

WHAT'S GOING ON

NEWS REVIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS

Flood Control Bill Fought by Coolidge and Others as "Extortionate."

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

THAT the flood control bill passed by the senate and, with certain amendments, under debate in the house last week, is the most extortionate measure in the history of the government is the opinion of President Coolidge. His remarkably outspoken view of this bill created something of a sensation in Washington and it encouraged a group of representatives, led by Mr. Frear of Wisconsin, in a determined fight on the measure reported by the house committee. The main issue was the question of local contribution upon which the President had insisted.

"Contribution is a cardinal principle in federal, state, and municipal aid," said Mr. Frear. "This case presents no exception. Thousands of corporations and large individual owners under this bill will enjoy enormous financial benefits through flood protection. They should contribute toward the expense. If we pass this bill and adopt the plan of giving away the taxpayers' money without limit to rehabilitate or benefit great interests that can bring political pressure to bear on congress, a hundred other flood control projects now knocking at committee doors will all demand the same treatment without contribution."

Reid of Illinois, chairman of the flood control committee, said in reply: "There is in the bill no provision for local contribution. There can be none if congress intends to protect the lives and property of its citizens from these destructive floods. No levee system can be effective unless it is unified, co-ordinated, and complete, and should any levee district fail to pay a contribution necessary under the reclamation theory the whole plan would fall. Nearly every levee district is now or will soon be bankrupt. There is no possible way for them to get money, as they are unable to sell any bonds because of the default in the bonds already issued."

There were conferences of house and senate leaders for the purpose of modifying the measure so that the President would sign it. Senators Ransdell and Sackett talked with Mr. Coolidge and reported that he would approve a bill similar to the Jones bill originally reported from the senate committee. This draft, while it eliminated local contributions, contained various safeguards which were not in the measure as passed by the senate and approved by the house flood control committee.

BY HOLDING up action on the \$304,000,000 naval appropriation bill the radical Republicans forced the senate to adopt the resolution of Blaine of Wisconsin demanding from Secretary Wilbur information as to the cost in lives and money of the operations of the marines in Nicaragua. Mr. Wilbur informed the senate that maintenance of the marine expeditionary force in Nicaragua had resulted in the death of 21 marines and the wounding of 45 others. He set extra-cost to the government of marine activities in Nicaragua at \$1,530,170. The total cost of maintaining the expeditionary force, Mr. Wilbur fixed at \$3,536,000. It was explained, however, that more than \$2,000,000 of the total cost would have been expended on the marines even if they had remained in their home stations. The secretary said it was known that 202 Nicaraguans had been killed in fights with the marines.

WASHINGTON, New York and Chicago were making plans to give rousing welcomes to the German-Irish transatlantic aviators, and were assured that the flyers would visit those cities after getting away from desolate Greenly Island in Belle Isle straits. The stories of their flight show that they lost their way because their compass failed in the dark and the snowstorm, and they wandered far to the north of their route. Relief and aid reached them by plane and otherwise

and they were busy repairing the Bremen so they could continue their flight to New York. James Fitzmaurice, promoted to major by the Free State government, was taken to Lake St. Agnes, Quebec, by Duke Schiller, Canadian aviator, to get a new propeller with which he intended to fly back to Greenly island.

Baron von Huenefeld, Koehl and Fitzmaurice will be entertained in New York for five days, and then, proceeding to Washington, will be the guests of President Coolidge, the Irish minister and the German ambassador. The wives of Koehl and Fitzmaurice will soon join them in this country.

GEN. UMBERTO NOBILE and a crew of fifteen left Milan, Italy, in the dirigible Italia on the way to the North pole, and on the first lap of the journey ran into a fierce storm over Germany. Finally the airship, somewhat battered, came down safely at Seddin airdrome, near Stolp, Pomerania, where repairs were made and further trial flights begun. Two more hops will take it to King's bay, Spitzbergen, which will be the base of operations. Nobile, who piloted Amundsen over the North pole two years ago in the dirigible Norge, intends to make several flights over the pole, taking scientific observations. He carries a cross given by the pope which will be planted in the ice at the top of the world.

ADMIRAL J. K. ROBISON, former chief of the navy engineering bureau, was a star witness for the defense in the Sinclair Teapot Dome conspiracy trial and he assumed full responsibility for the change in the government's policy from conserving the navy's oil reserves to storing fuel oil in seaboard tanks and that he favored the opening up of the whole reserve. "Sinclair asked me what we wanted if a contract was entered into," declared Robison. "I told him we wanted a pipe line among other things, and such arrangements as would give him the largest possible profits, and give us the largest possible share of his production. The more money he got, the more I got for the navy."

"I wanted to get the absolute maximum for the navy, and I got it," Robison almost shouted at the jury, as he banged the rail of the witness enclosure with his fist. Under cross-examination Robison was compelled to admit a close friendship for Sinclair. He disclosed that he traveled for a week in Sinclair's private car and was Sinclair's dinner guest at the exclusive Lotus club in New York. He also admitted he had played poker with Sinclair the very night that Sinclair secured three valuable contracts, one of them to supplement the Teapot lease.

The defense sought to show through Former Secretary of the Navy Denby that the scheme to lease the Teapot Dome reserve was conceived in the Navy department, but Denby's testimony was shut out by a government objection. Before the senate investigating committee C. C. Chase, a son-in-law of Albert B. Fall, made admissions that were considered extremely damaging to Sinclair's cause, and he was summoned by the government as a rebuttal witness in the trial.

SPRING in China brought a resumption of the Nationalist campaign against the Northerners and according to latest reports the Southern armies under Chiang Kai-shek are making great progress in Shantung province, where the miseries of war are added to those of famine and flood. Foreign military observers in Shanghai predict the collapse of Marshal Chang Tso-lin and his withdrawal to Manchuria within a few weeks. Japan expresses renewed fear for the safety of her nationals and her interests in Shantung and therefore has landed marines at Tsingtao and is preparing to send a large body of troops. It is almost certain that what Japan especially desires is to assure the status of her large interests in Manchuria in case Chang is defeated there.

GOV. AL SMITH was formally entered as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President by the New York state Democratic committee at a meeting in the National Democratic club in New York city. His name was presented by former

Lieut. Gov. George R. Lunn, and the laudatory resolution was seconded by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt. Both speakers centered the hopes of their party on the oil scandals. Senator Blaise of South Carolina, who is strongly against Smith, has put into the Congressional Record his opinion of the situation in his state. Summarized, this is that South Carolina will oppose Smith for the nomination to the last ballot; that if Smith gets the nomination in the regular way by the two-thirds rule, South Carolina will not initiate or join in any rump convention; and finally, that if Smith gets the nomination, some South Carolina Democrats, though not a great many, will vote the Republican ticket, while a considerable number of them will remain away from the polls, but not enough, in any event, to throw South Carolina into the Republican column.

Both Republicans and Democrats of Illinois held their state conventions, the former being strong for Lowden and the latter turning the delegates to Houston over to Smith. Republicans of Colorado refused to instruct their delegates at large for Hoover. Those of Delaware and Connecticut chose un-instructed delegations to the Kansas City convention, and it is expected these delegations will do their best to "draft" Coolidge. Senator Fess of Ohio, temporary chairman of the national convention, says he believes it will be the duty of Mr. Coolidge to accept the nomination if a deadlock, real and not manipulated, develops.

Meanwhile one national ticket already is in the field. The Socialists held their national convention in New York city and nominated Norman M. Thomas of New York for President and James H. Maurer of Reading, Pa., for vice president. Thomas is a minister and lecturer. Maurer is a member of the Reading city council and president of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor.

PUBLICATION of the government engineer's allotments for river and harbor work during the fiscal year 1929 discloses that Eastern and Southern waterways, together with the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio rivers, have the lion's share of the items running over \$1,000,000. Of the big allotments \$1,225,000 goes to the Mississippi river and between the Missouri river and Minneapolis, \$4,500,000 on the Ohio river, \$3,630,000 on the Missouri, \$1,700,000 on the Hudson river, \$1,200,000 on the East river, \$2,150,000 on the Delaware river, \$1,000,000 on the inland waterway from the Delaware river to Chesapeake bay, \$900,000 for the Savannah, Ga., harbor, \$900,000 for the waterway from Beaufort to the Cape Fear river, N. C., \$630,000 for Miami harbor, and \$1,025,000 for the Sabine-Neches waterway, Texas. The Illinois river is allotted \$575,000 for improvement work with the development of the Illinois link of the lakes to the gulf route.

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE, in an address at the opening session of the annual convention of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Washington, criticized federal encroachment on the rights of the states and the growing interference of government in business and the life of the individual. He was warmly applauded when he asserted that the American theory of society "rests upon a higher level than communism," and uttered a plea that the nation return to the high ideals for which the American Revolution was fought.

GEN. OSCAR CARMONA, dictator of Portugal, was inaugurated President of the republic, having been elected by regular suffrage without opposition in March. Violent earthquake shocks, extending over several days, caused the loss of many lives and vast destruction of property in the Balkans, mainly in Bulgaria. There were also destructive temblors in Peru and in Oaxaca state, Mexico.

Ellsworth Milton Statler, sixty-five, who rose from bellboy to ownership of more hotels than any other man in the world, died of pneumonia at the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York, which he operated.

Forty persons were killed in West Plains, Mo., by a mysterious explosion that wrecked a dance hall.

automobiles," he said, "has changed the population in more ways than can be easily estimated.

"One effect of our improved means of communication and travel is that disease can be spread rapidly by contact over a large area as compared with former times. We are more interested in well people as germ carriers now than we are in sick people as germ carriers. Sick people immobilize themselves; they go to bed. Germs are carried from the sick to the well by some one. People now know

the value of isolation and quarantine.

"The development of our highways, however, and the associated economic and social changes have tended to raise the general health level. The increase in the hazards of contact with germ carriers has been offset by the increase in the health of the individuals in our population, and highways and health are still intimately bound up with the welfare of the people of the present day."

Recently makes the third brave.

What Sumatra Is Like



Sumatran Women of the Rural Districts.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

SUMATRA, largest of the Dutch East Indies, and until fairly recently in the hands of savages, is rapidly undergoing development by its methodical rulers. It is an immense island, nearly four times the size of Java and thirteen times larger than Holland itself, but its wretched population amounts to less than 3,200,000, most of which, for various reasons, is not available for labor. Because of this the island has been slow in attracting attention, although more favorably situated than Java and richer in natural resources.

Java has already been developed. Sumatra is an island of great future. In the development of that future practically all the labor has to be imported on short-term contracts. Chiefly it is Chinese, which is expensive; Kling, which is viewed with disfavor by the British Indian government; or Javanese, which is unwilling to come and does not thrive in the climate.

The best idea of current life in Sumatra is to be had by leaving the towns behind and striking into the interior. From the capital, Medan, the road to the south at first leads through some miles of country dense and green with vegetation, with tiny thatched native huts making picturesque brown spots in the midst of fruit trees and coco palms. As one approaches nearer to the hills, this gives way to open plains covered with high grass and low bushes, the characteristic tobacco land of Deli.

The larger estates, especially those of the Deli company, are divided into sections under the administration of assistant managers. Each year only one-tenth to a fifth of their enormous area is under cultivation, since to maintain the high quality of the tobacco grown the land is left fallow for from five to ten years after each crop. During the first year the natives are permitted to grow rice upon the fallow fields; then the soil is left to itself and to the bushes and rank grass which soon cover it. The tobacco crop is a rich one, but the demands it makes upon the land and upon labor are such that it is not surprising to find the newer estates annually devoting more and more of their attention and territories to rubber and other less exacting products.

Up Through the Plantations. Gradually ascending in altitude, the road passes through many miles of these monotonous, fallow-lying plains, their desolate appearance only increased by an occasional row of un-used drying sheds and a few fire-blackened trunks of huge fossil trees, solitary survivors of the primeval forest.

The sections actually in cultivation, however, are extremely interesting, with many acres of magnificent tobacco plants growing to a height of five or six feet in closely planted parallel ridges. Frequently they hedge the road on both sides and extend in unbroken rows as far as the eye can follow over the rolling fields.

The work of the plantation is many-sided and the various nationalities employed are usually engaged in their own distinctive branches of labor. Thus, although sometimes replaced by other races, Chinese predominate in the actual work on the tobacco plants; the bullock-cart drivers are Klings; the carpenters are Boyans; the Javanese are woodmen, road builders, and gardeners; and the Bataks and Sumatras Malays, who are not obtainable in large numbers nor reliable for sustained labor, clear the land preparatory to planting, and build roads and sheds.

The ubiquitous Sikh is often found in his favorite capacity of guard or policeman.

Lines of two-wheeled bullock carts

with loose roofs of thatched palm leaves, matting, or even sheet tin, rattle slowly up and down the roads, hauling supplies and material for the estates. Many of the slow-plodding Indian oxen are magnificent big Guzerat animals, with large humps and long silky dewlaps, and, with their red-turbaned Tamil drivers sitting on the floor of the open-fronted carts, are strongly reminiscent of the tea plantations of Ceylon.

The road is very good, wide, and well made. There is practically no rock in this part of the island; and the metalling for the roads must be imported; nevertheless, the chief highways of the coastal plains and the pass over the mountains are all macadamized. In the highlands, where metalling has not yet been attempted, such roads as exist are of a very different type. These are of dirt or clay, well built and maintained, and good in dry weather. But Sumatra has an enormous annual rainfall, and during the wet season these clay roads become almost impassable.

Mountains and Great Forests.

The road from Medan to the interior, however, gives no warning of what is to follow. Leaving the plains and the tobacco plantations, it gradually ascends through wilder country, and presently, with well engineered zigzags, begins to climb into the mountains. As the road climbs higher the semi-tropical vegetation which has succeeded the coarse grass of the denuded plains gives way in turn to magnificent virgin forests, unbroken except for the narrow, winding path of the road. The enormous straight-trunked trees, ensnared by giant creepers, vines, and huge air plants, make so thick a canopy overhead that only a dim twilight filters in, and that falls to reach the ground through the dense, impenetrable tangle of vegetation.

Little brooks of clear water rush steeply down the mountainside, hurrying to the sluggish yellow rivers of the plains their tiny contributions for the extensions of Sumatra's coast. Butterflies flit in the blue-black shadows; jungle fowl, their brilliance all subdued in the obscure half light, vanish silently from the edges of the road as one approaches, and other little creeping and fugitive things seek the security of the subtropical jungle.

Insects with voices out of all proportion to their probable size scream shrilly from the branches, and the occasional whistle of a bird or the dull boom of a falling tree echo through the silent, dark recesses of the wood.

Much of the life of the jungle is to be seen along this little frequented road which opens up the very heart of the virgin forest; but infinitely more is the observer observed. Sometimes the crack of a broken branch betrays the hurried withdrawal of a larger animal, or a whirl of wings that of some startled bird; but only one's own sixth sense tells of the hidden watchers who silently follow an intruding man's progress with wondering, unfriendly eyes.

The swaying of branches overhead as one zigzags up the pass does not mean wind in the quiet forest; it means monkeys, and their antics are an unending amusement. Some wait in silence until the traveler draws near, then plunge back into the forest with a crash of branches which inevitably produces the shock they seem to have designed. Some tear furiously along through the trees in a desperate attempt to cross in front of the car.

When they do cross, far overhead, in a stream of small gray bodies flying through the air between the treetops, they as furiously race along on the other side and cross back again.

WITH CLIPPED WINGS

(By D. J. Walsh.)

NETTIE GRIGSBY stamped her foot impatiently, but the neat little white hen in the pansy bed went right on with her angleworm entree.

With an expert swoop Nettie had the hen by the legs, and in spite of fluttering and squawks carried her into the summer kitchen. Shining scissors snipped the hen's white wings.

"You'll stay put from now on. Until your wings grow, at least. Now try your over-the-fence stunt!" Released in the wire-enclosed poultry yard the hen did in truth try her wings almost at once. It was most boring in that pen. Out and over the fence were delicious tid-bits hidden in flower beds and potato patches. But queerly enough the trusty wings which had always before borne her up over the top wire of the netting about the yard utterly failed her now. Something was wrong. She fell back, to cluck her indignation in her gravel-covered run.

Nettie watched her with amusement. Then suddenly she discovered that she was wasting a morning which she had meant to spend quite otherwise than with the chickens.

"Myrtle will be at the library by this time. Uncle doesn't mind if his luncheon is a bit sketchy this warm weather. Or his dinner either. It will be so easy for me to slip off for the afternoon with Myrtle. And such entrancing work! If I must be buried here in this hole of a town while uncle thinks he has rheumatism, I'm entitled to some relief.

"I'll tell Myrtle I must have the work. She is sympathetic, and everybody knows her 'near' uncle is. It will be settled in no time."

Nettie, on her way to her own room to change her linen smock for an outdoor costume, glimpsed a bit of color whirling down the street. A second glance assured her it was Sue Hadley. Sue must have a new dress, and such a red, too. The silver certainly was the Hadley car. A little twitch at her conscience disturbed Nettie for an instant. Sue had been helping Myrtle at the library for two or three years. And how important that helping was to Sue.

"But she doesn't need the money, and she has so much to do on the farm, anyway. It really will be a kindness if I take the place." Not away from her, Nettie did not call it that. Just fill in temporarily. There were all the new books to catalogue and, for another thing, her experience in filing up there in the city would be welcomed by the over-worked Myrtle.

"Indeed you are a godsend, Nettie," the librarian informed her an hour later. "We have so many new conveniences that are a nuisance, really. And you will know all about them. Sue is a dear, but, well, h'm."

A page of Sue's scribbly writing lay on the desk as the two talked, and Nettie contrasted in her mind her own neat copperplate. She was doing a favor in taking this place, with her accuracy and efficiency. So every one seemed to think, too. The Eldersville Argus carried a pleasant little item that week about "our talented townswoman, Miss Nettie Grigsby, who has consented to assist Miss Myrtle Haines in the management of the Eldersville library. Miss Grigsby left a lucrative position in the city office of Golding & Golding to care for her aged and infirm uncle, Clayton Grigsby. Success, Miss Grigsby, says the Argus."

Very nice, thought Nettie's neighbors. Little Miss Alma Austin fattered out to her gate as Nettie passed one night and begged her to accept the leadership of the Entre Nous Library circle for the year. Rev. Mr. Massey beamed on her when he happened to meet her in the post office. All at once Nettie felt she had become a public character.

And Uncle Clayton was cared for so well enough. He never had much to say anyway. He could read his "Roman Empire" just as well by her in the cool library three blocks away as with her cooped up in the hot kitchen, or chasing the hens out of the flower beds.

If the meals were a bit bakery flavored it wouldn't matter. It was only afterwards she stayed at the library and who could cook all the afternoon in summer? Not Nettie.

The only one who did not seem overjoyed with the new arrangement was Sue Hadley. Sue did not bring in great bunches of daisies and jars of cottage cheese any more. When Nettie met her at church Sue only smiled stiffly. Instead of the jolly evenings on the side porch while Uncle Clayton smoked his pipe in the dining room Sue milled cups to town at all. And then only marriage and

after her errands at post office and grocery she whirled the silver fast past the Grigsby house.

Myrtle had duly reported Nettie's need of the position, of course. But Sue did not believe the story. She thought she had failed as assistant. And her brown eyes took a hard look that came from too many tears she shed alone. Whatever happened she would never beg any one's sympathy. Many a farm woman knows how she felt.

But few farm women are the heroines of their own stories, as Eldersville awoke to find, one bright autumn day.

A celebrity was in their midst. A real one. No less than a poet so great that he was rated above millionaires. And he had hired a car of Sam Hook at the Elite garage and inquired the way to the Hadley farm. Only those who have lived in small towns can understand the excitement rife in Eldersville about that time.

Some cousin of the Hadleys? They came from that vague region known as "Back East." Come to think of it Mrs. Hadley had such an intellectual look, now didn't she? A noble brow, Miss Alma Austin said.

And Mr. Hadley was really quite a bright man. Ever so many had noticed it. Postmaster Rankin mentioned the fact that they took some fine magazines. Druggist Thornton remembered that the Hadleys never bought patent medicines. Or, at least only the ones he personally assured them were doctors' prescriptions. Discriminating family, all said. Yet no one included Sue in the glory. She had failed. Sue hadn't been quite satisfactory as library assistant. Miss Nettie Grigsby had had to take hold and straighten out a lot of things after Sue—ahem, resigned. Nettie heard all the talk, a bit touched up by Myrtle, who dearly loved romance, in our book covers.

But that afternoon, at the Literary club, things happened. The celebrity was real. And he came accompanied by the high-school principal, who had met him before. Everybody was in a state of blissful fustiness. Even Nettie held her breath when the visitor grew eloquent over his errand in their "charming little city."

"To award the year's poetry prize given by the Pacific Quarterly. And I may say we have found a genius. Yes, a genius."

The celebrity was not so good at speech-making but he might have done his showing off by singing jazz, for all the attention the Literary club paid to him. The one who held their eyes was Sue Hadley, blushing and trying to back around behind somebody after she had thanked the gentleman for the check so handsomely presented in a leather and gold case.

Sue Hadley! Little Sue, who never had time to put her dress on the right way, and who bought the first one she saw anyway. Sue, whose hands were so cramped with farm work that in her afternoons at the library her poor fingers just wouldn't write legibly. Sue, who had gone home and cried her eyes out, who wouldn't go to Nettie and snap out of her the "why" of it all.

The celebrity was chatting on. Now that the presentation was made and he could just talk, he developed a very pleasing style.

"Like a little bird with clipped wings, is your Miss Hadley. But I and she doesn't waste her time moaning, or fluttering vainly about. Or getting into other people's gardens. A tame little bird, as pretty domestic fowls are. But how we should miss them were they gone! How we should miss them!"

Everybody smiled at Sue, squeezing down in a corner by fat Mrs. Atwill. Everybody wanted to kiss her and congratulate her. Even Nettie hurried up and hugged her until she gasped. But it was not the hug which made Sue look so pretty, with the old smile spilling all over her face. It was something Nettie whispered:

"I never dreamed you loved the library so! And you had a right there so much more than I! And you're going back. Tomorrow, I'll not have a minute for work like that this winter. Uncle wants so many attentions in the cold weather, and next summer I'm going to raise chickens really. Not just a few of them, but a lot. I believe I like them better than books. They get somewhere—some of them."

Sue took Nettie's speech with a grain of salt, but if that lady had made up her mind, that settled it. No more clipped wings for the poet of Eldersville.

Important Rediscovery In Egyptian tombs have been found pieces of a brilliant scarlet transparent glass, the composition of which has puzzled generations of scientists. In the Fifteenth century the Chinese rediscovered the secret of this glass, but again the recipe was lost, to be rediscovered by Sir Robert Jackson, who showed some of it before the Royal Institution.