

A LIVELY TIME IN SENATE COMMITTEE

Senator Morgan and William Nelson Morgan Almost Come To Blows.

OVER PANAMA CANAL MATTER.

Senator Told Him He Would Deal With Him in Senate, Latter Said That Was Only Safe Place To.

Washington, Feb. 26.—The examination of William Nelson Cromwell, who has figured largely in connection with the sale of the Panama canal property to the United States, was begun today by the senate committee on inter-oceanic canals. Many of the questions asked Mr. Cromwell related to the interview at the Manhattan hotel in New York regarding the resignation of Mr. Wallace when Mr. Wallace, Secy. Taft and Mr. Cromwell were present.

There were frequent fits between the witnesses and Senator Morgan because the former was not more specific in his answers to questions by the senator. It culminated dramatically at the close of the day, when Mr. Cromwell refused to answer various questions asked by the senator, and the latter declared he would deal with the witness in the senate when the facts regarding the resignation of Mr. Wallace came out.

Mr. Cromwell replied with some warmth that was the "only safe place to do it."

Another statement which Mr. Cromwell made that attracted much interest was that in all his relations with the government of the United States and Panama, and even in the acquiring of the outstanding minority shares of the Panama railway for the United States, which was brought about through Mr. Cromwell's activity and labor, not a cent was received by him for his services. He stated that his final account was in the government files, and every share of stock was now in the treasury of the United States.

A feature of Mr. Cromwell's statement, and upon which he was closely questioned, was with reference to the retirement of Chief Engineer Wallace and the testimony which Mr. Wallace had given before the committee. He said that the explanation which Mr. Wallace gave the committee was radically different from that which he gave at the time he retired, which was that he had been offered a larger salary than he had received before the Manhattan hotel interview made no reference to Cromwell; that in a letter to Chairman Shonts the day after the interview no allusion was made to Cromwell. Mr. Cromwell quoted from his letter in substantiation of this.

Mr. Cromwell also gave a letter addressed to him from Mr. Wallace, dated at Panama, May 26, 1905, saying that he "kindly repeatedly turned to the words of advice and counsel which I received from you."

Later he refers to Mr. Cromwell as the "skilled and polished diplomat," and in closing he says, "Permit me, my dear Mr. Cromwell, to lift my hat to you."

Mr. Cromwell asserted that the reasons given by Mr. Wallace for resigning his position as chief engineer and a member of the isthmian canal commission in testifying before the committee were radically different from the reasons expressed to the secretary of war. Mr. Cromwell said the account of the interview at the Hotel Manhattan in New York, as given to the press by Secy. Taft, was entirely correct, but he could not recall the name of a single newspaper that had printed the statement. Senator Morgan insisted that he produce a copy of the statement before continuing to discuss it.

From that time on Mr. Cromwell and Senator Morgan were almost continually engaged in fits of words.

The senator told Mr. Cromwell that he had not been asked any questions concerning Mr. Wallace and wanted to know of the witness his purpose in alluding to Mr. Wallace.

"Is it your purpose to contradict or



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to impeach his testimony?" asked the senator.

"It is my purpose to state facts," was the reply.

"I repeat, it is your purpose to contradict or impeach Mr. Wallace?" asked the senator sternly.

Again the witness made the same answer, but when Senator Morgan in a menacing tone began to ask the question for a third time, Mr. Cromwell said:

"If the facts contradict him, he is contradicted; if the facts impeach him, he is impeached."

The interview between Secy. Taft, Wallace and Cromwell was described by the witness as painful in the extreme, that after Mr. Wallace had told the secretary that he was going to quit the service of the government and enter the employ of a private corporation, his eyes were dimmed with tears, and I confess that mine were, too," said the witness.

"There was a man called upon to do a transient work leaving as we needed him most," said Mr. Cromwell, continuing his testimony, "and it looked as if all the work we had done was about to meet with defeat."

"We don't want any serious about it. We want facts," said Senator Morgan, and the witness replied:

"Those are the facts."

Mr. Cromwell said in reply to Mr. Morgan that Secy. Taft's attitude was one of great dignity and calmness as he heard Engineer Wallace's statement that day. He stated that in substance Mr. Wallace had said on arriving on the isthmus he had received an offer from a large holding corporation in New York of \$50,000; that he had refrained from answering the cablegram tendering the position for several days, when a supplemental offer was made of \$10,000 additional in the way of stock in the enterprise, making \$65,000 in all as his salary per year. This he said, he could not lightly put aside, as he had never anticipated so great a salary, and that he owed a duty to his family as well as to himself and he had decided to accept the place.

"What occurred at the end of that statement?" asked Mr. Morgan.

"There was a painful silence," replied the witness.

"Why painful?" asked Mr. Morgan.

"Because Mr. Wallace had gone down to the isthmus absolutely in accord with every plan made for the work on the canal. He knew the wishes of the commission. He knew the importance of consistent effort, and he went willingly. The fever period was approaching, and just at the moment when he was expected to do his best for the president and the country, he quit and left the work in the hands of subordinates. That was sufficiently painful in itself."

Then came a dramatic moment. Mr. Morgan had been plying question after question to the witness asking him to detail conversations between Secy. Taft and himself growing out of the resigna-

tion of Mr. Wallace, which the witness refused to answer.

"I will deal with you in the senate, when the facts regarding the resignation of Mr. Wallace come out," said Senator Morgan.

"And that is the only safe place to do it," replied Mr. Cromwell with burning face.

The two men, scarcely five feet apart, looked at each other in anger, but the strained situation was relieved by Chairman Millard, who interrupted, saying that the witness had properly answered the questions propounded.

As an executive session held by the committee later an effort was made to limit the range of Senator Morgan's inquiries. The senator, however, insisted that his procedure was entirely proper, and would not consent to have the scope of the inquiry narrowed.

MURDERER CUT HIS THROAT.

But It Was Sewed up and He Was Hanged.

Santa Fe, N. M., Feb. 24.—John Conley, a miner and prospector who, on Jan. 18, 1904, killed James Redding and Charles Purdy at the Guadalupe placers, was hanged today at Taos a few hours after being found in his cell with his throat cut. The wound did not sever the artery and was quickly bandaged up. He did it with a pocket knife. Limp, Conley was dragged to the gallows and slipped through the trap, death resulting from strangulation. Conley had been convicted by a jury, 11 members of which spoke only Spanish and the trial was conducted with the aid of an interpreter. An appeal was granted to the New Mexico supreme court, but as Conley, not having the money to pay for a transcript, the evidence was not reviewed and Gov. Hagerman refused to grant a reprieve of 30 days in which the case would have been reopened. Conley claimed that he killed the two men in self-defense. In a letter found in his cell he cursed his enemies and declared that he was innocent.

Conley was born at Albany, N. Y. He served in the civil war as a Pennsylvania volunteer and afterwards for five years in the regular army in Indian campaigns.

JURY ACQUITS FRENCH.

Sacramento, Cal., Feb. 26.—Former State Senator Frank French of this city, accused of accepting a bribe, was today acquitted by a jury in the superior court. The case was submitted without argument. The jury was out 30 minutes.

BIG BANK ROBBERY IN FINLAND.

Helsingfors, Finland, Feb. 26.—Ten men forced an entrance into the Russian State bank last night, shot the guardian and secured \$37,000. The robbers have not been captured.

PRESIDENT AS A STRIKE STOPPER.

He Writes John Mitchell Urging Him to do What He Can For Peace.

FOR A NATIONAL CONVENTION.

One Will be Held March 15 as a Result of Roosevelt's Letter.

New York, Feb. 26.—President Roosevelt has again intervened as a peacemaker between the coal miners and operators, and as the result of a letter addressed by him to John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers of America, a national convention of the United Mine Workers will be held on March 15 to try to reach an agreement with the soft coal operators in the hope of averting the threatened strike of April 1 in the bituminous coal fields.

The president's letter and the announcement that the national convention would be called were made public tonight by Mr. Mitchell after a long conference with Francis L. Robbins, president of the Pittsburgh Coal company, and chairman of the bituminous operators, who came to New York this morning. Also present at this conference were W. C. Berry of the Southwestern Coal association, and B. F. Bush, representing the soft coal interests allied with the Gould railroads.

ROOSEVELT'S LETTER.

The president's letter to Mr. Mitchell is as follows:

"I note with very great concern the failure of your late convention on the joint interstate agreement to come to a basis of settlement of the bituminous mining scale of wages. You in this business have enjoyed a great industrial peace for many years, thanks to the joint trade agreement that has resulted in the action of your successive conventions."

"A strike such as is threatened on April 1st is a menace to the peace and general welfare of the country. I urge you to make a further effort to avoid such calamity."

"You and Mr. Robbins are joint chairmen of the trade agreement committee of the National Civic federation, and it seems to me that this imposes additional duty upon you both, and gives an additional reason why each of you should join in making a further effort."

"THEODORE ROOSEVELT."

The conference did not adjourn until nearly 3 o'clock tonight, when Mr. Mitchell announced that after the reading of President Roosevelt's letter it was agreed, both by himself and the operators, that the national convention should be called. The miners were in session recently at Indianapolis, but failed to reach an agreement with the operators. President Mitchell himself has been quoted as saying that, so far as he knows, there would certainly be a strike in the bituminous fields April 1.

The negotiations for an agreement between the hard coal workers and the anthracite operators have been progressing smoothly to all outward appearances, and arrangements have been made for a joint conference Wednesday between the sub-committees having the settlement of the difficulties in hand.

With the anthracite negotiations well under way President Mitchell has been devoting more of his time to bringing about a settlement of the differences in the soft coal regions.

Mr. Mitchell has not announced any details of today's conference, nor did he say just when the call for the convention, which will fix the place of meeting, will be sent out. March 15, he believes, is the earliest date the convention can be summoned, and he believes that if there is to be peace the two weeks between the date fixed for the miners' assembly, and April 1, when the present agreement with the operators expires, is sufficient time to bring about the desired result. Mr. Mitchell would not indicate what new propositions will be placed before the miners, but significance is attached to his statement that the operators at today's conference agreed that the convention should be called. Concessions may be made on both sides, and President Roosevelt's interest in the situation will be held as an additional reason for bringing about a new agreement.

GEN. EDWARD SERRELL.

One of Greatest Military Engineers of America Very Ill in Infirmary.

New York, Feb. 27.—Brig-Gen. Edward W. Serrell, one of the greatest American military engineers, constructor of the Hoosier tunnel, the man who placed the Swamp Angel battery before Charleston, the engineer who first surveyed the inter-oceanic canal routes for the government, is lying very sick in an infirmary on Staten Island, a feeble patient. He has been there since last October. The money he made as engineer for big railway and bridge jobs is all gone; he has no retired pay from the government, because he left the service as a volunteer when the war was over, and the little service pension which he draws is hardly enough to support him. Serrell was born in New York City and he will be 80 years old this year. He began his career as an engineer on the Central Railroad of New Jersey. He then entered the government service and on the isthmus surveyed the course of the Nicaragua and Panama canal routes of the present day. He also surveyed a route for the Panama railroad. His next work was as chief engineer of construction of the Niagara Suspension bridge, which made a sensation at the time. In the next 10 years he was at the head of several large projects, chief of which was the Hoosier tunnel, then a world-wonder. During the Civil war he figured in 125 engagements and became by the end of it, chief engineer of the department of the south. His most sensational work was during the siege of Charleston, in 1862. By a system of parallels he enabled the federal batteries to reduce Fort Sumter and render Fort Wagner untenable by the Confederates. It was he who managed to obtain an anchorage in 28 feet of mud and to mount the 200 pounder parrot gun known as the Swamp Angel. This gun brought about the fall of Charleston. He left the army at the close of the war as brevet brigadier general. He then went into private practice. Three times in his career he received the thanks of Congress. His illness is not necessarily fatal.

MINERS HEAVILY FINED.

Mexico City, Feb. 27.—Reports from the Arizona district, state of Chihuahua, state that fines aggregating \$127,000 have been imposed on several miners of that district for infractions of the stamp law.

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