A TRANS-PACIFIC CABLE

Discussion of the Subject by Army and Navy Officers.

Criticism of the Action of the Majority of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Arguments for Government Control of the Submarine Telegraph.

The delay that has recently occurred in the transmission of messages between Washington and the Far East has, at the War and Navy Departments, stimulated discussion of an American trans-Pacific cable and perhaps augmented criticism which officers heap upon the majority of the House Committee on Inter-State and Foreign Commerce because of its report, presented to the House at the last session, against the bill for a Government cable and in favor of a submarine telegraph owned and operated by a private company.

It is said that the establishment of an American trans-Pacific cable has been under consideration by Congress for many years. Various arguments have been urged in favor of this undertaking, but at the present time all the arguments used in the past are dwarfed by the overwhelming naval and military necessities which demand the immediate establishment of an American trans-Pacific cable connecting the Pacific Coast of the United States with the Hawaiian Islands, with the naval stations at Guam, and with the Philippines. Cable communication with the American Army and Navy in the Philippines is wholly dependent on foreign lines which may at any moment be interrupted through war or other causes, and therefore it is argued that a means of telegraphic communication wholly under American control and free from all foreign interference should be established as soon as practicable.

Both in the Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth Congresses the Committee on Inter-State and Foreign Commerce reported to the House a bill for the establishment of an American trans-Pacific cable. Though these bills were supported by the almost unanimous opinion of the committee, neither of them was ever acted upon by the House.

The pressing nature of this subject was emphasized by the special message of President McKinley, transmitted to Conby the strong recommendations contained gress on the 10th of February, 1899, and in the message submitted to Congress at the opening of the last session.

The President, by his special message of February 10, called the attention of Congress to the cable subject in the following language:

"As a consequence of the ratification of the Treaty of Peace between the United States and Spain, and its expected ratification by the Spanish Government, the United States will come into possession of the Philippine Islands, on the farther shore of the Pacific. The Hawaiian Islands and Guam becoming United States territory, and forming convenient stopping places on the way across the sea, the necessity for speedy cable communication between the United States and all these Pacific islands has become imperative. Such communication should be established in such a way as to be wholly under the control of the United States, whether in time of peace or of war. At present the Philippines can be reached only by cables which pass through many foreign countries, and the Hawaiian Islands and Guam can only be communicated with by steamers, involving delays in each instance of at least a week. The present condition should not be allowed to continue for a moment longer than is absolutely necessary."

In support of the contention that a Government cable should be laid it is urged that the right to construct a Pacific cable connecting the United States with its new possessions in the Pacific Ocean is a special privilege held by the people, which can be conveyed only by an act of Congress. The operation of such cable would necessarily establish for many years a monopoly of the cable communications with Hawaii, Guam, and the Philippine Islands, and, to a large extent, with the markets of the Orient, and it should be laid, owned, and operated by the Government for the protection of its military and naval power and the advancement of American trade and commerce.

It is said that one of the best pleas for the Government ownership and control of the cable was made by Messrs. Corliss, Fletcher, and Stewart in the last session of the Fifty-sixth Congress, when they wrote:

"A new era has dawned upon our country. For over a century the genius and industry of our people have been applied to the development of our national resources and internal trade and industries, until every part of the United States has been supplied with means of rapid communication and transportation; until every city, town, and hamlet has been made to feel the benefit of industrial enterprise; our navigable lakes and rivers have been improved until our inland waters are dotted with a merchant marine equal to the present necessities of commerce; our agricultural lands and natural resources have been developed until they are capable of producing sufficient product to supply the markets of the world. The time has arrived in our marvelous development when, in order to continue the march of American progress, we must reach out and command the commerce of the sea.

"Great Britain has achieved her commercial supremacy by the purchase or construction and control of the great canals; by the acquisition of territory and the establishment of her colonies in every part of the world; by the construction and ownership of cables to every part of her vast possessions, thereby securing rapid communication at reasonable rates for her trade and commerce. We should profit by her example and connect the waters of the oceans by the Nicaragua Canal, and join together the islands of the Pacific with a cable constructed, owned, and operated by our Government for the benefit of the people, without profit or hope of gain, save the expansion of our trade and the development of our merchant marine and commerce.

"Great Britain has officially had under recent consideration a proposal for laying a telegraphic cable between British North America, through the Pacific, to the colonies of Australia.

Rear Admiral Bradford's Views.

Rear Admiral Bradford, United States Navy, Chief of the Bureau of Equipment, in an argument in behalf of a Government cable between the United States and its insular possessions in the East, said:

"This proposed cable will not come in competition with any established American interests, except so far as the American Trans-Atlantic lines share in the existing traffic between the United States and the Orient. On the other hand, these same lines will secure a new and increasing business by sharing in that portion of the traffic between Europe and the Orient which will be carried by the Pacific cables.

"Cheap cable tolls, probably one of the greatest inducements that could be furnished by the Government to attract capital in the development of our island possessions, might not be secured through a subsidized company, even though the rates are prescribed by law. Collusion with other cable companies, for the purpose of diverting traffic from the American cable, would make it possible for a subsidized company to show less receipts and thereby increase its subsidy.

"It would be many years before the traffic would justify the construction of a competing combination or trust, and thus deter any independent private corporation from attempting to compete with it.

"There can be no doubt that a greater efficiency of a cable would be secured under Government operation. The aim of the department controlling it would be to handle all the traffic the cable could carry. The aim of a private company would be to make the most money possible, even if by so doing the cable was idle much of the time, as is now the case with many existing cables.

"In time of war private ownership would be of no advantage. If our own country were involved in war the fact that the cable was private property would not prevent the enemy from cutting it. In case of war between other countries Government ownership might save a cable from injury, for the reason that a Government is in a position to guarantee to belligerents that neither shall secure an advantage over the other in the use of a cable."

The present commercial rate from Washington to Manila is $2.38 per word, Government rate $2.25 per word, and the rate for "right-of-way" messages three times the normal rate.

AN ELABORATE SUMMER AFTERNOON GOWN.

This charming summer gown is of white taffeta silk, which has a satin stripe and a delicate flecking of dark blue over it. The chiffon-covered bolero is embossed richly with applications of white gauze flowers and tufted white silk, the centre of the flowers being worked in dark blue with French knots of silk floss. The same elaborate trimming covers the sleeves. Revers and a circular collar of lace edged with chiffon fall over the encrusted bolero sleeves, and a little drapery of the chiffon falls from the bolero to the waist line.

THE ARMIES OF CHINA

Not Much Known of the Empire's Actual Military Strength.

Lord Beresford Describes a Visit to One Encampment, Where the Celestials Were a Fine Body of Men. Most of the Forces Poorly Armed and Equipped for Effective Work.

Lieut. Gen. Nelson A. Miles said yesterday that there is very little information in possession of American military authorities concerning the strength, organization, and equipment of the Chinese Army. In the latest edition of Jerrom's "Armies of the World" it is recited that: "To attempt any estimate of the forces of China is impracticable. The black flags, formed on the nucleus of Gordon's Taipin Army and trained by European officers may at their best have numbered about 50,000 men. Beyond that it is unsafe to go. But English officers of distinction believe that the Chinese soldier when trained, will make an efficient fighter."

Lord Charles Beresford has written in his work on "The Break-up of China," the following: "In the reference I received from the President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, I was particularly asked to report 'whether the organization of the Chinese civil and military administration is sufficiently complete to ensure adequate protection to commercial ventures.'"

He wrote that he found that "no security whatever exist for development of British trade and commerce within the Chinese Empire, and further no security exists now for British trade outside of the treaty ports. I refer to that security which only can be given by effective military and police organization. No one knows the real strength of the Chinese armies, not even the Chinese Government itself."

The military forces are divided; some are Manchu and some are Chinese. The Manchu forces are quite exclusive, no Chinese serving in their ranks; but the Chinese have some Manchus serving among them.

The armies in the north and about Pekin are nearly all commanded by Manchu princes, and the Manchu armies are supposed to be about 170,000 strong, but none of these armies is efficient either in drill, discipline, or organization. The general officers are either Manchus or Tartars. This Manchu force is quartered in most of the great cities such as Nanking, Hangchow, Soochow, and Canton. The officers and men of these armies have many privileges not allowed to the Chinese, for every Manchu, whether in or out of the army, is allowed his rice and 3 taels a month by the Government. The amount of imperial taxation devoted to the support of the Manchus is variously estimated at from five to fifteen million dollars annually.

The armies in the provinces are maintained at the expense of the viceroys, with the exception of the Manchu garrisons. In the province of Chihli, Gen. Yuan Shi Kai's army and the imperial armies at and around Pekin are maintained by the Board of Revenue out of imperial taxes. These armies, which are paid by the state, are supposed not to be sent from the vicinity of Pekin. In some of the armies the men are paid and find their own rations and clothing, while in some they are fed and clothed. This is all left to the discretion or whim of the commanding general. It is said to be a common thing in China for a general to report that he commands 10,000 men, whereas he may actually not command 1,000, though he receives the pay and rations for 10,000. If his army is to be inspected he hires coolies at a low rate per day to appear on parade. The inspecting officer receives a "douceur" and reports that the army is 10,000 strong and properly drilled and equipped.

Lord Beresford says: "I went to Hsiao Chan to visit General Yuan Shi Kai, and to attend a review of his troops. I stayed two days and one night with the general, and not only saw all his troops paraded and maneuvered, but had ample opportunity to examine his equipment. The strength of this army was 7,400 men, mostly Shantung men. These and the Hunonese are reported to make the best soldiers in China. The infantry were armed with the Mauser rifle, German made. He had the six-gun batteries of artillery of different calibres, throwing from one to six-pound projectiles. The cavalry were armed with lances and a Mauser infantry rifle. On parade the whole force appeared an exceptionally smart body of men, of extremely fine physique. They were evidently well fed, and their uniforms were very serviceable and well kept.

"Most other armies are clothed in an ordinary Chinese dress, with a large badge sewed on in the front and rear. The discipline was excellent. With the exception of the artillery and Maxims, all the equipment was serviceable. I suggested to the general to practically test the equipment of the artillery and Maxims by galloping them over some rough ground. The result was to prove conclusively that the equipment was useless. If all the Chinese generals were like Yuan Shi Kai the armies and their financial arrangements would not be in the condition they are now. He spends the money he receives for his army as intended."

Along the coast about Kinchow is the army commanded by General Sung, variously estimated at from 10,000 to 20,000, armed with Mausers, Krupp artillery, and Maxims. It is said that some of these men have been drilled by German officers.

General Soon Ching has an army at Lutai, which is alleged to be 15,000 strong. These have been drilled by Russian and German officers.

Gen. Tung Fu Chan is reported to have 10,000 Kansuh troops (mostly Mohammedans), near Pekin. These troops are poorly armed and undrilled, but are said to be individually brave.

General Nieh commands between Hsiao Chan and Tientsin. Some of his men have been drilled by German officers. They are reported to be well armed.

The Pekin field force, commanded from the Palace, is said to be 10,000 strong, picked men, well armed, but poorly drilled and quartered in Hunting Park, Pekin.

At Kaiping there is a cavalry camp of perhaps 1,500 men drilled by Rusians. General Ti-Ke-Tong is reported to command an army of between 8,000 and 15,000 men scattered through Manchuria.

There is in Mongolia a cavalry force of 100,000 Mongolians, ruled by their own princes under a species of fedual tenure.

In some of the armies it is said that soldiers are still practicing with bows and arrows. There are also armies, the strength of which is not known to Americans or Europeans, and the equipment of which is reported miserable, under the command of Viceroy Chung Chi Tung, Viceroy Liu Kwen Yi, Viceroy Hsu Ying Kwei, and Viceroy Tou Chung Lin.

The different types of small arms reported to be in use in the Chinese armies are Mauser, Martini-Henry, Winchester, Mannlicher, Remington, Peabody-Henry, Sneider, Enfield, smooth-bore Tower muskets, Berdan, and Gingal. A gingal is a weapon between nine and ten feet long and their weight vary from forty to sixty pounds. Three men are required to handle one. When in action, the gingal is laid along the shoulders of two men, while No. 3 fires it.

There are seven arsenals in China where good ordnance from German and English patterns, it is said, may be produced. These are Tientsin, Shanghai, Nauking, Hankow, Foochow, Canton, and Ching-tu.

NORMAL SCHOOL GRADUATES.

Those Who Received Diplomas at the Commencement Exercises Today.

The graduating exercises of the District Normal School were held at 10 o'clock this morning at the Franklin School building, at the corner of Thirteenth and K Streets northwest, in the presence of a large number of the friends and relatives of those who had successfully passed the final examination.

The assembly hall was beautifully decorated with cut flowers, potted plants, ribbons, and flags, and with the presence of so many pretty white-gowned young ladies presented a scene that will long be remembered by the participants.

The programme was interesting and was opened with an address by William B. Powell, Superintedent of the Public Schools of the District of Columbia. Commissioner H. B. Macfarland delivered the address to the graduates. J. W. Wheipley, President of the Normal School Board, conferred the diplomas upon the successful candidates. The programme was interspersed with music, both vocal and instrumental.

Those who received diplomas of graduation were:

Christine M. Arth, Olivia G. Arth, Nettie V. Baker, Jennie Bartley, Beulah Bohrer, Jennie Bowbeer, Christine Brecht, M. Lillian Burke, Blandina C. Bushman, Mary A. Cady, Adda B. Carr, Florence A. Clapp, May S. Clark, Alice A. Clark, Anna E. Compton, Margaret D. Davies, Helen Dyer, Della Flahell, Grace Follell, Sue Gardner, Helen Gary, Helen Guerdrum, Minnie F. Healy, Florence K. Hinkel, Eva Hurd, Minnie B. Hutchinson, Emma B. Jones, Martha Kuhnel, Eleanor Lamson, May Lautenschlager, May Lewis, May Lyon, Valeria Marshall, Bertha McNaught, Callie F. Moore, Henrietta Morrison, Mary Muckenhaupt, Nellie Ramby, Ada Roome, Alice Lee Roche, Recha Sanders, A. Irene Sanderson, Sophia Sanger, Clara Sawyer, Edith Shank, Mabel Stuard, Virginia Turtle, Anna H. Ulke, May Walters, Mable C. White, Mary C. Woodward, Fannie Woolverton, and Leonora Wright.

ELOPED AT EXCURSION RATES.

Seventeen Couples Seek Marriage Licenses in Cumberland.

CUMBERLAND, Md., June 19.—For interesting features, the excursion that came here Sunday over the Baltimore and Ohio from Johnstown, Pa., outdid anything before heard of in this city.

Among the 1,500 people on the excursion train the tough element predominated. Before the train started for home many of the pleasure-seekers were intoxicated, and thereafter fights were frequent occurrences. The railroad had placed four detectives aboard the train, but despite this precaution, when the rioting commenced a man cut the train and created the worst kind of a panic. Twelve of the rioters were arrested, five of whom were committed to the jail at Somerset to await the action of the grand jury. One man, in order to escape arrest jumped through a window of the moving train.

With the excursion came seventeen eloping couples, who had taken advantage of the low rate of fare. Everyone of these went to the marriage clerk's home, his office being closed, to get a license, but all were turned away without the coveted piece of paper. Of the seventeen couples ten remained over until yesterday and were married.

Man Choked by a Snake.

MAY'S LANDING, N. J., June 19.—David Carr, a well-known snake fancier, of this place, came near losing his life yesterday. A six-foot pine snake coiled around his neck and choked him until he turned black. Carr has been in the habit of capturing the several varieties of reptiles common to the woods and swamps in this vicinity and selling them to museums. Having captured a fine specimen Carr began to show some friends how harmless the reptile was by letting it crawl around him. The reptile began hissing and coiled itself about the man's throat. Bystanders uncoiled the snake and gave Carr restoratives. He is in a precarious condition.

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL.

Miss Eliza B. Bankhages and Mr. John J. Kleiner, jr., son of ex-Representative Kleiner, of Indiana, were quietly married yesterday at noon, at the residence of the bride in Hyattsville, Md., Rev. S. Ward Righter, of the Hyattsville Presbyterian Church, officiating. The bride was gowned in white satin, trimmed in white silk and silk lace. She was unattended. A wedding breakfast was served, after which the couple left for an extended trip North. On their return they will take up their residence at the home of the bride. Many handsome presents were received. Mr. and Mrs. Kleiner presented the bride with a residence in Washington. Only relatives and a few intimate friends were present.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, in Southeast Washington, was the setting for a pretty wedding, which occurred yesterday afternoon at 5:30 o'clock. The bridal pair were Mr. Louis J. Walkert and Miss Minnie Irene Calvert, both of Virginia, who for some years past have resided in this city. The bride has been a member of the vested choir of the church, and that organization furnished the music for the ceremony, and also escorted the bridal train to and from the chancel. The officiating clergyman was Rev. J. M. E. McKee, the minister in charge of St. Matthew's. Immediately after the ceremony Mr. and Mrs. Walkert left for a honeymoon trip to the southern portion of their native State.

The St. Paul will sail tomorrow with the following Washingtonians on board: Col. Joseph H. Bingham, Mr. Ormsby Goodrich, Miss Margaret Goodrich, Mr. J. C. Hanley, Capt. and Mrs. Allison Nailor, Mrs. Nailor, Mrs. L. L. Ormsby, Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Speare, and Mr. J. J. Woodward.

The marriage of Miss Eleanora Gertrude Larmon, daughter of Mrs. Margaret A. Larmon, to Mr. Frederick Blackford will take place tomorrow evening at 8 o'clock, in Chestnut Avenue, Takoma Park. The wedding will be followed by a reception from 8:30 to 10.

Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Greer have closed their visit to Atlantic City and gone to their summer home at Williamstown, Mass.

Mrs. Daniel McMurtrie, of Sixteenth Street, is now at her summer home in Milton, Pa.

Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Hasler have issued cards for the marriage tomorrow of their daughter, Annie Augusta, to Mr. Frederick A. Williams, at Epihany Chapel.

Explosion of a Soda Fountain.

PERKASIE, Pa., June 19.—With a report like a cannon a soda water tank in Harry Neamand's drug store here exploded while Clerk Nelson Yeakel was handling it yesterday, and Yeakel was hurled back and seriously injured. A partition in the store was torn out and drug fixtures and bottles were smashed.