COMMUTERS DEMAND LOWER RATES QUICKLY

Westchester Contingent Has Paid Out $2,000,000 Extra in Fares.

CASE DRAGS 18 MONTHS

New Jersey Travellers in Meantime Have Won Their Case and Enjoy Reduction in Commutation Rates.

More than $2,000,000 in increased rates has been paid by the Westchester County commuters on the New York Central and the New York, New Haven & Hartford railroads since July 1, 1910.

When the suit of the commuters against the railroads was brought in 1910, immediately after the rates had been increased, Frank W. Stevens, chairman of the Public Service Commission of the 2d District, said he saw no reason why a decision should not be handed down before the fall of 1910. And to facilitate the case he and the rest of the commission gave up their vacations in order to hear the side of the commuters.

But it was not until last week, almost eighteen months after the railroads had completed their case, that the commuters presented their brief. The delay, which cost them about $100,000 a month, was due in a large measure, according to some commuters, to the elaborate manner with which their counsel, Joseph Wood, of Mount Vernon, presented their case. They are tired of the delay.

Mr. Wood was appointed to represent the commuters by Mayor Edwin A. Fiske of Mount Vernon, where the largest number of commuters live. It is possible that Mr. Wood was busy the better part of the time preparing the brief, which contains 299 pages of printed matter, averaging 200 words to the page. He attended the baseball game at the Polo Grounds on Saturday, but his sponsor, Mayor Fiske, gave it as his opinion that the delay was due largely to the Public Service Commission.

"The commission," said Mayor Fiske, "has done what it usually does in such cases—taken its time in hearing it. But we can't blame all the delay on them, for we asked for adjournment a couple of times." The Mayor could not explain why it was that the commuters in New Jersey had the rates reduced within a year after their suits against the railroads had been started, while the New York commuters are still paying the increase—$100,000 a month.

It was on June 21 last that the Interstate Commerce Commission, in the case of the commuters of Metuchen and New Brunswick against the Lehigh Valley Railroad, ordered the rates reduced and made a request, almost tantamount to an order, that the other New Jersey railroads conform to the lower schedule established. The "request" was regarded as an order by the New Jersey roads, which reduced the rates forthwith.

There was also a third provision in that order. In it the Interstate Commerce Commission laid over the case of the Connecticut commuters on the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad until the New York Public Service Commission had acted.

Henry M. Hewson, who, with William L. Ransom, won the case for the New Jersey commuters, said that there was no reason why the case of the New York commuters should not have been ended and a decision handed down before the end of 1910.

"But even at the worst," said Mr. Hewson, "there was no reason why the rates in New York should not have been reduced shortly after the Interstate Commerce Commission handed down its decision on June 21, 1911."

Mr. Hewson said he did not think there was any need of adjournments, as Mayor Fiske admitted there had been.

"I was present at the opening hearing in New York," said Mr. Hewson, "and I remember the words of Chairman Stevens of the commission. He said: 'All you gentlemen need cite in your complaint is that the increased rates are excessive and unreasonable.'"

DIAMOND SHARES PAY 500%

Transvaal Premier Co. Also Declares 250% on Preferred.

According to a report received here by Maiden Lane importers, a profit of $2,585,434 was made by the Premier Diamond Company, of the Transvaal, for the year ended October 31, 1911, in addition to $1,515,165 worth of diamonds on hand and unrealized special accounts for $65,191.

During the company's year 250 per cent was paid in dividends on the preferred shares and 200 per cent on the deferred shares. A further dividend of 500 per cent later declared payable on the deferred shares made a total for the calendar year of 500 per cent on the latter stock.

The earth washed during the year—8,325,000 loads—was 1,000,000 loads less than that handled in the preceding year, owing to the scarcity of native labor. The yield of diamonds—1,774,206 carats—was a decrease of 371,627 carats from the previous year.

The gem importers have also been informed regarding conditions in the diamond fields of German Southwest Africa. The government authorities there estimate that the revenue from the diamond industry will amount to $2,432,500 in the budget year of 1912. The output of diamonds is estimated at 850,000 carats for this year, as compared with an estimate of 900,000 carats for 1911.

ROBBERS COWED BY PISTOL

Sergeant Off Duty Nabs Two—Held in $2,500 Bail.

Lew M. Davis, musician, and Fred Engel, laborer, whom Sergeant Edward Mulraney, of Inspector McClusky's staff, found rifling a house in East 139th street on Saturday night, were arraigned before Magistrate Murphy in the Morrisania court yesterday morning and held in $2,500 bail each for the grand jury on a charge of burglary.

Mulraney was off duty Saturday night and at his home, when a neighbor came in and said that she had seen suspicious lights moving about in the house across the street. Mulraney slipped his gun in his pocket and hustled over. He found the front door of the house jimmied open half way, and upon going around back of the building saw a window half open. It had been jimmied also, and the marks were plainly visible on the sill.

Mulraney crawled in, making his way up to the second floor and there found the two men. When he covered them with his revolver they made a move as if to get away, but the click of Mulraney's pistol reduced them to submission, and he marched them to the police station. The police say that jewelry valued at $150 was found on the men.

FETE STIRS IRISH SOCIETIES

Protest Against Celebrating 100 Years of Truce with England.

Resolutions protesting against the enactment of the "Root amendment" to the immigration bill, now before the House of Representatives, at Washington, and in opposition to the enactment of the pending bill appropriating $7,500,000 for celebration of the anniversary of one hundred years of peace with England, were adopted at a meeting of delegates of the United Irish-American Society of New York last night.

APRIL GEM IMPORTS LESS

Fall Below 1911 Record Because of Loss on Titanic.

The gem imports to New York during April reached a total of $3,024,767, according to figures compiled by Mr. Treadwell, examiner at the Appraisers Stores, and would, according to his estimate, have just about equalled the receipts in April, 1911, had it not been for the Titanic disaster. The April imports last year totalled $3,413,378, which is the largest on record for that month, with the single exception of the corresponding month in 1906.

Of the gems received during the last month the cut precious stones and pearls are valued at $2,164,857, which is a few thousand dollars less than the figures a year ago. The value of the uncut stones, principally diamonds, is placed at $859,310, as against $1,227,810 last year.

The April importations of gems brings the total for the first four months of 1912 up to $11,088,241, and indicates that this will be a big year for gems. One large dealer estimates that the value of the pearls imported will alone reach $10,000,000. The Maiden Lane importers expect that the watch which will be maintained by agents of the new Jewellers' Protective Association of America, acting in conjunction with the government in the detection of smugglers, will result in more gems and jewelry being declared at the Custom House in this city than ever before, and this will naturally mean an increase in the import figures.

PRIZE FOR ARMY AIRMEN

C. H. Mackay Offers Trophy for Reconnoissance Work.

Army aviators are looking forward with interest to a new form of competition, to be conducted under the auspices of government officials and officers of the Aero Club of America, some time in September or October of this year. The men will compete for a trophy offered by Clarence H. Mackay, to be known as the army trophy, and to be competed for annually by army aviators under such rules as are drawn up by the officers of the War Department and the contest committee of the Aero Club of America.

The competition will take the form of tests to determine the winner of reconnoissance manoeuvres among military aviators, and the War Department has already submitted tentative conditions, which have been accepted by the Aero Club of America, subject to slight alterations.

The army aviators will be required to locate accurately moving bodies of troops, moving along roads unknown to the competitors and distant at least ten miles from the starting point of competition. All competitors will be required to describe as accurately as possible the formation and number of the troops, the direction in which they are moving and other important details.

Written reports and position of troops on maps, together with elapsed time taken by competitors, will be counted, based on a point system. The tests will have to be conducted at an average altitude of 1,500 feet, according to the conditions laid down by government officials, any competitor dropping below 1,000 feet being disqualified. The Aero Club of America, however, has made the suggestion that these altitude figures be changed to 2,000 and 2,000 feet, respectively, and these may be adopted.

AERO SHOW ARMY-NAVY DAY

General James Allen and Military Aviators Will Attend.

Today has been designated as Army and Navy Day at the aero show at the New Grand Central Palace, and one of the foremost of those who will visit the exhibit is General James Allen, chief signal officer of the United States army, who will represent the War Department. Accompanying him will be several army aviators, including Lieutenant Milling and Lieutenant Arnold. It is expected that during the week the dozen or more government airmen will come up from Washington to inspect the latest designs in aeroplanes.

Commenting on the progress made by the army in aviation, General Allen said last night he was of the belief that the summer of 1912 would see some flying that would outdo the remarkable performances of last year.

"The army is making exceptional progress in aviation," he declared, "and it will forge ahead with a bound when we secure more officers. The War Department has made provision for extending the service, and with added equipment we hope to increase the number of aviators from fourteen to a hundred. At present College Park, near Washington, and a few hangars in the South and West complete the list of government aviation stations. With additional appropriations we hope to establish several more, and also to enlist the interest of the national guard in flying."

It has been decided by the Aero Club of America, under the auspices of which the show is being held, to continue the series of lectures throughout the week. To-day the speakers will be Charles de F. Chandler, U. S. A., and Allan R. Hawley. On Tuesday G. E. Loening and Mr. Chandler will deliver lectures. Others who will speak during the week include Dr. Whitney William Christman, J. D. McCurdy, Baron L. d'Orcy and Henry A. Wise.

C. C. Witmer will continue his hydroaeroplane flights this week from a float in front of the Colonial Yacht Club, at 138th street and the North River.

MAYOR CRAIG OUT ON BAIL

Sister of Assault Victim Tells of Political Feud.

Hackensack, N. J., May 12 (Special).—Mayor Robert L. Craig of Moonachie, who is charged by Miss Mary E. Livesey with attempting to murder her brother, James Livesey, on Friday afternoon, was released from the Hackensack jail late last night, when friends came here and furnished $1,500 bail. He still refuses to make a statement regarding the attack that sent Livesey to the hospital with his jaw fractured in two places and suffering from possible internal injuries.

This afternoon Dr. M. R. Brinkman, a dental surgeon, assisted Dr. White and Dr. MacDonald in putting wires in the fractured jaw and it will be several days before Livesey will be able to tell at length concerning the attack upon him. He told his sister, before starting for the hospital, that Mayor Craig had struck him on the back of the head with a blunt instrument, approaching from the rear.

IT'S A WISE PARK BIRD, ETC.

Mix-Up in Motherhood Due in Next Water Fowl Brood.

Thomas Donohue, the keeper of the water fowl in Central Park, is having his troubles. His charges have laid 130 eggs recently, and he is expecting a large batch of swans, geese and ducks in the near future. But there has come a queer mix-up, and Donohue cannot straighten it out.

One big, white swan, which had no nest of her own, got into a scrap with a duck and appropriated the latter's nest, with its eight eggs, and has stayed on the nest ever since, despite the efforts of Donohue and the duck.

"It'll be a sad day for thim ducks when they see what kind of a mother they have," said the keeper yesterday.

But that's not all, by a great deal. A goose "swiped" the nest of a swan, and there promises to be trouble in camp in a few days, when the swan's eggs are hatched out by the goose.

"We're sure of gettin' somethin', anyway," said Donohue, "and I guess that's all we can expect."

SUGAR SUIT DELAY ENDED

Action for Dissolution Goes to Trial To-morrow.

SPECIAL EXAMINER NAMED

Time Limit Put on Both Prosecution and Defence and Court Will Pass Directly on Case.

The long delayed trial of the government's suit in equity for the dissolution of the American Sugar Refining Company and its subsidiaries, known as the sugar trust, will begin to-morrow morning in Room 47 in the Federal Building before Wilson B. Brice as special examiner.

In appointing Mr. Brice and ordering that the hearings begin this week the judges of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, who under the expedition act will pass directly upon the case on the testimony gathered before Mr. Brice, allowed sixty days to the government for the introduction of its evidence, 105 days to the defence for answering testimony and thirty days each for rebuttal.

Should all of the time, approximately seven months, be consumed, the printed record of testimony could not be submitted to the judges until January or perhaps February, 1913, and no decision could possibly be expected until the spring of 1913. With an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States, the case may not reach its final settlement until 1914 at the earliest.

The plan of the government, it was indicated, was to start in with the period of the inception of the trust and to call witnesses in such an order as to bring out clearly, step by step, the changing control of the American Sugar Refining Company, which at one time, it is charged, controlled 98 per cent of the sugar trade.

Henry A. Wise, United States Attorney, will give much of his attention to the case, though James B. Knapp, one of his assistants, will have charge of conducting the examinations, aided by Goldthwaite H. Dorr, John W. H. Crim and Abel I. Smith. The American Sugar Refining Company will be represented by James M. Beck, its general counsel, and associated with him will be Richard Olney, John G. Johnson, of Philadelphia, and Frank L. Crawford.

Petition Filed in 1910.

The petition of the government asking for the dissolution of the American Sugar Refining Company was filed in the United States Circuit Court in this city on November 28, 1910. The principal companies named in the petition were the American Sugar Refining Company of New Jersey, alleged to have obtained control over its many subsidiaries through ownership of stock or through directors; the Western Sugar Refining Company, dominant on the Pacific Coast, and the National Sugar Refining Company of New Jersey, a creation of H. O. Havemeyer. These three companies, the government charged, obtained control over the cane sugar production of the country. The Michigan Sugar Company, the Great Western Sugar Company, the Spreckels and the Alameda Sugar Company, all then under the control of the American Sugar Refining Company, were named as controlling the beet sugar industry.

Among the individual defendants named in the action were Washington B. Thomas, president of the American Sugar Refining Company; Arthur Donner, its treasurer; George H. Frazier, Henry E. Niese, Henry C. Mott, Samuel C. Hooker, Samuel Carr, Edwin S. Marston, Edwin F. Atkins, Charles H. Allen, Joseph E. Freeman, John D. Spreckels, James H. Post and Frederick D. Mollenhauer. There were many others.

Before the year 1887, the petition said, there were twenty-three independent companies engaged in the manufacture of sugar, but in that year H. O. Havemeyer, with some of the defendants, agreed to form the first trust, known as the Sugar Refineries Company, which consolidated seventeen of the twenty-three smaller corporations. A number of refineries were dismantled and eliminated from the business.

The capital stock of the original trust was $50,000,000. When in 1890 the courts of New York State declared the Sugar Refineries Company illegal the American Sugar Refining Company of New Jersey was organized and took over the business of the outlawed corporation.

Alleged Methods Described.

The petition went on describing how the trust continued its policy of acquisition all over the country, until finally, in 1900, the National Sugar Refining Company of New Jersey was formed to eliminate the competition of the New York Sugar Refining Company, the Mollenhauer Sugar Company and the old National Sugar Refining Company. The petition also described various ways in which, it charged, the American Sugar Refining Company obtained unfair advantages over competitors, like obtaining cheaper raw product through customs frauds by which it avoided payment of a large part of duty and agreements with wholesale grocers throughout the country by which sugar prices were kept up arbitrarily.

As to the condition at the time of the filing of the suit, the government alleged that the American Sugar Refining Company controlled 72 per cent of the country's cane sugar output and produced about 64 per cent of the refined sugar sold in interstate trade.

In its answer to the government's suit the American Sugar Refining Company on February 5, 1912, made a general denial of the allegations of unlawful combination or conspiracy against interstate trade. The principal feature of the answer was that it leaned upon the Knight case, to assert that the decision of the United States Supreme Court, which there upheld the right of the company to acquire refineries through acquisition of stock, equitably estopped the government from prosecuting any action for the dissolution of the American Sugar Refining Company.

It also asserted that the alleged combination had never been one in undue or unreasonable restraint of trade and that the company's present output did not exceed 40 per cent of the country's total.

DR. ADLER REVIEWS WORK

Ethical Culture Society Celebrates 36th Anniversary.

The thirty-sixth anniversary of the founding of the Ethical Culture Society of New York was celebrated yesterday morning in the home of the organization, 63d street and Central Park West. Dr. Felix Adler, founder and leader of the movement, reviewed the work of the order and contemporary ethical and social ideals.

People were so much taken up these days with "square deals," the distribution of wealth and "the raw externals of morality," Dr. Adler complained, that they often lost sight of real truths.

His subject was "The Reuniting of Life's Broken Threads." "What is the best in the old religion?" he asked. "What is religion? Not stark madness, as some starkly mad persons would have us believe, but the attempt to describe the impressions which life as a whole makes upon the human spirit.

"When we leave our old religion we forget it has an office for us. Certain things that the old religious teachers have said ring true, and will forever ring true. On the other hand, there are many things that must be said that they have not expressed.

"The person who ceases to be religious ceases to have the affections that lead out from religion. He is aware of the human fellowship of which he is a member, but unaware of the life of the universal soul."

ASK FIRE BUREAU PROBE

Politics in Appointments, Say Realty Men and Citizens Union.

APPEAL TO THE ALDERMEN

Civil Service Reform Charges as to Naming of Prevention Inspectors Repeated.

Those who charge that at least seventy-five of the eighty-nine inspectors recently appointed to the Bureau of Fire Prevention obtained their places because of their political affiliations have requested the Board of Aldermen to conduct an investigation of the whole matter.

The investigation is requested in a letter jointly signed by the committee on safety, the Allied Real Estate Interests and the Citizens Union. The letter reads:

May 11, 1912.

Hon. John Purroy Mitchel, President Board of Aldermen, New York City.

Dear sir: We urge upon your honorable body that under the powers conferred upon the Board of Aldermen by Section 56 of the greater New York Charter an investigation be made of the appointments in the Bureau of Fire Prevention and the character of work performed by that bureau.

The correspondence between the Mayor and the Civil Service Reform Association had disclosed sufficient facts, in our opinion, to make it the plain duty of the Board of Aldermen to investigate. Without such an official inquiry the full facts cannot be brought out. Very truly yours,

JOHN A. KINGSBURY,
Acting chairman, Committee on Safety.
ALLAN ROBINSON,
President Allied Real Estate Interests.
WILLIAM JAY SCHIEFFELIN,
Chairman, Citizens Union.

It is the plan of the men behind the proposed investigation to show that Fire Commissioner Johnson has assumed powers that have not only thrust the Bureau of Fire Prevention into politics, but the entire Fire Department, from the newest probationary fireman to the Fire Chief. This is because the Hoey law took the power of transfer and promotion out of the hands of the Fire Chief and placed it with the Commissioner, it is pointed out.

"An investigation of the whole affair is sorely needed," said Allan Robinson last night. "Politics should not enter into a department which has to do with the saving of life and the preserving of property.

"The most competent men in the city should have been appointed to the Bureau of Fire Prevention. This could have been done by appointing firemen who have had experience in fighting fires and whose qualifications were demonstrated when they passed the civil service examination, instead of appointing men who have no qualifications."

A prominent builder, who feared that the publication of his name would result in unpleasantness with the city authorities and for that reason requested that his name be not used, said:

"Commissioner Johnson's tactics will practically stop building in New York City. He has assumed powers that are arbitrary and unjust, powers that have no basis in any existing laws. And what builder is going to put up a building which, when erected, may be subject to an order of the Commissioner based on nothing more than his mere whim? Because of the kind of appointments made in this new Bureau of Fire Prevention this assumption of arbitrary power is all the more dangerous."

Attention was first brought to the nature of the appointments by the Civil Service Reform Association through Samuel H. Ordway, chairman of its executive committee, in a letter to Mayor Gaynor. It was charged that seventy-five of the eighty-nine appointments were political workers and that each of the Democratic leaders in Manhattan and The Bronx and a few in Brooklyn had been "taken care of."

TAFT FRIEND OF VETERANS

Lost No Time in Signing Bill Disbursing $35,000,000.

[From The Tribune Bureau.]

Washington, May 12.—As told in a late edition of to-day's Tribune, President Taft, just before midnight last night, affixed his name to the pension bill which passed Congress late Friday carrying an additional $35,000,000 for the veterans of the Civil War. The importance of acting immediately on the bill is manifested by the fact that the old soldiers are dying at such a rapid rate that a delay of even twenty-four hours would prevent several hundred from enjoying the fruits of this legislation.

For the first three years of its operation the bill carries $22,000,000, the maximum amount under the provisions of the act being $35,000,000.

Throughout the campaign President Taft has been misrepresented by his political opponents with respect to the pension legislation. The charge has been persistently made that the President was opposed to pensions altogether, and would sign no pension bill at all if Congress passed one. How great was this misrepresentation is shown by the following extract from President Taft's inaugural address of March 4, 1909:

The uniform policy of the government in the matter of granting pensions to those gallant and devoted men who fought to save the life of the nation in the perilous days of the great Civil War has always been of the most liberal character. These men are now rapidly passing away. The best obtainable statistics show that they are dying at the rate of something over three thousand a month, and, in view of their advancing years, this rate must inevitably, in proportion, largely increase. As to the man who risked everything on the field of battle to save the nation in the hour of its direct need, we owe a debt which has not been and should not be computed in a begrudging or parsimonious spirit.

But while we should be actuated by this spirit to the soldier himself, care should be exercised not to go to absurd lengths, or disburse the bounty of the government to classes of persons who may, at this late day, from a mere mercenary motive, seek to obtain some legal relation with an old veteran now tottering on the brink of the grave. The true spirit of the pension laws is to be found in the noble sentiments expressed by Mr. Lincoln in his last inaugural address wherein, in speaking of the nation's duty to its soldiers, when the struggle should be over, he said we should care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans.

The present pension bill makes provision only for veterans who are sixty-two years old or over, and it is estimated that 420,965 veterans have now reached that age. Every veteran who has reached the minimum age limit, after serving ninety days in either the naval or military service during the Civil War, and who was honorably discharged, is entitled to receive a pension under the bill at the following rates:

Those sixty-two years old and over who served ninety days, $13 a month, with increases up to $16 a month for three years of service; those sixty-five years old and over, from $15 a month for ninety days to $19 for three years; those seventy years old and over, for ninety days, $18 a month, up to $25 a month for three years, and those seventy-five years old and over, $21 a month for ninety days, up to $30 for three years.

MISS QUIMBY BACK HOME

Modest About Her Flight Across English Channel.

Miss Harriet Quimby, the first American woman to fly across the English Channel, arrived here yesterday on the Hamburg-American liner Amerika. She brought over a 70-horsepower Blériot monoplane which will carry passengers, and with it she expects to make flights at Mineola. Miss Quimby said she made twenty flights in Europe and in two weeks earned $6,000.

She seemed to attach no importance to her distinction of being the first American woman to fly from Dover to Calais, declaring that it was as easy to handle an aeroplane as it was to drive an automobile.

STRIKERS MEET IN WOODS

Paterson Police Refuse to Permit Gatherings in Halls.

Paterson, N. J., May 12.—Barred from holding meetings in any hall in this city, the Industrial Workers of the World held a mass meeting to-day in the woods at Haledon, outside the jurisdiction of the city police officials. About two thousand persons attended the meeting. Nothing of a sensational character was said or done at the meeting.

The organizers of the Industrial Workers of the World will no longer be permitted to hold meetings in this city. Chief Bimson refused to permit the proprietor of Turn Hall to rent his place for a proposed Industrial Workers of the World meeting on Friday last, and any owner of a hall who rents it for such a purpose may expect to have his license revoked.

HELD ON FORGERY CHARGE

Pittsburgh Man Defrauded Cafe Proprietor, It Is Alleged.

A young man, who represented himself as being a member of a well known Pittsburgh family, and who gave his name as Charles B. Fester, of No. 313 Shetland avenue, Pittsburgh, was held in $2,500 bail for examination to-morrow by Magistrate Murphy, in the Morrisania court, yesterday. He is accused of forging a check for $45, on which he obtained $15.

Frederick Rossback, who runs a café at No. 2068 Third avenue, The Bronx, appeared as complainant against Fester. He said that the young man went to his place on Thursday and presented the check for $45, asking him to cash it. Rosstack had only $15 about him, and Fester accepted this, he said, saying he would come for the remainder after the check went through.

The check came back to Rossback the next day, with the information that it was a forgery. The paper was made out to Charles E. Fester on the Mechanics' Bank, of Brooklyn, and bore the signature, "Hamilton B. McNair," a real estate man, of No. 483 Fifth avenue, Brooklyn.

McNair said, according to the police, that Fester had been to his offices on Tuesday, accompanied by a mutual friend, and that while there he had taken a blank check from McNair's checkbook.

Fester was arrested on Saturday night at Seventh avenue and 36th street, on his way to take a train to Pittsburgh.

NATIONAL SAFETY CONVENTION

Manufacturers and Employes to Plan Big Lifesaving Crusade.

The seventeenth annual convention of the National Association of Manufacturers will open in the Waldorf-Astoria on May 29, and will continue for three days, closing on the 32d with the annual banquet of the association.

The employers, their assistants and the workmen will meet on the common ground that industrial accidents are their mutual enemies. During the convention sessions there will be exhibited by motion pictures lifesaving devices and their workings.

SUNDAY'S NEW-YORK TRIBUNE
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PRESIDENT DENIES CHURCH FAVORITISM

Declares There Is a Conspiracy to Stir Religious Prejudice Against Him.

SENT NO MISSION TO POPE

Refutes Charges That He Has Taken Any Part in Any Matter Relating to Catholic Church.

Washington, May 12.—At the White House to-night a personal statement by President Taft was given out, categorically denying that Major Archibald W. Butt, the President's military aid, who was lost on the Titanic, had gone to Rome on any mission whatever from the President to the Vatican. The President's statement follows:

Among the insidious methods of attack pursued by some against me is the attempt to arouse religious prejudice on the charge that I am in some manner unduly favoring the Roman Catholic Church. It has been my official purpose, first, as the Governor General of the Philippines; second, as Secretary of War, and third, as President, to encourage every church as far as possible where this does not involve invidious distinctions and does not depart from the rule which separates our state from official relations to all churches. I have unduly favored no church, but have treated them all with absolute impartiality.

In 1902 I visited Rome and conferred with Pope Leo XIII in an attempt to settle the friar land controversy, which had arisen in the Philippines while I was Governor General, and after a time I succeeded in doing so. When, last March, my aid, Major Butt, set out on a trip solely for his health, and proposed to visit Rome, he asked me for a letter of introduction to the present Pope, that he might have the privilege of an audience, and I gave him such a letter.

The letter contained nothing but a statement of who Major Butt was and an expression of the hope that he might have the honor of being received. The only note or letter from the Pope or any representative of his in answer to this letter of introduction which I have received is a cablegram of condolence for all concerned sent by Cardinal Merry del Val, by direction of the Pope, at the time of the Titanic disaster, and making an inquiry as to the fate of Major Butt, to which I replied expressing my thanks and giving the fact.

The letter introducing Major Butt contained no reference to the recent appointment of American cardinals and no comment on or reference to the Catholic Church or any matter relating to it. The stories circulated that I have made any inquiry or have taken anywhere at any time any part or manifested any interest in questions of social precedence of the recently appointed cardinals are wholly without foundation.

The evidence that there is a conspiracy for the purpose of arousing religious prejudice against me is shown by the fact that, at the instance of some one unknown to me, it was reported in a great many very respectable newspapers that I sent a message of welcome and congratulation to the newly appointed Apostolic Delegate by wireless to the incoming steamer which was bearing him to New York. No such message was sent by me or by any one by my authority. A denial of the published report was issued from the White House, but the denial has obtained no publicity.

The statement that I suspended an order made by the Indian Commissioner affecting the garb of the teachers in certain Indian schools which have been transferred from the Catholic Church to the government is true. I did this for the reason that the Commissioner had issued the order after consulting with the Secretary of the Interior and without awaiting his conclusions. The propriety of the order has now been made the subject of an open, free discussion by all the parties in interest, and the decision of the Secretary of the Interior will soon be handed down.

I say nothing of the merits of the controversy, except that the order reversed a condition which has existed for years and affected thirty or forty teachers, who, as nuns, had been long before my time incorporated in the service of the government, and who would be in effect expelled from that service by the order should it prevail. They were therefore entitled to a full hearing.

WILLIAM H. TAFT.

BETTING ON BRYAN

Some Pittsburg Democrats Think He Will Be Nominee.

[By Telegraph to The Tribune.]

Pittsburgh, May 12.—Small wagers have been made here that William J. Bryan will be the next Democratic nominee. The betting was made on the strength of an alleged conversation Bryan is said to have had with some of his supporters while in this city last Sunday. He is said to have made the remark that, while either Wilson or Clark would suit him as candidates, he did not believe either would secure the necessary two-thirds vote.

Joseph Howley, candidate for Representative-at-large on the Democratic ticket, asked Bryan to permit him to present his name before the Harrisburg convention. Bryan declared such an act would be a mistake.

Guy E. Campbell, of the Bryan League of Allegheny County, is recruiting 100 Democrats to go to Baltimore and carry banners in a parade with the legend, "Bryan Only."

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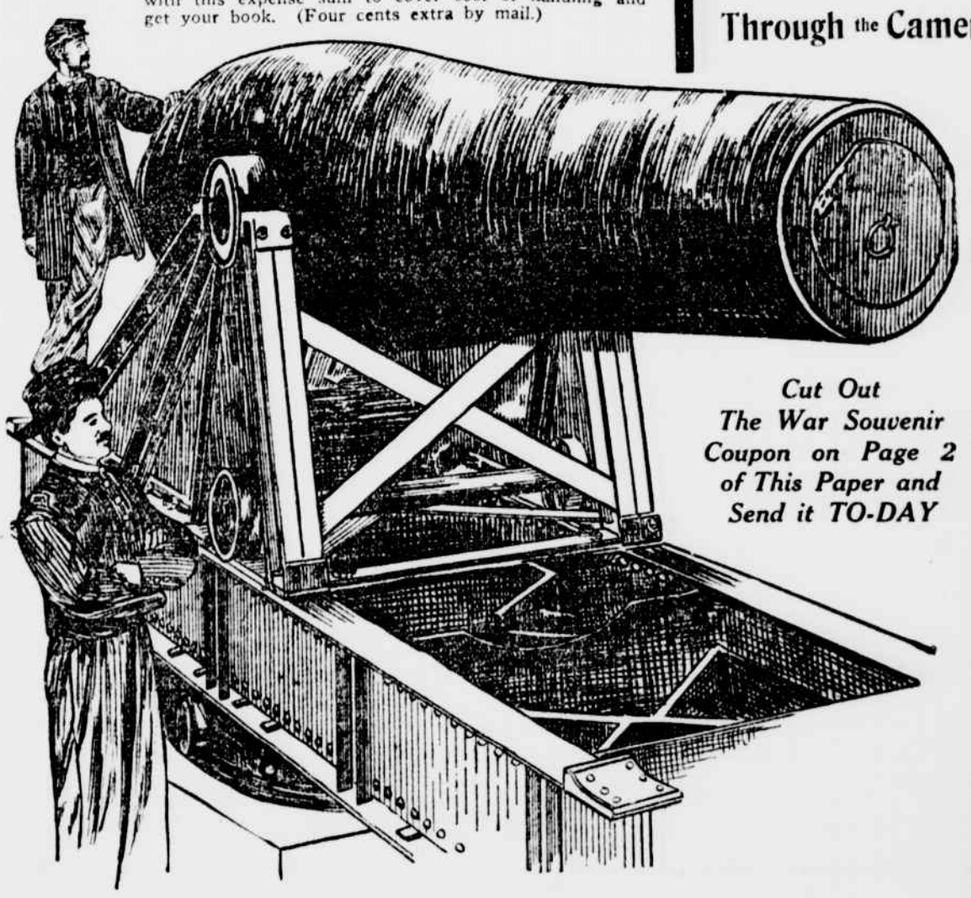

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