

TAFT ANSWERS POULT BIGELOW.

President Wanted to Know About
Attack on Administration
And Secy. of War.

HE SAYS IS NOTHING IN THEM.

No Delay by "Red Tape"—Denies
Again That Black Women
Were Imported.

Washington, Jan. 10.—An elaborate and comprehensive answer to the charges against the Isthmian canal commission, contained in an article in the Independent, has been made by Secy. Taft. It is in the form of a letter to the president, who on Jan. 6, in a communication to the secretary, said his attention had been directed to an article published purporting to have been written by Poultney Bigelow "attacking the administration of affairs by the canal commission and yourself on the isthmus," and adding: "Will you please advise me what basis, if any, there is for these charges?"

In his reply, Secy. Taft first briefly summarizes the charges as follows: Alleging that the conditions in Colon are so unsanitary as to indicate great neglect in providing for the health of the employees of the commission; alleging mistreatment of negro laborers; that persons appointed to the isthmus are incompetent and have been given their places through political influence; and official incompetency in connection with the latter involving the charge that there is so much "red tape" necessary to bring about the construction of buildings that great misery has come to the laborers of the isthmus.

The secretary says that Chief Engineer Stevens is now in Washington and is personally cognizant of the facts with respect to every local condition, and that the writer of the article, and a memorandum of comments thereon by Mr. Stevens is appended to the letter as an exhibit.

Discussing the conditions at Colon the secretary quotes Mr. Stevens as saying that every one knows, who has been on the ground, that the problem of draining the city is one of extreme difficulty owing to the situation on an island surrounded by the sea on one side and by a fresh-water swamp on the other; that the land on the average is not more than 1 1/2 feet above the sea level.

Uncertainty as to the plans of improving Colon has rendered impracticable any radical destruction of unsanitary buildings, most of which are on lands owned by the railroad company and leased on short terms to middlemen. Meantime, the secretary says, the sanitary conditions in Panama required much more urgent treatment than those at Colon. The death rate at Panama since the government took charge of the health of the isthmus, the secretary says, is from 25 per cent to 33-1/2 per cent greater than in Colon.

The commission thought itself fully justified, therefore, the secretary says, in establishing a water system and a sewer system in Panama first. It is not true, he says, that a large number of the employees of the isthmian canal live in Colon proper, where the swampy district is and, as Mr. Stevens points out, there are not to exceed 200 or 300 living there.

Regarding the charge of indifference as to food supply for the laborers, the secretary refers to the reports on the market contract and says the very diligent efforts made in this regard are sufficiently set out there, as already published.

Hearing on the charge that there is no water supply in Colon, Secy. Taft quotes from a dispatch from Gov. Magdon advising him that the two temporary reservoirs for the Colon and Cristobal water supply (the latter place being not five minutes' walk from the center of Colon) were completed, one on Nov. 11 and the other the latter part of December, with a total capacity of 80,000 gallons, amply sufficient for the present dry season; that there is no scarcity of water in Colon; that a permanent reservoir with a capacity of 700,000 gallons is under construction with two permanent stand pipes, under contract to be completed April 1.

The statements of Mr. Stevens and Gov. Magdon, Secy. Taft says, are at variance with those of the writer of this article.

Secy. Taft declares that the rate of wages is well advertised throughout the West Indies at 10 cents an hour for a day of eight hours, which may be increased by diligent work to 13 cents an hour.

It is also untrue, he says, that a great prejudice exists against negroes in the railroad management. The secretary says it is charged that the chairman of the commission and all others wrongly looked upon the tropical negro laborers as poor labor. The conclusion of Mr. Stevens and of every observer on the isthmus, he declared, is to the effect that this labor is inefficient.

Regarding the statement that the negroes are leaving the isthmus in portentous numbers because of mistreatment, Mr. Stevens testifies, the secretary says, that just before the holidays a great number of laborers returned to the islands whence they came. This, the secretary says, has been the custom ever since the beginning of the French construction. Many of the laborers leave their families and, because transportation is cheap, are able to go back and then return. The secretary shows that there are now on the payroll 17,000 laborers.

Secy. Taft refers to the personnel of the court of the canal zone and says it would be difficult to select a better one for the duties it has to discharge. As to the charge that officials on the isthmus were appointed through congressional or political influence, the secretary says the chief engineer categorically denies this, "and I am able from the standpoint of Washington also categorically to deny it." Political influence, he says, has played no part whatever in the selection of appointees. He adds:

"There has been great difficulty in securing under the civil service law methods men for out-of-door work on the isthmus—skilled mechanics, track-layers, carpenters and others—but certainly the defects in their qualifications which have been found to exist, have never been due to the exercise of political influence."

Secy. Taft says the charge of delay by "red tape" in the construction of buildings on the isthmus is shown to be untrue by the statement of the chief engineer, and as to the allegation that the dredges in the Culebra cut were not working to 20 per cent of their promised capacity, the secretary says there are no dredges within a long distance of the Culebra cut, and that the instruments there being used are steam shovels.

Secy. Taft says that the charge that quarantine officials construe the law and enforce it as far as possible to interfere with commerce is "stirred up" by the isthmian press. Being surrounded on every side by disease-breeding ports, the secretary says it is of the highest importance if the work done upon the isthmus is to remain permanent that the quarantine be strictly enforced.

Natives of the isthmus, he says, regard themselves as immune from yellow fever, and many of the other diseases, and therefore naturally resent the strictness of the quarantine against such diseases, but are greatly alarmed over the importation of the bubonic plague.

Secy. Taft repeats his former statement that the charge that a boatload of black women were imported from Martinique for immoral purposes is false, and refers to documents to corroborate this denial.

Secy. Taft says the 12 members of the advisory board of engineers spent seven and a half days on the isthmus and made an extended examination of the proposed sites and its appurtenances, quite sufficient and minute enough, he asserts, for them to pass upon the proper type of the canal.

Secy. Taft continues: "Finally I come to the charges specifically made against the secretary of war. They consist in a refusal to accept the guidance of Tracy Robinson in visiting the port of Colon and a refusal to have an interview with John L. Hadley, chief engineer of the electric and refrigerator plant in Panama."

"To the first charge I plead guilty," he says. An impression was sought to be given that Mr. Durdie's application for an interview was made in the interest of the negro laborers on the isthmus, and declares that the correspondence shows "how unfounded this is, and that in fact Mr. Durdie did not ask for an interview at all."

Secy. Taft states that the writer of the article containing the charges arrived in Panama Nov. 30 and left Dec. 1, and that "it is not unfair to say that his opportunities for observing were limited to 28 hours, including daytime and nighttime."

REORGANIZE CUSTOMS DISTRICTS

Washington, Jan. 10.—Reorganization and consolidation of customs collection districts by the president was approved today by the house committee on ways and means, which decided to report favorably on the Payne bill. This measure gives the president entire control of the reorganization of districts, the only limitation being that not more than 120 collection districts shall be created.

COURT OF INQUIRY CONVENES.

Fortress Monroe, Va., Jan. 10.—The court of inquiry appointed to investigate the recent collision between the battleships Alabama and Kentucky was convened today aboard the battleship Iowa. Capt. P. B. Barry of the Kentucky was the only witness examined.

BAD BLOOD WEAKENS THE SYSTEM AND INVITES DISEASE

Every part of the body is dependent on the blood for nourishment and strength, and when from any cause this vital stream of life becomes impoverished or run-down, it invites disease to enter. No one can be well when the blood is impure; they lack the energy that is natural with health, the complexion becomes pale and sallow, the vital energies are at a low ebb, and they suffer from a general broken-down condition of health. The system is weakened and unable to resist the diseases and disorders that are constantly assailing it. The Liver and Kidneys, failing to receive the proper stimulation and nourishment from the blood, grow inactive and dull, and the waste matters and bodily impurities that should pass off through these channels of nature are left in the system to produce Rheumatism, Catarrh, Sores and Ulcers, Skin Diseases or some other blood disorder. When the blood is in this weakened and diseased condition it should be treated with a remedy that is not only thorough, but gentle in its action. S. S. S., a purely vegetable remedy, made of roots, herbs and barks, is just what is needed. It not only cleanses the blood of all impurities and poisons, and enriches and strengthens it, but gently builds up the entire system by its tonic effect. S. S. S. reinvigorates every member of the body, gives tone and vigor to the blood, and as it goes to the different parts, carries robust health and strength. S. S. S. acts more promptly and gives better results than any other medicine. It cures Rheumatism, Catarrh, Sores and Ulcers, Skin Diseases and all other blood disorders, and cures them permanently. Our Medical Department will be glad to give advice without charge to all suffering with blood or skin diseases. Address:

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HIGHBINDER'S MAKING THREATS

Chinese Merchants in Chicago
Seek the Protection of
The Police.

HAVE ALL BEEN APPROACHED.

Threatened With Harm Unless They
Join the Ranks and Take the
Secret Oath.

Chicago, Jan. 11.—Fearing for their lives at the hands of highbinder, several well known Chinese merchants have sought protection from the police. Within the last few months they declare the organization has grown with rapid strides in Chicago, and now numbers more than 100 members. Every merchant in Chinatown of any consequence has, it is said, been approached recently by members of the society and threatened with harm unless they join the ranks and take the secret oath.

Those who have complained to the police refuse to give their names, saying should it become known that they have informed the authorities they might meet with violence at the hands of the members. It is positively, however, that the organization has already gained a strong foothold in Chicago and they say at least 20 merchants who have refused to listen to the pleadings of the agents to become members have been told unless they reconsider their action they will be forced out of business. Some, it is said, have been threatened with violence and even death providing they remain obstinate.

The organization is known as the Hing Tong society, and is the same as generally known in New York and San Francisco as the highbinder. Several who have been approached claim it is only a scheme to force them to pay large sums of money to a band of Chinamen who refuse to work.

The society has employed an interpreter, it is said, and has elected regular officers, and meetings are held nightly in Chinatown, at which reports from the secret agents are read and names of persons who are not friendly to the organization are reported. It is also claimed that the first step of the members when a merchant refuses to join the ranks is to write anonymous letters to Chief of Police Collins complaining of the character of the place kept by the obstinate ones and in other ways causing them trouble. Detectives have been detailed to learn about the alleged workings of the secret band.

H. H. ROGERS' CASE GOES OVER UNTIL FRIDAY.

New York, Jan. 10.—The hearing before a commission in the quo warranto proceedings brought by Atty.-Gen. Herbert S. Hadley of Missouri, to oust three oil companies from that state was put over until today, after the counsel for the Standard Oil company, to appear in the supreme court and make an argument on the order issued by that court to H. H. Rogers, Jr., directing him to show cause why he shall not answer the questions asked him by Mr. Hadley.

The questions were in the main intended to bring out whether or not the Standard Oil company of New Jersey owns or controls a majority of the stock of the Waters-Pierce Oil company of Missouri, the Republic Oil company of New York and the Standard Oil company of Indiana.

When the order to show cause was taken up before Justice Glendon B. Rogers, the supreme court today, William W. Rowe and Frank Hagerman, counsel for the Standard Oil company, asked that the hearing on the question whether the Rogers should be compelled to answer the questions be put over until Friday morning. Justice Glendon B. Rogers granted the motion.

The counsel for the Standard Oil company informed the court that they had not had time to prepare an answer. They also requested that the hearing before Commissioner Sanborn should be held in absence until after argument before the supreme court. Justice Glendon B. Rogers ordered that all proceedings before Commissioner Frederick H. Sanborn be stayed until Friday at 2 p. m. or until after argument on the order to show cause. Judge H. S. Priest of St. Louis, counsel in the west for the Standard Oil company, arrived here today to take part in the case.

TSINAN FU OPENED TO FOREIGN TRADE.

Tsinan Fu, Jan. 10.—The ceremonies of opening Tsinan Fu, capital of the province of Shantung, to foreign trade today, were attended by many Chinese and foreign officials. The invited American guests present included consular officials and representatives of prominent mercantile companies.

Two hundred and fifty guests attended luncheon at noon, and the governor of Shantung will give a banquet to many guests tonight at his palatial home, which is built and furnished in foreign style.

The governor's speech today emphasized the fact that the first international commercial settlement opened by China herself was initiated and long ago favored by Viceroy Yuan Shi Kai and Chou Fu.

The area of the settlement is about four square miles. The reception given to American Consul Fowler, who is stationed at the Foo, and the other Americans, was very cordial. The boycott does not exist in Shan Tung province.

IRRIGATORS' FEDERATION ORGANIZED AT OMAHA.

Omaha, Jan. 10.—The American Irrigators' Federation is the name chosen for an organization formed by representatives of the irrigation states who met in Omaha today.

Among the objects of the federation set forth in an official statement are to harmonize conflicting interests, promote essential legislation, circulate instructive literature, aid in settlement of reclamation areas, criticize officials or others for acts of injustice and to aid in the adjustment of the freight rates and from the reclamation areas.

The following officers were elected to serve until the first annual meeting, which will be held at Boise, Ida., the date to be named by the executive committee, to correspond with dates selected for the national irrigation congress:

President, ex-Gov. L. Bradford Terence, New Mexico.
Secretary, D. H. Anderson, Chicago.
An executive committee among whose members are: Zera Snow, Portland, Ore.

"Incompatibility" loses its Significance in a home where Husler's Flour

is—Live where the "Dove"
abides.

C. M. Heinze, Los Angeles; ex-Gov. Frank Hunt, Boise; Lucius M. Wilcox, Denver, and several vice presidents, including Tom Richardson, Portland, Ore.; Judge Cyrus Hays, Spokane, Wash.; C. E. Brainerd, Payette, Idaho; M. H. Heber, Los Angeles; Fred J. Kiesel, Ogden, Utah; Clarence L. Johnston, Cheyenne; Lucius M. Wilcox, Denver; J. Turley, Washington, N. M.; C. D. Rephey, Florence, Ark.; Prof. F. D. Coburn, Topeka, Kan.; and A. J. Cobban, Rhinelander, Wyo.

SANDBAGGED IN LOS ANGELES.

Los Angeles, Cal., Jan. 10.—Evidently the victim of thugs, an unidentified man was found lying in an unconscious condition across the Salt Lake railroad tracks east of the Macy street bridge today, with several lacerations of the scalp. Robbery is said to have been the motive for the deed.

While the police have no clues upon which to work, they are satisfied that the deed was that of highwaymen, who, after believing their victim dead, threw his body across the tracks to be mangled by the first passenger train that entered the city.

PADDED PAY ROLLS.

G. H. Smith Arrested for Carrying
"Straw Men" on Them.

St. Paul, Jan. 10.—A special to the Dispatch from Minto, N. D., says: George H. Smith, a clerk in the Great Northern railway division superintendent's office here is under arrest charged with carrying "straw men" on his pay rolls.

The local officials for some time have suspected some one was "padding" the division checks aggregating more than \$200,000 have been located but the padded checks against Smith's account a check made out to Fred Kelly, for \$35 which was presented for payment by Smith last month.

Smith had charge of making up all time vouchers issued from the superintendent's office. He avers his innocence.

SAVED HIS PRISONER.

Whitcomb Co., Wash., Sheriff Crossed
The Canadian Boundary.

Bellingham, Wash., Jan. 10.—Sheriff Williams of Whitcomb county, in order to escape mob violence to his prisoner, Jake Terry, went across the international boundary line at Sumas, 20 miles north of here, and spent last night in British Columbia.

Terry, who is a noted character, and claims to be in touch with several well known bandits of the Northwest, was arrested yesterday on a charge of having stolen a gun on Christmas day, when, it is alleged, Terry threw Gus Lindsey, husband of Mrs. Lindsey, out of her house and kept a crowd of citizens at bay with the weapon he is accused of stealing.

Claiming he could get bond at Sumas, Terry was yesterday taken there by the sheriff. He failed, however, and was notified by citizens to leave town. The officer became uneasy for the safety of his prisoner.

The crowd notified Mrs. Lindsey to leave town or accept the alternative of receiving a coat of tar and feathers. Mr. Lindsey, her husband, was brought to Bellingham today, and is ill at a hospital.

Terry is again in jail here. Feeling runs high at Sumas, where a meeting will be held tonight to consider the case of the woman.

CHINESE LEGISLATION.

China's Minister Telegraphs Peking that
Any Satisfaction Not Probable.

Peking, Jan. 10.—The Chinese minister at Washington has telegraphed his government that any satisfactory legislation on the exclusion question is improbable. He says that the majority of congressmen favor greater liberty, but that the influence of the laboring class is too strong against the Chinese.

Imperfect Digestion.

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