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**CAPITOL'S CHANGES.**

IMPROVEMENTS MADE IN THE NA-  
TION'S LEGISLATIVE BUILDING.  
More Committee Rooms For Senate  
and House—Masonic Honor For  
Congressman Richardson—Dr. Norton  
and Karpuz Constitute.  
[Special Correspondence.]  
WASHINGTON, Dec. 10.—The closing  
session of the Fifty-sixth congress is  
now fairly under way, and the senators  
and representatives are getting down  
to work with an apparent determina-  
tion to clear up the heavily incumbered  
calendar or at least to dispose of the  
most important items of the unfinished  
business left over from the first ses-  
sion.  
Senators and representatives alike  
are highly pleased over the changes

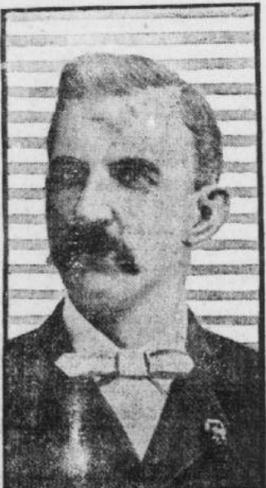


Photo by Bell, Washington.  
JAMES D. RICHARDSON.

and improvements that have been  
made in the capitol building during the  
recess, which give each branch of con-  
gress 14 additional committee rooms.  
They are likewise loud in their praises  
of Assistant Architect Woods and mar-  
vel that the work could have been  
done so thoroughly in so short a space  
of time. Toward the close of the last  
session a joint resolution was adopted  
which provided that "the rooms and  
space recently occupied by the Library  
of Congress in the capitol building shall  
be divided into three stories, the third  
story of which shall be fitted up and  
used as a reference library for the  
senate and house of representatives  
and that portion of the other two  
stories north of a line drawn east and  
west through the center of the rotunda  
shall be used for such purpose as may  
be designated by the senate of the  
United States and that portion of the  
first and second stories south of said  
line shall be used for such purpose as  
may be designated by the house of  
representatives."

An indefinite appropriation was made  
by the resolution and no limit fixed on  
the expenditure, full discretion being  
lodged in the architect of the capitol,  
Edward Clark. As soon as Mr. Clark  
received the authority of congress for  
the work he turned the whole matter  
over to Elliott Wood, the assistant  
architect of the capitol, who prepared  
the plans and supervised the work. All  
contracts were approved by the secre-  
tary of the interior and disbursements  
made through that office. The cost has  
been about \$200,000.

The work was begun on Aug. 20 and  
since been pushed vigorously day and  
night. At the outset a difficulty was  
encountered of quite a serious char-  
acter. When the old structure was torn  
away and the foundation for the new  
work was about to be begun upon  
plans drawn for the occasion, it was  
found that the windows and doors of  
the old building were not "true." This  
necessitated changes in the working  
plans and considerable additional labor.  
Solid masonry was put in, about 300,  
000 bricks being used. There are 11,  
000 square feet of tiling in the work  
and 4,500 lineal feet of marble base.  
Altogether there are 28 apartments,  
occupying two floors, thus giving each  
body 14 additional committee rooms.  
Nearly all the rooms are light and airy  
and some of them of ample dimensions.  
Each apartment has a fireplace, with a  
marble mantel, American marble being  
used. The rooms will not be decorated  
until next summer, but are finished in  
white at this time. The woodwork in  
the doors is solid mahogany, and every-  
thing about the place is of the best  
quality. The main entrance to the  
apartments is reached from the rotun-  
da in the same way as the Library  
of Congress was formerly entered. The  
little lobby between the rotunda and  
the new committee rooms is highly or-  
namental. Two marble columns, with  
carved capitals, support a marble ceil-  
ing. The side walls are also of marble,  
and a marble balustrade surrounds the  
stairway leading to the lower floor.

Many improvements of a minor char-  
acter have been made about the capitol  
building since congress was last in ses-  
sion. The room of the senate commit-  
tee on foreign relations has been redecor-  
ated in an elaborate manner and new  
furnishings put in to match the decora-  
tions. Green and gold work is the  
color scheme, and the effect is strik-  
ing. The room of the house committee  
on foreign affairs has also been newly  
ornamented, as well as some other of  
the committee rooms. Two new elec-  
tric elevators have been placed in the  
house wing of the capitol to replace the  
slow and cumbersome old machines.  
New tiling has been put in the base-

ment floor of the old building, and the  
machinery of the ventilating plant has  
been completely overhauled. Altogeth-  
er the congressional recess has been an  
exceedingly busy time for the archi-  
tect's office.

Speaking of capitol betterments, it  
may be noted that there is a strong sen-  
timent in favor of improving and beau-  
tifying the rotunda. One suggestion is  
to line the walls with Siena marble  
similar to that used in the Library of  
Congress. It is said that this would  
blend with the color of the  
frieze better than anything else.  
The contemplated improvements would  
include a mosaic floor instead of the  
old granite slabs and the removal of  
the fluted columns around the walls,  
which now appear as if they were com-  
posed of plaster of paris. The beauti-  
ful entrance to the new committee  
rooms, consisting of marble columns  
with carved capitals and marble side  
walls and ceilings, serves to throw into  
unfavorable contrast the dingy rotun-  
da, and many senators and representa-  
tives have commented upon it.

Another matter in connection with  
the capitol building which concerns the  
representatives in congress is what is  
to be done with the additional mem-  
bers of the house which it is supposed  
that the reapportionment bill will pro-  
vide. There is apparently no way with  
the present accommodations to seat 23  
additional members, and it is probable  
that there will be some radical change  
in the hall of the house.

The reapportionment question, which  
comes to the front as a result of the in-  
creased population as shown by the  
twelfth census, is likely to precipitate  
a pretty lively fight in which the party  
lines will be sharply drawn. The forces  
of the minority will be marshaled by  
Congressman James D. Richardson, the  
Democratic leader of the house.

Since the last session of congress Mr.  
Richardson has, by the way, been the  
recipient of a new honor, one of which  
even his most pronounced political op-  
ponents freely recognize that he is en-  
tirely worthy. He is now one of the  
most exalted Masons in point of rank  
in the United States, being the sov-  
ereign grand commander of the southern  
jurisdiction, "Ancient and Accepted  
Scottish Rite of Freemasonry," to which  
position he succeeds through the death  
of the late Grand Commander Thomas  
Hubbard Caswell, who died in Califor-  
nia a few weeks ago. The officers of  
the Scottish Rite, unlike all others in  
Masonry, hold their rank and stations  
for life, and Mr. Richardson, who was  
lieutenant grand commander, becomes  
in the order of succession the grand  
commander.

In executive, diplomatic and even  
congressional circles there is just now  
not a little of speculation and comment  
as to what will be the outcome of the  
tangle in the Levant, which is brought  
into prominence by Turkey's rejection  
of a request for an exequatur for an  
American consul at Karpuz and the  
dispatch of the battleship Kentucky to  
Smyrna. The refusal to grant an ex-  
equatur is regarded by the United  
States legation at Constantinople as a  
violation of treaty rights. Consequen-  
tly Dr. Thomas H. Norton, who was  
appointed some time ago by President  
McKinley to establish a consulate at  
Karpuz, has been directed to proceed  
to his post. He has been in Constanti-  
nople some time awaiting the issuance  
of his exequatur. The claim of the  
United States in his case is based upon  
a clause in the Turco-American treaty  
of 1830 which reads, "The United  
States may appoint their citizens to be  
consuls and vice consuls at the com-  
mercial places in the dominions of the  
sublime porte where it shall be found  
needful to superintend the affairs of  
commerce." The sultan claims—and it  
is difficult to prove the contrary—that  
there is no commerce at the place in  
question, the same objection made to  
the establishment of a consulate at  
Erzerum. Furthermore, he claims that  
his final permission in the case of Er-  
zerum was obtained under an implied  
understanding that the United States gov-



Photo by Bellsmith, Cincinnati.  
DR. THOMAS H. NORTON.

ernment would abandon its claim to a  
consulate at the other place. While it  
is admitted at Washington that there  
may have been foundation for this un-  
derstanding, it is said that the British  
government has since established a  
consulate where one is now refused to  
us, and under the favored nation clause  
of the Turco-American treaty our gov-  
ernment claims the same privileges as  
those accorded to Great Britain. The  
visit of the battleship Kentucky to  
Smyrna may relate to this matter as  
well as to the larger one of missionary  
indemnity. At all events the unfolding  
of the Turkish complications will be  
watched with keenest interest here.  
SAMUEL HUBBARD.

**CIVIC FEDERATION. ACRE AND ITS RUBBER**

MEETING OF NATIONAL ORGANIZA-  
TION AT CHICAGO.

Questions of Labor and Capital to  
Receive Much Consideration—Car-  
roll D. Wright and John Mitchell  
to Be Present.

[Special Correspondence.]  
CHICAGO, Dec. 11.—Last fall at the  
trust conference held under the aus-  
pices of the Civic Federation of Chi-  
cago the question of forming a national  
civic federation along the same lines as  
the eminently successful Chicago or-  
ganization was discussed. In June of  
this year the discussion bore fruit, and  
the National Civic Federation was or-  
ganized. In a few days the federation  
will meet here, and the open discussion  
of some of the problems that are vex-  
ing the United States may point the  
way to their solution.

The federation is unpartisan and  
very wide in its scope. It is intended  
by its founders that nothing that has a  
bearing, direct or indirect, on the wel-  
fare of our country shall be neglected.  
The prospectus of the organization, is-  
sued last June, states its objects to be  
"to provide for study and discussion of  
questions of national import affecting  
either the foreign or domestic policy of  
the United States, to aid in the crystal-  
lization of the most enlightened public  
sentiment of the country in respect  
thereto and when desirable to promote  
necessary legislation in accordance  
therewith."

It will readily be seen that the inten-  
tions of the federation if carried into  
effect can but make for the betterment  
of the country. Its parent organiza-  
tion, the Civic Federation of Chicago,  
which has been in existence about six  
years, has done much for local im-  
provement, since it is composed of the  
best citizens of the city. It is proposed  
to make of its prototype, the national  
organization, the same power for good  
in national affairs that the local federa-  
tion has been in Chicago affairs.

The need of such an organization is  
set forth by Franklin H. Head, the  
chairman of the committee on organiza-  
tion, who cites the fact that the man-  
ufacturers, the agriculturists, the great  
labor bodies, the financiers, the econ-  
omists and other classes have their an-  
nual meetings devoted to their special  
questions. The object of the National  
Civic Federation in addition to creating  
departments to study national prob-  
lems is to provide a national forum by  
means of which representatives of all  
these great divisions of society may  
come together and discuss the prob-  
lems in which all have an interest.

The advisory council of the National  
Federation now has a membership of



From a recent photograph.  
JOHN MITCHELL.

about 500 in all parts of the United  
States and representatives in our new-  
ly acquired dependencies. The aims of  
the federation are warmly indorsed by  
many eminent economists and students  
of social science and the conditions of  
American life. Among those who have  
commended it are the late Charles  
Dudley Warner, president of the Amer-  
ican Social Science association, and J.  
W. Jenks, the political economist of  
Cornell university. Professor Jenks  
has expressed the opinion that the carry-  
ing out of the aims of this associa-  
tion would be of untold benefit to the  
voters throughout the country.

At the coming meeting of the federa-  
tion many questions of grave import  
connected with the internal and fore-  
ign policy of the United States and  
others concerning subjects of social  
and economic importance will be dis-  
cussed. Many of the most prominent  
of American students and investigators  
of these subjects will be heard, and it  
will be strange if satisfactory solutions  
of some at least of the problems con-  
fronting our people are not reached in  
this and succeeding conferences. One  
of the questions uppermost in the  
minds of Chicago people and of grave  
import to the other sections of the  
country is the successful arbitration of  
strikes. Chicago has suffered much  
through the great strike in the building  
trades. Many of the best known labor  
leaders of the United States will be  
here during the meeting. Among those  
who have accepted invitations to partic-  
ipate are Carroll D. Wright, the  
United States commissioner of labor;  
John Mitchell, who conducted the re-  
cent strike of the coal miners and who  
will doubtless relate his experiences  
during that struggle, and Samuel Gompers,  
the well known labor leader. In its  
call for the coming meeting the federa-  
tion says that strikes and lockouts are  
perhaps a greater waste of human en-  
ergy and responsible for a greater loss  
of wealth to society as a whole than  
any other obstructive factor connected  
with modern industrialism.  
HENRY W. MILLER.

VALUABLE PRODUCT OF THE PRO-  
SPECTIVE REPUBLIC.

Strong Efforts Being Made to Estab-  
lish a Government Independent of  
Bolivia—How Britain Gets Millions  
In Taxes.

[Special Correspondence.]  
LA PAZ, Bolivia, Nov. 22.—The na-  
tions of the world may possibly see a  
new republic rising before long to its  
place in the ranks of the existing dem-  
ocratic governments. Acre, a stretch  
of territory about 300 miles square in  
the upper part of Bolivia near the Bra-  
zilian boundary line, is the site of the  
prospective republic. This locality has  
many features which can be turned to  
good advantage by those desirous of  
making it their domicile provided the  
dispute as to the actual ownership of  
the expanse is decided in favor of the  
element advocating the establishment  
of an independent form of government.  
The Bolivian officials, arguing that the  
entire district known as Acre is within  
the boundaries of their state, have sent  
a detachment of troops to Acreopolis,  
Acre's metropolis, to quell all attempts  
at rebellion, but Acre's supporters in-  
tend resisting in no uncertain manner,  
realizing that if they are to be an in-  
dependent people they must strike while  
the iron is hot. Should the contest re-  
sult in Bolivia's defeat no time will be  
lost by Acre in seeking general recogni-  
tion.

Henry W. Phillips, a property holder  
in the disputed territory, has already  
been sent to the United States to ob-  
tain help if possible from the authori-  
ties at Washington, but the success of  
his mission is not very extensively be-  
lieved in by those said to be in a posi-  
tion to know.

Acre has undoubtedly a great future  
from a commercial standpoint, and the  
proper and thorough exploitation of its  
possibilities will help materially in  
gaining the confidence which it is striv-  
ing to get. One commodity which is



TYPICAL ACRE RUBBER HUNTER.

obtainable in quantities sufficient to  
guarantee the future success of the  
whole region is rubber. Most of the  
9,000 inhabitants of Acre are connected  
in some way with the traffic in the use-  
ful and valuable gum. The rubber has  
to be taken to the coast for shipment  
through Brazil. In doing this the Ama-  
zon river, that great artery circulat-  
ing and pulsating through the heart of  
the vast tropical wilderness, serves as  
an outlet. The boats in leaving Acre  
follow the Aquiro river to its junction  
with the Purus and thence eastward to  
the point of the latter's confluence with  
the main current of the Amazon. The  
total distance is about 2,000 miles.

Brazil requires the payment of a duty  
on all the rubber that is taken through  
its territory. The impost is levied and  
collected at Para. Last year the ship-  
ments ran from 3,000 to 4,000 tons. The  
rubber, being worth from 98 cents to \$1  
a pound, would run its value up to  
about \$2,000 a ton. Four thousand  
tons at \$2,000 each would equal \$8,000,  
000 as the value of the annual product  
of the Acre country. On this Brazil  
has been collecting an export duty at  
Para of from 21 to 22 per cent, thereby  
deriving a revenue approximated at  
\$1,750,000 annually. Brazilian capital-  
ists are the principal investors in Acre,  
and it is likely that that country will  
always wield considerable influence in  
its development.

Rubber hunting is a varied and inter-  
esting pursuit, but it is also accompa-  
nied with more or less of risk. The  
best localities for the finding of the Si-  
phonia elastica, or Brazilian rubber  
tree, are isolated and thronged with all  
sorts of reptiles and wild animals.  
Hereabouts the rubber hunters are  
called "stringueros," which name cor-  
responds to the Central American term  
"puladores." They usually go out in  
small parties, each having chosen one  
of their number for captain. As soon  
as the rubber swamps are reached they  
select a suitable spot for a base of op-  
erations and proceed to construct a  
rude camp, which serves as a general  
rendezvous. Then they wander off  
singly and in couples looking for the  
rubber trees until nightfall, when they  
return to headquarters.

The hunter as he goes his daily  
rounds makes a number of fresh cuts  
around the trunk of each tree which he  
has previously marked as his own spe-  
cial property pro tem, and sets little  
clay cups to catch the valuable sap that  
flows from the incisions. The sap at  
this stage resembles rich Jersey cream  
more than anything else that I can  
compare it with.

The milky juice, or crouchouc, as  
the natives call it, was first made use  
of by the Indians of Costa Rica and by  
them made known to their conquerors.  
The Spaniards in Mexico had leaped  
as early as 1513 to make it into shoes  
and also to use it for waxing their  
cloaks in order to render them water-  
proof.  
HANS DUBOIS.