more than \$10,000,000, but it will put a large number of projects under the contract system. The committee in reporting the bill in favor of the authorization of these contracts will say that it has found in the past that about 30 to 50 per cent of the appropriations are saved by the system and that it has proved economical.

To Restrict Immigration.

Washington, March 18.—The house committee on immigration on Tuesday decided to favorably report two important restrictive measures introduced by Mr. McCall (Mass.) and Mr. W. A. Stone (Pa.). The Stone bill establishes as a requisite for admission to the United States that the immigrant shall be provided with a certificate from the United States consul or other authorized representative of the United States at the place nearest his last residence that he is eligible to admission to the United States under the existing laws. The McCall bill, as amended by the committee, excludes all males between the ages of 16 and 60 who are not able to read and write English or some other language.

Cuban Debate Nearly Ended.

Washington, March 18.—The Cuban debate in the senate is drawing to a close, and the expectation is that a final vote will be taken within a day or two—possibly to-day. Mr. Sherman is keeping the question before the senate continuously, so that the speeches are not likely to last much longer. Mr. Mills (Tex.) and Mr. Platt (Conn.) are yet to be heard, but their remarks will not be lengthy.

The Seed Distribution Law.

Washington, March 18.—Regarding the seed resolution, which has now become a law, Secretary Morton says he will execute to the letter the law as construed by the attorney-general. Secretary Morton reiterates his previous statement that he intends to buy the seeds all ready packed.

FIRE AT PEORIA, ILL.

Succession of Blazes Thought to Be the Work of Incendiaries.

Peoria, Ill., March 18.—The fire bell was clanging almost incessantly between midnight and 2 o'clock Tuesday morning. Five alarms were turned in and the entire department kept at work in the southern portion of the city. The fires were all of mysterious origin, and it is supposed that some one starting from Apple street walked up the railroad tracks leaving a trail of fire behind him.

The first fire was in the Hutchinson cooperage works, the largest plant of the kind in the city. The fire started near the engine-room and had secured considerable headway when discovered. The rear portion of the building was badly damaged. No estimate of loss could be given, but it is covered by insurance.

The engines had scarcely returned to their quarters when two alarms called them to the Manhattan distillery, where an immense hay stack was in flames and threatening destruction to the distillery and the other immense stacks. The hay is all baled, and it was a hard fight the firemen had. They had just got the better of this fire when a few blocks away from them, at the cooperage works of Madigan, Walsh & Co., flames were seen to burst, and two more alarms came in rapid succession. The fire here had a big start before discovery, and the forces had to be divided. The cooperage works were practically destroyed. Nothing is known as to the origin here, but it is presumed to have been incendiary with the rest.

A few years ago this was a favorite section for incendiaries, and fires were almost nightly occurrence there. Thousands of dollars' worth of property were annually burned up in this way. At 2:45 a. m. the flames from the Madigan, Walsh & Co. plant communicated to the Peoria white lead works on the north. This is a large three-story building, and the fire was in the roof. The firemen soon got it under control, however.

SILVER MEN REPLY.

Answer of Denver Chamber of Commerce to New York Institution.

Denver, Colo., March 18.—The Denver chamber of commerce has mailed a reply, of which the following is the concluding paragraph, to a communication received from the New York chamber of commerce:

"We are in full accord with the sentiment that the time is past for any halting or doubtful phrases to express the meaning of political parties upon any public question. The issue is between the producers of wealth and the manipulators of the exchange. Prosperity is impossible without a sufficient and stable money circulation. This can only be secured by the free coinage of gold and silver. By destroying the latter we have placed a bounty upon the staple products of silver-using lands and compelled them to manufacture for themselves. They are progressive, we are stationary. We cannot improve our condition by praising an honest money that is dishonest, or by denouncing a cheap currency that is not cheap. We earnestly invite the co-operation of all in the effort to convince the people that the free coinage of both gold and silver is the primary essential to permanent improvement, and that the continued degradation of silver can only benefit our foreign competitors, the lenders, the annuitants, the possessors of fixed incomes, and must ultimately destroy as it now seriously injures the welfare of the nation and the citizen."

Chicago Board of Trade.

Chicago, March 17.—The following table shows the range of quotations on the Chicago Board of Trade to-day:

—Closing—					
Articles.	High.	Low.	Mar.	17.	Mar. 16.
Wheat—					
Mar.	61%	60%	61%	60%	60%
May	63%	62	63	62%	62%
June	63%	62%	63%	62%	62%
July	63%	62%	63%	62%	62%
Corn—					
Mar.	29%	28%	28%	28%	28%
May	29%	29%	29%	29%	29%
July	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%
Sept.	31%	31%	31%	31%	31%
Oats—					
Mar.	19%	19	19	19	19
May	20%	20	20%	20%	20%
July	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Sept.	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Pork—					
Mar.	9.62%	9.45	9.50	9.60	
May	9.80	9.62%	9.67%	9.75	
July	9.97%	9.82%	9.85	9.92%	
Lard—					
Mar.	5.32%	5.25	5.27%	5.30	
May	5.45	5.37%	5.40	5.42%	
July	5.57%	5.52%	5.55	5.55	
S. Ribs—					
Mar.	5.12%	5.05	5.05	5.07%	
July	5.32%	5.30	5.30	5.32%	

Gov. Matthews Worse.

Indianapolis, Ind., March 18.—There was a pronounced change for the worse in the condition of Governor Matthews Monday night and Tuesday he was worse than at any time since he was forced to leave his office on Thursday. His disease is complicated by an affection of the larynx, which is very painful, his throat being inflamed. His physician thinks the grip has been overcome and that careful nursing will bring the patient through, but the fact is not disguised that the executive is very weak and that his condition is serious.

Monetary Debate in Parliament.

London, March 18.—In the house of commons Tuesday the motion made by Mr. Whately concerning bimetallism was taken up. The motion recites that it is the opinion of the house that the instability of the relative value of gold and silver since the action of the Latin union in 1873 has proved injurious to the best interests of the country, and it urges upon the government the advisability that it does its utmost to secure an international agreement. It prevailed.

Waller Is Out of Prison.

Washington, March 18.—Nothing is known at the state department of the detention in prison in France of ex-Consul Waller, as suggested by a Paris newspaper. The records of the department show that he was released Feb. 23, and relatives in this country have had letters from him dated in England.

FRANCE IS IRRITATED

PROTESTS AGAINST SOUDAN EXPEDITION.

Lord Dufferin Asked to Explain the Purpose of Sending British Troops Up the Nile—III Feeling Toward Great Britain Felt at Paris.

Paris, March 18.—The French government up to this time has not defined its position toward the proposal to dispatch an Egyptian expedition up the Nile. There is reason to believe that the proposal came as a surprise to the French government. French statesmen had been entertaining the hope that an opening of negotiations was near at hand looking to the evacuation of Egypt by the British troops. Next to the sovereignty of Germany over Alsace-Lorraine, probably the greatest source of irritation known to French diplomacy is the British occupation of Egypt. The present move on Great Britain's part is doubly irritating, coming as a check to hopes which French statesmen had allowed themselves to entertain.

The first intimation of the probable course France will take in view of the new conditions in Egypt came Tuesday. A sensation has been caused by the announcement made by M. Berthelot, minister of foreign affairs, in the cabinet meeting, that he had asked the British ambassador, the marquis of Dufferin, for information regarding the proposed advance of British-Egyptian troops up the Nile, and had pointed out to him the serious consequences of such an advance. This warning note may be a preliminary to more decided steps. The prevailing sentiment expressed here is one of indignation at the course adopted by Great Britain, and the general feeling is that France must adopt a decisive tone in dealing with the matter.

France is not deciding upon the course she will pursue without a full understanding with her Russian ally and it is announced that numerous telegrams have passed between Paris and St. Petersburg on the subject. It is understood here that Great Britain also sounded the Russian government before announcing the Egyptian program. But the action of the czar in conferring upon the Negus Menelik the military order of St. George is accepted as peremptory notice that Russia has no sympathy with Great Britain's plans for aiding and relieving the Italians in Africa.

As one of the guaranteeing powers to the Egyptian bondholders, France has more than the usual interest of the other powers in the disposal of Egyptian revenues, and she may refuse to consent to the cost of the Nile campaign being charged to the Egyptian budget. The skepticism semi-officially expressed by the French government as to the alleged necessity of the campaign in the interest of Egypt indicates a purpose to try to restrain the disposal of Egyptian revenues.

The apprehensions aroused in France by a British campaign up the Nile extend beyond Egypt, beyond Dongola and Khartoum and into central Africa and the sources of the Nile, where French colonial expansion has been as active or more active than it has been in Tonkin and up the Mekong. This French expansion threatens to absorb the valley of the Nile itself, and to push on to the borders of the Italian possessions in Ethiopia, thus forming an obstruction between British Uganda and Egypt. Great Britain has viewed these encroachments with impatience, and French observers do not fail to note that even liberal members of the British parliament express the belief that Lord Salisbury is looking to reoccupying the Sudan and opening the way to the British possessions in South Africa.

France fears that the Egyptian advance to Dongola covers a British advance to Khartoum and to Uganda and an interference with her prosperous colonial expansion in central Africa. The British occupation of Egypt is sufficiently galling in itself, but more so in its threats to French plans in Africa beyond Egypt.

London, March 18.—A dispatch from Rome to the Times says that the Marquis di Rudini's statement regarding the new government's policy in Africa has not produced a good impression, and is considered pointless and indicative of an uncertain policy. The comment of the press is mostly unfavorable.

Kitchener Will Command

Cairo, March 18.—Sir H. H. Kitchener, the brigadier-general in command of the Egyptian forces, has been definitely appointed to command the British-Egyptian expedition which will advance April 1 on Wada-Halfa up the Nile and toward Dongola.

Italy Will Continue the War.

Rome, March 18.—The new cabinet, headed by the Marquis di Rudini, met the chamber of deputies for the first time Tuesday. The Marquis di Rudini made a statement regarding the policy of the government in Abyssinia, which may, perhaps, be summarized in the words: "Peace with dignity and honor." He also asked for a credit of 140,000,000 lire (\$2,800,000) to defray the expenses of the African campaign, and to send additional troops to Abyssinia, should such a step be necessary. The credit was granted unanimously and with cheers.

Menominee River Log Cut.

Menominee, Mich., March 18.—A careful estimate of the amount of logs cut on the Menominee river and tributaries during the winter places the same at upward of 400,000,000 feet, against 370,000,000 for last season. All but about 75,000,000 feet of this amount will be manufactured in the Menominee and Marinette mills.

Nicholson Renominated.

Kokomo, Ind., March 18.—In the republican county primary E. S. Nicholson, author of the well-known temperance law enacted by the last Indiana legislature, was renominated by a majority of forty votes over his leading opponent, ex-County Auditor George O. Roach.

Germany's Colonial Policy.

Berlin, March 18.—There was another animated discussion in the Reichstag Tuesday of the colonial policy of Germany, the supporters of the government upholding it and its opponents condemning it most strongly.

Cherokee Bill Hanged.

Fort Smith, Ark., March 18.—Cherokee Bill was hanged here yesterday. He met death bravely.

WISCONSIN REPUBLICANS.

State Convention in Session at Milwaukee—Probable Action.

Milwaukee, Wis., March 18.—Delegates to the republican state convention were coming into the city all day Tuesday. The matter of the Milwaukee delegate-at-large has been disposed of and Eugene Elliott will go to the national convention. The Payne men had secured many proxies in the Milwaukee delegation and felt that they could muster a majority, but the Elliott men rebelled and refused to agree not to go before the convention, even if out-voted in the caucus. There was a long conference by the leaders, and finally Payne's managers made a proposal to withdraw his name, provided he was returned as a member of the republican national committee. This was accepted and the fight was over.

The convention will adopt a resolution indorsing McKinley for president and declaring that he is the unanimous choice of the party in Wisconsin. Resolutions will also be adopted strongly affirming the policy of protection to American industries as exemplified in the McKinley tariff bill and declaring for "sound money." The convention met in the Academy of Music at noon.

John J. Esch of La Crosse was chosen temporary chairman, and John Ewing secretary of the republican state central committee, will be made secretary, and these officers will be made permanent.

Illinois Republican Conventions.

Bloomington, Ill., March 18.—The republican convention of McLean county was held here Tuesday. The convention indorsed the candidacy of William McKinley of Ohio for nomination as the republican candidate for president of the United States. A motion to instruct for Tanner for governor was carried—138 to 44.

Watseka, Ill., March 18.—The republicans of Iroquois county held their county convention Tuesday. Judge C. W. Raymond, president of the Republican State league, introduced resolutions instructing the delegates for J. G. Cannon for congress and McKinley for president. The resolutions were adopted unanimously.

Indiana Prohibitionists.

Indianapolis, Ind., March 18.—The Indiana prohibition state central committee held a meeting here Tuesday for the purpose of supplying the vacancies on the state ticket made by the resignations of the candidates for governor and attorney general. After considerable discussion the committee selected J. G. Kingsbury of this city for the first place on the ticket, S. J. North of Mifflord for lieutenant-governor and C. S. Dobbins of Martin county for attorney general. Members of the committee report that the party will place candidates in the field for congressmen in all the districts and will nominate candidates for the legislature in a majority of the counties.

Burglars Wreck an Iowa Bank.