

NATIONAL AFFAIRS.

Our Washington Correspondent Tells What Congress is Doing and Discusses the Panama Situation.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer

In all political and diplomatic circles here the Panama situation is the all-absorbing topic of discussion. The new republic was born so quickly and the attitude of the Administration announced so promptly that public men have hardly had time to catch their breath before being called upon to express their opinion on the affair. Declaring that "he is bound not merely by treaty obligations but by the interests of civilization to see that the peaceful traffic of the world across the Isthmus of Panama shall no longer be disturbed by a constant succession of unnecessary and wasteful civil wars," President Roosevelt has issued a communication to our representatives in Panama and Columbia in which he says that the United States has entered into relations with the defacto government on the Isthmus.

THE PANAMA SITUATION

More ships are on their way to Colon and Panama, and our government has informed Colombia that she will not be allowed to land troops at either of these ports. Mr. Phillippe Bunau-Varilla has been appointed "envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the government of the United States with full powers to conduct political and financial negotiations." The new envoy has been received and dined by Secretary Hay and talks of negotiating a treaty direct with the United States. He began his career by what is regarded here as a "breach of diplomatic propriety," in writing an open letter to Senator Morgan asking this champion of the Nicaraguan route to renounce his opposition to Panama. He explains that he wrote the letter as a private citizen, and before he presented his credentials, but as he begins his communication by declaring that he is the minister plenipotentiary of the new republic, his excuse is not very sound. However, in the whirl of political interests revolving around the Panama affair, a breach of diplomatic etiquette is a mere detail. Most of the Republican Senators support the Administration and Senator Hanna emphatically declared that the President had done only what was our manifest duty. The Democratic Senators, with the caution which characterizes their new leader, have decided to wait for further information before making a party issue out of the situation. Nothing, however, will restrain Senators Morgan and Teller who are preparing to make a vigorous attack on the action of the administration.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ON CUBAN RECIPROCIITY.

In his message to Congress for the extra session, the President dealt solely with the question of Cuban reciprocity, urging the passage of an act which would render the treaty signed with Cuba effective. He said we were bound by our interest and by

our honor to grant reciprocity to Cuba. By the acceptance of the Platt Amendment this small republic was placed in a unique position in regard to this country, with which it had come into close political and economic relation. The treaty injured no American interests, and opened up to us a large and constantly increasing market, right at our door. It was an opportunity which we could not afford to neglect, and we should not force Cuba to seek connections with foreign countries which would be disadvantageous to us. In the granting of coaling stations and in other matters, this island republic, to which we had given freedom, and which we started on a national career, had performed faithfully all its obligations to this country, and we were morally bound to do likewise. The treaty would serve as a guarantee of good faith of our nation toward her young sister republic. He ended his plea for the treaty by saying, "A failure to enact such legislation would come perilously near a repudiation of the pledged faith of the nation." Although there are now a host of rumors that the opposition to the treaty will succeed in defeating it, it is evident to a non-partisan observer that the reciprocity will be granted to Cuba either at the extra session or during the first part of the regular session.

MORGAN OFF THE CANAL COMMITTEE.

The Republicans of the State have decided to remove Senator Morgan from the chairmanship of the Committee of the Interoceanic Canals, and the Senate Committee of Committees has been instructed to choose his Republican successor. It is no doubt owing to his determined hostility to the Panama route that the venerable Senator from Alabama is to be removed. Senator Hanna, who is the strongest advocate of the Panama route, and the third member of the committee, will probably be made chairman. Senator Morgan will be offered the chairmanship of the Committee on Public Health and Quarantine, a position formerly held by Senator Vest, of Missouri. Through the courtesy of the majority, the minority in the Senate has been given the chairmanship of ten committees out of the sixty-four. Senator Morgan's removal will reduce this number to nine.

THE NEGRO CRUM AGAIN.

A minor event in the Senate, which is likely to cause much discussion by the press of the country, was the sending for the third time, the nomination by the President of Dr. W. D. Crum to be Collector of the port of Charleston. As will be remembered, Crum is a colored man, to whose appointment the South Carolina Senators and the business men of Charleston made much objection. The Senate failed twice to act on the nomination, and the President named Dr. Crum as a recess appointment, and he has served in that capacity for several months. With the summing of his name again, the entire controversy is likely to be reopened. This time the Senate can hardly find an excuse for refusing to take action

in the case, and it will be interesting to see if all the Republicans will support the President.

A. B. M.
Washington, D. C., Nov. 14, 1903.

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The Progressive Farmer,
RALEIGH, N. C.