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FAVOR SHORT ROUTE
ISTHMIAN CANAL COMMISSIONERS WOULD ACCEPT PANAMA PROPOSAL.

Recommends That the Offer to Sell to the United States for Forty Million Dollars Be Accepted—Full Statement of the Company's Assets and Liabilities and an Estimate of Cost of Construction.

Washington, Jan. 21.—The president has transmitted to congress the supplemental report of the isthmian canal commission, in which it is unanimously recommended that the offer of the Panama Canal company to sell its rights, property and unfinished works to the United States for \$40,000,000 be accepted. The report gives in full the conference which has passed between the commission and the canal company and includes a cablegram from the president of the board, dated Jan. 9, as follows:

"The new Panama Canal company declares that it is ready to accept for the totality, without exception, of its property and rights on the isthmus the amount of \$40,000,000, the above offer to remain in force up to March, 1903."

The report states that the "totality" mentioned in this message includes 56 parcels of lands, amounting to 56,000 acres of land, which cover nearly all the ground necessary for the construction of the canal. It also includes 2,431 buildings used for offices, quarters, hospitals, storehouses, etc.; also an immense amount of machinery, consisting of floating plant, tugs, dredges, locomotives, cars, etc. It also includes all excavation work accomplished upon the main canal line, amounting to about 34,700,000 cubic yards. The value of the work already done is estimated at \$22,895,028; less contingencies estimated at \$4,579,005, leaving an aggregate of \$27,740,033. The offer also embraces all of the existing 70,000 shares of the Panama Railroad and Canal company, except 1,100 shares held by individuals in Europe and the United States. Against the property are mortgage bonds amounting to \$3,439,000. Of this amount the canal company owns \$871,000. It also holds in its treasury \$1,064,000 subject to sale or cancellation, leaving in the hands of the public \$1,604,000. These bonds bear 4 1/2 per cent interest. There are also outstanding \$996,000 6 per cent sinking fund bonds. The transfer also will include three passenger and freight steamers of 2,000 tons each. Summing up the commission finds the total value of the property to be as follows:

Excavation work done, \$27,474,033; Panama railroad stock at par, \$6,886,300; maps, etc., \$2,000,000; total, \$36,360,333. Add 10 per cent to cover omissions, \$3,636,667. Grand total, \$40,000,000.

The estimated cost of constructing the Nicaragua canal is given as \$45,630,704 more than the cost of completing the Panama canal.

A FAVORABLE REPORT.

Ship Subsidy Bill Approved by Senate Committee on Commerce.

Washington, Jan. 18.—The senate committee on commerce has authorized a favorable report on Senator Fry's ship subsidy bill. The Democratic members of the committee voted against reporting the bill. They also voted solidly for a motion offered by Senator Mallory to strike out the general subsidy provision of the bill. The committee made several amendments to the bill. The most important were: Allowing mail carrying vessels under the bill to be either iron or steel, instead of steel only, as originally provided, and another reducing to 1,500 gross registered tons the vessels receiving a bounty under the bill.

The report prepared by Senator Frye was read to the committee. It says the purpose of the bill is to establish the maritime supremacy of the United States in trade with Asia and in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean; to establish thoroughly trade between the United States and South American republics and to give the United States a respectable representation on the North Atlantic. The claim is made that all these results will be accomplished within 10 years. The report also asserts that the bill will so extend shipbuilding as to transfer in time from abroad to the United States the center of that industry, as the centers of other industries recently have been transferred, and also that it will give to the United States a measure of maritime independence corresponding to our industrial and agricultural independence.

FAVOR A REDUCTION.

War Taxes Discussed by House Ways and Means Committee.

Washington, Jan. 21.—The Republican members of the ways and means committee held a private meeting during the afternoon to consider what should be done about reducing the war revenue taxes. This is the first formal step taken by those who will frame a reduction measure to map out a line of action. The sentiment among Republican members of the committee is said to be quite general in favor of a reduction.

SURRENDER OF INSURGENTS.

Over Three Hundred Filipinos Take the Oath of Allegiance.

Washington, Jan. 19.—The war department is advised of the surrender of 365 insurgents to Brigadier General James F. Wade at Cebu, Philippine Islands, Jan. 14. On Jan. 15 they took the oath at Taglibaran, Bohol.

Most of the Patrol Missing. Cradock, Cape Colony, Jan. 21.—Wessels' command of Boers on Saturday last cut up a patrol of 50 men belonging to the local town guard, on the Tarkastad road. A few stragglers have returned. The remainder of the party are missing.

MEXICAN TOWN WRECKED.

Severe Disaster the Result of a Severe Shock of Earthquake.

Mexico City, Jan. 18.—One of the most terrible catastrophes in the history of the state of Guerrero is reported to have occurred at Chilpancingo, when an extremely violent earthquake shock caused a great loss of life and injured many persons. Details from the stricken district are very meager, but scattering reports received here indicate that probably 300 persons were killed and as many more injured. It is known that the state capital, the parish church and many business houses and residences are in ruins and there is much suffering as a result of the awful seismic disturbance.

One of the edifices that suffered most was the federal telegraph office, which explains the paucity of news that has so far reached this city. Meager details finally began to arrive here. The telegraph lines and apparatus at Chilpancingo were badly damaged, but the employees, all of whom were uninjured, quickly proceeded to erect an improvised telegraph office on the outskirts of the city.

The number of deaths was greater in the parish church than in any single place, as a crowd of worshippers was gathered there for the afternoon service. The solid masonry walled roof came toppling down on the worshippers and many people were killed. The war department has ordered troops in the neighborhood to co-operate in the work of rescue. Until this work is completed it would be impossible accurately to learn the number of victims.

It is believed, however, that this is one of the most destructive seismic phenomena that has occurred in Mexico. The greater part of the population of Chilpancingo are now camping out under tents around the town, which is five days' journey from the national capital.

Earthquake shocks were felt in many other cities and towns. In Mexico City the earthquake took place at 5:17 p. m. and was of such violence as to shake the most substantial buildings. The Pan-American congress was in session at the time and many of the delegates were greatly alarmed. The first movement here was one of trepidation and was very sharp. It was followed by an easy oscillatory movement north-northeast to south-southwest. The duration was 55 seconds. The damage to this city was only slight.

BUILDINGS IN RUINS.

Collapse of Four Structures in Detroit's Wholesale District.

Detroit, Jan. 20.—Four buildings, each four stories high, located in the heart of the wholesale district of the city, collapsed at 8:30 p. m. Sunday without any apparent cause and all that now remains is a smouldering heap of ruins. The buildings were a part of the block bounded by Jefferson avenue and Shelby and Griswold streets, and were occupied by five concerns, and their stocks are a total loss, which is estimated at \$152,000, exclusive of the loss on the buildings, which amounts to \$50,500. The buildings joined each other at the corner of Jefferson avenue and Shelby street. No one seems to know what caused the collapse of the buildings. On Sunday night that district is practically deserted and the few who were in the vicinity say that the buildings seemed to fall into a heap without apparent cause, making a noise like the rumbling of distant thunder. There are evidences of an explosion about the ruins, but no one heard a sound of such an explosion. The walls of the rear part of one of the buildings are still standing to the height of two stories, but the roof of this part of the building lies bottom side upward in the middle of Shelby street, and a large iron smokestack lies on the sidewalk on the opposite side of the street, smashed against the buildings there as if driven by force.

Experts from the Detroit Gas company's office made an examination of the ruins, but said they were unable to find evidences of a gas explosion.

HEROIC ELEVATOR BOY.

Sticks to His Post in a Burning Chicago Hotel.

Chicago, Jan. 19.—The La Strada hotel, a 7-story apartment hotel at 3535 Ellis avenue, was practically destroyed by fire during the day. Sixty women and children were in the building when the flames were discovered. About half of them were on the top floor at luncheon and they were thrown into a panic. Otto Bola, the elevator boy, however, succeeded in making several trips through the smoke and flames and carried all of them to safety. The last one out of the building was a paralytic, whom the elevator boy carried to his car and later into the air. The loss is put at \$100,000. The fire originated in a shed at the rear of the building. One fireman was slightly injured by falling glass.

WAS NOT A PRIZE FIGHT.

Magistrate Promptly Discharges Sharkey and Maher.

Philadelphia, Jan. 19.—Peter Maher and Tom Sharkey, who were arrested at the instance, it is alleged, of the Law and Order Society and held in \$5,000 bail to keep the peace, appeared at the magistrate's office and were discharged. James H. MacFarland, the promoter of Friday night's bout, who was also under bond, was released. The magistrate announced that as the men had not committed any overt act which might be construed as a violation of the statute prohibiting prize fighting, there was no complaint against them.

MANY BURIED IN THE RUINS.

Belfast, Jan. 21.—A wall of the Smithfield flax mills collapsed during the day, burying the operatives, who included many women. Ten bodies have already been extricated from the ruins.

ONE VESSEL IS SUNK

SEVERE NAVAL ENGAGEMENT OCCURS IN THE HARBOR OF PANAMA.

Revolutionists Seem to Have the Better of the Fight—Result of an Early Morning Surprise—Insurgents Withdraw With One Vessel in Bad Shape. Cruiser Philadelphia Close to the Scene.

Panama, Jan. 21.—General Carlos Alban, the military commander of this district and the governor of Panama, was killed during a naval fight in the harbor during the morning. His death is deeply deplored, for General Alban was loved by his soldiers and enjoyed the esteem of the community.

It is asserted that the death of the Colombian leader may have the effect of bringing to the government side large numbers of men anxious to avenge the loss. Some of the men who were killed on board the government ship Lantaro have been brought ashore, where they are being buried. The crew of the Philadelphia assisted to put out a fire on board the Lantaro, but she sunk despite all efforts. It is rumored on shore that the firing of the Lantaro was a result of treason. It is also reported that her crew rebelled.

The revolutionary gunboat Padilla surprised the Lantaro early in the morning and began shooting at close range. Many men on board the Lantaro were killed. The slow movements of the Padilla, noticeable from the shore, leads to the belief that she has been damaged.

The revolutionary fleet consisted of the steamers Padilla, Darien and Gaitan. They tried to force a landing off Saona.

The government ships were the Chilean line steamer Lantaro, the Pacific Steam Navigation company's steamer Chickio and the Panama Canal company's steamer Boyaca. The first named steamer was seized by General Alban and the other two have been chartered by the Colombian government.

The United States cruiser Philadelphia was close to the scene of the fighting.

The government gunboat Boyaca has just moored to the dock here. She brings troops from Chiriqui. She reports that the revolutionary steamers Padilla, Darien and Gaitan drew off when they became aware of her presence. The Darien is now reported to be in a sinking condition.

MANY DEATHS RESULT.

Fatal Boiler Explosion in a Spinning Mill Near Manresa, Spain.

Barcelona, Jan. 20.—The explosion of the boiler of a spinning mill near Manresa destroyed half the village of Puente de Vilumara. The hospital at Manresa is filled with the injured. Sixteen mutilated bodies of working people buried in the debris have been recovered. These include the manager of the spinning mill and his two sisters. It is estimated that 60 persons were killed and 100 injured. Of the persons injured 30 are not expected to recover. The dead included many children.

The boiler exploded in the evening when the mill hands, many of whom were accompanied by their wives and children, were eating supper before commencing their night's work. The buildings of the mill collapsed entirely and the debris was hurled in all directions, destroying other buildings and killing and injuring the people in the vicinity. Owing to the darkness the work of extricating the victims proceeded with great difficulty. During the work of rescue there were heard the groans of the victims whose mutilated limbs were pinned down by the ruins. A long line of carts and carriages was engaged in conveying the injured to the Manresa hospital, five miles distant.

In the morning the inhabitants went among the ruins, seeking the remains of friends and relatives, while the priests in the open air administered the last rites of the church to the dying.

The search at the scene of the explosion was continued during the day by members of the Red Cross society and officials. Heads, arms and legs, separated from the bodies, and unrecognizable blackened corpses were found. The village of Puente de Vilumara is desolated.

CAN JOIN THE BOERS.

Men to Fight for Their Cause Landing in South Africa.

New Orleans, Jan. 19.—Captain L. De Villiers, late from South Africa, wishes to correct the assertion, made in his name, that no men willing to fight for the Boers could be landed in South Africa. The assertion made by Captain De Villiers was that a body of men could not be landed together, owing to British martial law regulations, but men anxious to fight for the cause have found and are finding their way every day as the statistics of Lord Kitchener show that he has captured, killed and wounded 33,000 Boers, while the total population is only 110,000.

PAPERMAKERS TO STRIKE.

Over a Score of Factories in Wisconsin Will Be Closed.

Kaukauna, Wis., Jan. 21.—A general strike of the Appleton, Kaukauna and Neenah lodges of the United Brotherhood of Papermakers has been ordered. It will result in closing 25 mills in the state of Wisconsin, throwing out of employment 3,000 laborers and cutting off over 780 tons a day from the supply of the paper market, unless the demands of the union for shorter hours are granted.

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