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## ISTHMIAN CANAL COMMISSION REPORT.

Most Practicable and Feasible Route For a Canal.

### COST OF NICARAGUA ROUTE.

The Estimates in Excess of Any Heretofore Made on Account of Increased Dimensions and Other Features—Condition of Construction Work Already Performed—Estimated Cost of the Different Divisions—Panama Route Benefits That Will Accrue to the U. S. From Canal.

(By Telegraph to Virginian-Pilot.)

Washington, Dec. 4.—The report of the Isthmian canal commission, submitted by the President to congress today, gives as the unanimous conclusion of that body that "the most practicable and feasible route for an Isthmian canal, under the control, management and ownership of the United States, is that known as the Nicaragua route." The commission estimates the cost of this route at \$200,540,000. This estimate is much in excess of any heretofore made and is due to increased dimensions and other features not heretofore considered. The commission also estimates the cost of a canal by the Panama route at \$432,342,579, according to one route, or \$456,378,253 according to another route. As between the Nicaragua and Panama routes the commission sums up a number of advantages favorable to the former.

It states also that under the concession given by the government of Colombia to the Panama Canal Company that government is not free to grant the necessary rights to the United States, except upon conditions made by the company.

### THE NICARAGUAN ROUTE.

Along the Nicaragua it was found that the short section of partially constructed canal is perhaps in as good shape to-day as it was when the work was stopped.

The buildings, locks, etc., are worthless. The commission visited President Zelaya and other leading officials of Nicaragua and found them greatly interested in the project. The occupation of their territory by the United States for canal purposes did not seem to be regarded as a serious obstacle, provided the sovereignty of the republic was respected. Along the Panama route the commission found a large force of workmen engaged upon the canal line, about 2,000 in number, according to the Panama Company. The canal had been opened to some extent at both ends.

No value should be given to the plant now on the Isthmus. A visit was also made to President Iglesias, of Costa Rica, and his cabinet, and a strong sentiment found to exist for an American canal along the Nicaraguan route. Trips were also made along the Darien route.

### DIMENSIONS.

The commission having in mind the increasing size of ocean-going vessels, it was determined to fix upon a depth of thirty-five feet at mean low water and a bottom width of 150 feet, with some increase of dimensions at certain points. These dimensions are larger than those proposed for any previous canal scheme.

A width of 150 feet will allow all but the very largest ships to pass each other in the canal, while the locks are of a dimension to permit even the largest ships afloat to be maneuvered. The size of locks is 70 feet length, 81 feet width, in the clear, with a depth of 25 feet.

The Nicaragua route adopted follows essentially the lines laid down by the Nicaragua canal commission in its report of 1879-99. It begins near Greytown, on the Atlantic side, follows the San Juan river, enters Lake Nicaragua and terminates at Brito on the Pacific side. The distance from ocean to ocean is about 185 miles. Plans are given for the great harbors required at Greytown and Brito. The most difficult engineering work is the dam across the San Juan river to regulate the water of the lake, on whose construction hinges largely the time required to build the canal.

### TIME OF BUILDING.

The commission says eight years would probably be a reasonable estimate for the time of building it. At least two years will be consumed in preparatory work and opening a harbor at Greytown, so that if work on the dam should be commenced immediately thereafter the time required for completing the entire work will be about ten years.

### ESTIMATED COST.

The commission then submits the following estimated cost of a canal on the Nicaragua route:

Nicaragua division (from Greytown to Boca de Caserio dam) \$32,662,000.

Middle division (from Boca de Caserio dam to Las Lajas) \$25,425,000.

Western division (from Las Lajas to Brito) \$51,680,000.

Eighty-nine miles of railroad, \$7,350,000.

Total, \$117,117,000.

Engineering, police, sanitation, and general contingencies, \$33,423,000.

Aggregate, \$200,540,000.

This estimate provides for a double system of locks, but a single lock system would reduce the cost \$19,678,000. Narrowing the bottom one-third will permit a further reduction of \$16,049,000. This would bring the estimated cost down to \$163,813,000.

### THE PANAMA ROUTE.

Concerning the Panama route, the commission says its natural attraction lies in the combination of a very narrow Isthmus with a low summit. The estimated cost of construction totals \$118,618,816, while the engineering, police, sanitation, and general contingencies swells the aggregate estimate to \$142,342,579.

This estimate is capable of reduction to \$115,941,215 if single locks and a narrow bottom are adopted. An alternative estimate is submitted, based on having the Alhajuela dam built to impound the water of the upper Chagres. This estimate is \$156,378,253. The commission reports that the val-

ue of the French work already done is estimated at \$3,931,493.

### RECEIPTS TO ACCRUE.

It is estimated that the tonnage that would use the canal will amount to 7,030,027 tons in 1903.

The report says: "As compared with Europe the United States will derive from the canal far greater benefits, both commercially and industrially. The canal once opened, our trade with the west coast of South America will rapidly increase, as will also the volume of our trade with the Orient. The amount of the American commerce through the canal will quickly surpass the total amount of Europe's traffic."

"An Isthmian canal will strengthen the unity of the national and political interests of the United States and promote its commerce and industries."

"By bringing the eastern and western sections of our country into closer relations, by reducing the time and cost of transporting our western products to Europe and by enabling the eastern, southern and central states to reach the raw materials and markets of Pacific countries cheaply and expeditiously the canal will more fully identify political and social intercourse and quicken the industrial activity of every section of the United States. The manufacturers of eastern and southern states, the cotton from the south, etc., will flow out to the foreign countries in an increasing volume."

The commission's final conclusions follow: "The estimated cost of building the Nicaragua canal is about \$55,000,000 more than that of completing the Panama canal, leaving out the cost of acquiring the latter property. This measure the difference in the magnitude of obstacles to be overcome in the actual construction of the two canals, and covering all physical considerations."

The new Panama Canal Company has shown no disposition to sell its property to the United States. Should that company be able and willing to sell there is reason to believe that the price would not be such as would make the total cost to the United States less than that of the Nicaragua canal."

### TIME OF PASSAGE THROUGH CANAL.

"II. The Panama canal, after completion, would be shorter, have fewer locks and less curvature than the Nicaragua canal. The measure of these advantages is the time required for a vessel to pass through, which is estimated for an average speed at twelve hours for Panama and thirty-three hours for Nicaragua."

"On the other hand, the distance from San Francisco to New York is 37 miles; to New Orleans 579 miles and to Liverpool 486 miles greater via Panama than via Nicaragua. The time required to pass over these distances being greater than the difference in the time of transit through the canals, the Nicaragua lines after completion, would be somewhat the more advantageous of the two to the United States, notwithstanding the greater cost of maintaining the longer canal."

### CONCESSIONS.

"III. The Government of Colombia, in which lies the Panama canal, has granted an exclusive concession, which still has many years to run. So far as can be ascertained, the company is not willing to sell its franchise, but it will allow the United States to become the owner of part of its stock. The commission considers such an arrangement inadmissible."

### THE GOVERNMENTS OF NICARAGUA AND COSTA RICA, ON THE OTHER HAND, ARE UNTRAMMELED BY CONCESSIONS."

### TEMPERANCE WOMEN.

#### SECOND DAY OF THEIR NATIONAL CONVENTION.

(By Telegraph to Virginian-Pilot.) Washington, Dec. 4.—The Woman's Christian Temperance Union convention in session here to-day adopted resolutions against the army canteen and prepared a petition to the President; another to congress, and identical petitions to all of the great powers against the sale of fire-arms and the importation of liquor and opium into the Philippine Islands or the island possessions of the other powers.

The petition to the President pointed out that it has been the policy of America to forbid the sale of intoxicants to the Indian tribes, and that England, who had the greatest experience among all of the colonizing powers of the world, had been forced to adopt a prohibition policy in her colonies in Africa and elsewhere. The convention therefore asks that the President, either through the war department or the Philippine commission, shall extend the prohibition law to the Indian territory so as to take in the Philippine Islands.

A petition to the Senate urges the ratification of the pending treaty for the protection of Central Africa against intoxicants.

A petition also was drawn up to Great Britain, France, Spain, Holland, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Hungary, Greece, Russia, Turkey, Persia and Japan, asking for an international treaty that will forbid the sale of intoxicants, opium and firearms in all islands and other regions inhabited chiefly by aboriginal tribes.

### A DISASTROUS WRECK.

#### EIGHT PERSONS KILLED AND TWENTY WOUNDED.

(By Telegraph to Virginian-Pilot.) Sacramento, Cal., Dec. 4.—A work train, carrying its crew of between twenty-five and thirty track repairers, backed into a freight train a few minutes east of Sulzham, on the Southern Pacific road, to-day, and in the wreck which followed eight men were killed and twenty more injured, many of them seriously.

From the meagre reports received it appears that the freight train had the right-of-way and was running at full speed in order to meet and pass another freight at Sulzham. The work train should have been on a siding and was making for it at a good rate of speed when it collided with the freight. A heavy fog was prevailing and it was possible to discern objects for only a short distance, so the shock of the colliding trains was terrific. All the casualties are reported to be among the men of the working crews, as the engineers and firemen jumped and saved themselves.

Over 200 feet of track was torn up and the cars were smashed and piled upon each other in every conceivable shape.

## FRENCH TALKS WAR WITH ENGLAND.

General Mercier Causes Deep Sensation in the Senate.

### THE PRESIDENT INTERVENES.

The Old Soldier Points Out How Easily England Could Be Invaded, and Makes Demands Which Caused President Order to Declare Such Proposals Out of Order—He Declares France the Equal of England, Whose Premier Recently Expressed Significant Fears.

(By Telegraph to Virginian-Pilot.)

Paris, Dec. 4.—General Mercier caused a deep sensation in the senate to-day during the debate on the naval bill by pointing out the ease by which England could be invaded. He demanded that the government introduce into the plans for mobilization of the army the navy methods for the rapid embarkation and debarkation of an expeditionary corps. The president, M. Fallieres, intervened, declaring that such proposals were out of order.

### THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS.

"In view of the possibility of war with Great Britain, the use of the army is not sufficiently taken into account. The times are not the same as they were a hundred years ago. Steam, the navy, the telegraph and the railroad have rendered the problem of the invasion of England much easier of so-

## CONGRESS ARRANGING TO DO BUSINESS.

The Program of Senate Leaders Taken Up in Earnest.

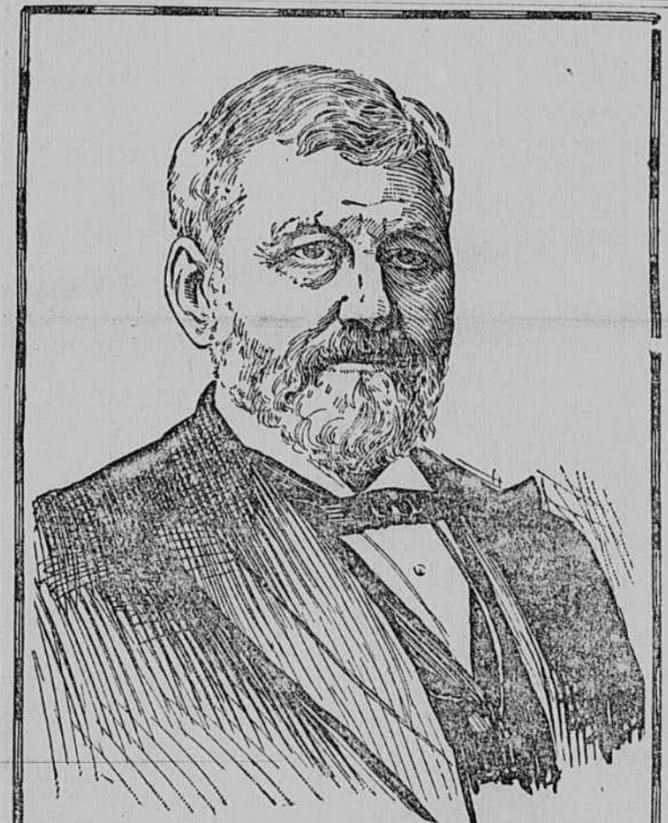
### BRIEF SESSION OF HOUSE.

The Ship Subsidy Bill Made the Unfinished Business of the Senate—Americans Authorized to Accept Decorations From Foreign Rulers—Senator Frye's Speech in Support of Ship Subsidy Bill—Amendments to Root Army Bill Offered in the House—Other Matters of Interest.

(By Telegraph to Virginian-Pilot.)

Washington, Dec. 4.—The program of the senate leaders for a business session was taken up in earnest today and material progress was made. What is popularly known as the ship subsidy bill was made the unfinished business of the senate instead of the Spooner Philippine measure and the discussion of it was opened by Mr. Frye, of Maine, chairman of the committee on commerce, from which the measure was reported.

Mr. Allison presented the credentials of Jonathan Prentiss Dolliver, who was appointed to succeed the late Senator John Henry Gear, of Iowa. Mr. Dolliver, escorted by Mr. Allison, presented himself at the desk, where the oath of office was administered to him by President Pro Tem Frye.



William B. Allison.

A Prominent Republican and Leader on the floor of the United States Senate

### BILLS PASSED.

Among the bills passed were the following: To authorize the use of depositions before naval courts in certain cases, with an amendment restricting its operations to depositions taken at the instance of the accused; to authorize Captain N. M. Brooks, superintendent of foreign mails, to accept the decoration of the Red Eagle of the Third Class from the Emperor of Germany; to authorize Hon. George D. Meeker, John to accept a decoration of Chevalier of the First Class from the government of Sweden and Norway; to encourage the holding of an Inter-State and West Indian Exposition in Charleston, S. C., in 1901. The measure appropriates \$250,000 and admits exhibits free of duty.

When the unfinished business, known as the Spooner Philippine bill, was laid before the senate at 2 o'clock, Mr. Frye, having previously yielded the gavel to Senator Gallinger, moved that the senate proceed to the consideration of the ship subsidy bill.

Mr. Jones (Ark.) demanded the yeas and nays upon the motion. It prevailed, 35 to 29, as follows: Yeas—Allrich, Allison, Baker, Bar, Reverdy, Carter, Clark, Cullom, Dolliver, Elkins, Foraker, Foster, Frye, Gallinger, Hale, Hanna, Hansbrough, Hawley, Hoar, Keam, Lodge, McComas, McCumber, McMillan, Mason, Nelson, Penrose, Perkins, Platt (Connecticut), Platt (New York), Quarles, Scott, Sewell, Shoup, Stewart, Thurston, Wetmore, Wolcott—35.

Nays—Bacon, Berry, Clay, Cockrell, Culberson, Harris, Heitfeld, Jones (Arkansas), Keeney, Lindsay, Morgan, Pettigrew, Pettus, Sullivan, Tallaferrro, Teller, Tillman, Vest, Wellington—29.

### SENATOR FRYE'S REMARKS.

Mr. Frye then addressed the Senate. He said that with a boundless coast, unparalleled and unapproachable natural resources, ship-builders the equal of any in the world, the greatest exports in the world and every other argument in our favor, the United

### THE HOUSE.

The session of the House to-day was brief. The real work will be done tomorrow, when the House will take up the consideration of the army reorganization bill which Mr. Hull, chairman of the committee on military affairs, reported to-day. He explained the urgent necessity for immediate action.

The objection to the swearing in of Mr. Connor of Iowa, the successor of Senator Dolliver, which was raised by Mr. Bailey, of Texas, yesterday, was removed to-day by the presentation of a new set of credentials from Governor Shaw, and he took the oath.

Three bills were passed under the call of committees, the most important being one to provide for the detail of not to exceed 100 retired army officers and 500 non-commissioned officers as military instructors in the public schools of such cities as adopt a system of military instruction. The others were "to prevent the failure of military justice" and to legalize an issue of \$250,000 of bonds by Pima county, Arizona.

The resignation of Mr. Devries, of California, who is now a member of the board of general appraisers, was laid before the House.

The speaker announced the appointment of Mr. Davis, of Florida, as a member of the committee on merchant marine and fisheries.

ARMY REORGANIZATION. Mr. Hull, of Iowa, chairman of the military affairs committee, reported the army reorganization bill. The volunteers under the present law, he said, must be mustered out July 1, and every one must feel the imperative need of providing for a new army. He asked unanimous consent that the bill be taken up to-morrow. Mr. Sulzer objected.

THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY. A resolution providing for memorial exercises in the hall of representatives on the occasion of the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the founding of the government at Washington, December 12, was adopted. At 1:35 p. m. the house adjourned.

### APPROPRIATION BILL.

Washington, Dec. 4.—The committee on appropriations of the house to-day completed the legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill. The committee expects to be able to obtain consideration for the bill to-morrow. The bill carries \$34,499,508, being \$903,091 less than the estimates and \$238,496 more than is carried by the present law. The whole number of salaries provided for in the bill is 758 less than the number estimated for and an increase of 129 over that carried in the present law.

THE ROOT BILL AMENDMENTS. The bill reported by the house military committee to-day is the Root bill, amended. Most of these changes have been reported. Two sections were added to the bill to-day, the first of which is meant to cover the case of General Shafter and the last of General Fitzhugh Lee and James H. Wilson. These sections are:

41. That the President is hereby authorized to select from the retired list of the army an officer not above the rank of brigadier general, who may have distinguished himself during the war with Spain in command of a separate army, and to appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, the officer so selected to be major general, United States army, with the pay and allowances established by law for officers of that grade on the retired list.

States had permitted its commercial rivals to solve the pathways of commerce and hold them practically to the exclusion of this country.

Last year of all the enormous exports and imports of the United States, only 9 per cent, was carried in American bottoms. Last year, Mr. Frye said, the United States paid to foreign nations, principally Great Britain and Germany, \$600,000 a day for doing carrying trade work for this country.

### A PIERCE COMMERCIAL WAR.

"The world," Mr. Frye declared, "has entered upon a fierce commercial war, and it is to be a long and strenuous conflict. Each nation is seeking the advantage of its rivals in this conflict and is pressing forward to gain that advantage. Most of the foreign nations are looking for commercial advantage in the east. Russia, France, Great Britain, Italy and Germany are paying an aggregate of \$5,000,000 per year in subsidies for the carrying ships of the eastern trade."

### WHAT IT COSTS US.

He pointed out that under present conditions it costs the United States from 40 to 50 per cent, more, principally in wages and food, to operate its ships than it costs Great Britain, and about 80 per cent, more than it costs Norway, and yet the United States is forced to compete, under such a handicap, with the encouraged and protected ships of foreign countries. He maintained that export bounties were impracticable, and that in the matter of discriminating duties the United States would encounter no less than thirty-one different treaties. Those would have to be abrogated if discriminating duties are enforced. The abrogation of those treaties would be an offence to every nation involved. His figures indicated that ships of Great Britain had an advantage of from \$4.50 to \$5 per gross ton over the bill 234,000 a year. Mr. Frye explained how the subsidy payment was regulated.

### QUESTIONS AND REPLIES.

Mr. Clay, of Georgia, asked if it were not true that a 21-knot ship would not draw over \$100,000 a year.

Mr. Frye replied that the amount drawn by such vessel would be about \$22,000 in excess of her coal consumption and handling.

"But," persisted Mr. Clay, "is not the gross amount of the subsidy of the 21-knot ship \$304,000 a year under this bill?"

Mr. Frye admitted that it was.

"I understand," said Mr. Clay, "that the 10-knot and 12-knot ships, which carry the agricultural products of the country, do not receive more than one-third the subsidy of the fast passenger vessels, which carry no agricultural products."

"And I was showing," responded Mr. Frye, "that the low speed vessels were the ones which received the actual benefits from the subsidy, and not the fast passenger ships."

The senate, at 3:55 p. m., held a brief executive session, after which it adjourned.

### SHANGHAI, DEC. 4.—THE YANG TSE VICEROYS, WHO ARE MASTERS OF THE SITUATION, GAVE VICE-ADMIRAL SEYMOUR SATISFACTORY ASSURANCES OF THEIR FUTURE POLICY ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RECENT VISIT TO THESE OFFICIALS.

United States Ambassador Choate had a long conversation today with the secretary of state for foreign affairs, the Marquis of Lansdowne, in which the proposed alternatives and amendments in Secretary Hay's recent note and the notes of the other powers were fully discussed. Nothing definite was arrived at. Lord Lansdowne showed the most friendly spirit.

Mr. Choate is notifying Secretary Hay of Lord Lansdowne's views. Further consultation will follow shortly.

### SATISFACTORY ASSURANCES.

Shanghai, Dec. 4.—The Yang Tse viceroys, who are masters of the situation, gave Vice-Admiral Seymour satisfactory assurances of their future policy on the occasion of his recent visit to these officials.

### CANDIDATE FOR DECAPITATION.

Tien Tsin, Monday, Dec. 3.—Tang Wen Huan, the author of the outrages upon the Pao Ting Fu missionaries, arrived to-day and was paraded through the Victoria road in a cart under a strong German guard previous to being handed over to the provisional government for decapitation.

### GERMAN LOSSES.

Shanghai, Dec. 4.—It is reported in Tien Tsin that the Germans lost twenty killed and many wounded west of Pao Ting Fu, where they were attacked by twenty-five hundred Boxers.

### ANOTHER EXPEDITION.

Berlin, Dec. 4.—A dispatch from Field Marshal Count von Waldersee, date Peking, Monday, December 3, says a considerable force of Chinese regulars has taken up a position at Bang Chou, 95 kilometres southward of Tien Tsin, and that two detachments of troops from Tien Tsin, commanded by Colonel Lohrscheidt and Major Falkenhayn, are proceeding against these Chinese.

### A CONCILIATORY DISPATCH.

Dr. Mumm von Schwartzstein, the German minister to China, cables that he has received a conciliatory dispatch from Yuan Shi Kai, the military governor of the province of Shantung, assuming full responsibility for the safety of Bishop Anzer, who is about to proceed to Tsi Nan Fu, to confer with Yuan Shi Kai.

### FRUITLESS MEETING OF ENVOYS.

Peking, Dec. 4.—As was expected, the meeting of the foreign envoys to-day did not result in any definite conclusion, owing to the fact that not all of the governments have notified their representatives as to the form of the preliminary note to the Chinese plenipotentiaries. Mr. Conger, the United States minister, said after the meeting: "Apparently it is the desire of all to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. I believe the next meeting will be the last, but will not be called until every minister has received definite instructions covering all contingencies. Personally I am satisfied with the results of the proceedings to-day."

### COMMANDER HALL.

HIS CONDITION SAID TO BE MORE HOPEFUL. The many friends of Lieutenant-Commander Hall, who was injured Monday in the Brooklyn navy-yard, will rejoice to read the following dispatch, received by the Virginian-Pilot at an early hour this morning:

"New York, Dec. 5.—Physicians attending Lieutenant-Commander Reynolds T. Hall, whose skull was fractured by a falling beam at the navy-yard here yesterday, are more hopeful to-day of the patient's recovery."

### CLASSIFICATION OF NEWS.

BY DEPARTMENTS.

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Editorial—Page 4.  
Virginia News—Page 8.  
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Portsmouth News—Pages 10, 11.  
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