

# PLANS BEFORE CONGRESS

## THE BILL TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL LAND LOAN BUREAU.

PROPOSITION TO PROVIDE \$100,000,000 FOR THIS—THE NEW TORPEDO BOATS—THE POSTAL TELEGRAPH.

WASHINGTON, May 20.—Senator Stanford's bill, introduced to-day, to provide for making loans on lands, establishes a land loan bureau in the Treasury Department. The chief and deputy chief shall be appointed by the President, with salaries of \$6,000 and \$5,000, respectively. The Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to prepare, ready for issue, United States circulating notes of the denominations of \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$500, and \$1,000, to the amount of \$100,000,000, and additional amounts as they become necessary, to be placed to the credit of the land loan bureau. Those notes shall be full legal tender for public and private debts, except interest on the public debt or in redemption of the national currency.

Any citizen of the United States or any person who has declared his intention to become such who owns unincumbered agricultural land may apply to the land loan bureau for a loan from these certificates, to be secured by lien on such land, the loan not to exceed half the assessed value of the land. No loan shall be made upon land of less than \$500 in value, nor in sums less than \$250, nor for longer time than twenty years. The loans shall bear interest at the rate of 2 per cent. per annum, payable annually, and may be paid at any time in sums of not less than 25 per cent. of the whole amount. The Secretary of the Treasury shall cancel and retire amounts of notes equal to the payments made on loans, and in case payment is made in other currency of the United States he shall cancel an equal amount of the note issued under this act. In case of default of payment of interest or principal of the loan, the chief of the bureau may order a foreclosure of the lien in a United States Circuit Court.

Dr. Norvin Green, President of the Western Union Telegraph Company, was in the room of the House Committee on Post Office and Post Roads to-day for the purpose of giving his views on the revised and amended bill proposed by the Postmaster General on the subject of a limited postal telegraph. Barely a quorum of the committee, however, was in attendance.

At the request of Chairman Bingham, Dr. Green answered informally several questions in regard to the bill. After referring to the great differences in the rates of the Western Union and those proposed in the bill, he said those rates upon their face meant absolute loss to any telegraph company doing business under them. The Western Union could not afford to accept those rates. There was no business in the country that could stand such a reduction in its charges. Even in the case of the telephone companies, he said, a reduction of 40 per cent. in rates would close every Exchange in the country, and many would have to close business at a reduction of 25 per cent.

Dr. Green gave a list of telegraph companies in existence, and said agreements to maintain rates were necessary to prevent companies from wasteful competition. Referring to the relative rates for the Government and the public, Dr. Green said he had made an account of the business from one city for three months. This showed that the rates to the public were just about twice as much as to the Government during last year and for some years past, and about four times as much as the rate fixed by the Postmaster General for the Government, Oct. 30 last, for the present fiscal year.

Dr. Green said that, although the Government operated the telegraph in Europe, yet it never started one in competition with its own citizens. There had been a number of outrageous misrepresentations made to the committee he would like to answer, and on which he desired to produce record evidence. He will have another hearing.

By request of the Wagesworkers' Alliance of Washington, Senator Ingalls to-day introduced a bill to abolish metal money. The bill is prefaced by a preamble reciting that Congress, through British cunning and American ignorance, has monetized gold; that the monetization of any material is class legislation; that the money of each nation is based on force; that "money is a thought—of legal-tender power stamp upon some material by some nation," and that "the volume of the declaratory full legal silk-threaded greenback paper money of the United States should be expanded until interest falls into silent disuse." The bill makes it unlawful for any officer of the Government to coin any more metal money under imprisonment for life.

The question of the Behring Sea fisheries was considered at to-day's Cabinet meeting, and it was decided, so it is understood, to adhere to the policy of last season, which is practically the same as the position taken on this question by the last and previous Administrations.

The revenue steamer Bear is now at Seattle, Washington, awaiting instructions for her guidance in Alaskan waters, and it is expected that her sailing orders will be sent at once. The revenue steamers Rush and Corwin are fitting out at San Francisco for their annual cruise in the same waters. The Rush will start north about the 1st of June, and the Corwin about June 10. It is likely that the war ship Ranger, now being repaired at San Francisco, will also make a trip to the fishing grounds during the coming season. The Pinta was at Ounalaska at last accounts.

No action has yet been taken on Mr. Daggett's postal card contract. Samples of paper which arrived to-day from the Birmingham works are said to be of a better quality than any hitherto received, and nearly if not quite equal to the department standard, and it is at least probable that, if this standard is maintained, no further objection as to quality will be made. If the required number of cards are regularly furnished, and the deficiency as to an additional surety is remedied, it is believed that Mr. Daggett will be permitted to complete his contract.

It is said at the Navy Department that there will be no more court-martial cases growing out of the recent cruise of the Enterprise. Chief Engineer Entwistle and Ensign George W. Kline, who were under suspension, have been restored to duty, and the court which tried Commander McCalla has been dissolved, which would hardly have been done in case the department intended to make any charges against Lieut. Ingersoll, executive of the Enterprise.

The two vessels added to the Naval Appropriation bill by the Senate committee are very acceptable to the Navy Department, although the Secretary would have been better pleased had there been at least two more torpedo boats added. The torpedo boat is to be substantially the same as the Cushing, with such improvements as may be suggested by experience with that vessel.

The torpedo cruiser of 750 tons and 23 knots speed, if provided for, will be the first vessel in the navy of that type which has come into common use abroad, the most familiar example being the Sharpshooter, and her class, in the British Navy. She will carry a battery of two four-inch rapid-fire guns and about six three-pounder rapid-fire ones, and will be fitted with at least four torpedo tubes. Such a vessel would be used for torpedo attack on an enemy's vessels, and with her great speed and large number of rapid-fire guns would be able to destroy his torpedo boats.

The English have had a great deal of trouble with their earlier vessels of the Sharpshooter class, owing to weakness of construction. The Sharpshooter broke down seven times on her natural draught trials, and she has never yet been able to run with forced draught. If similar vessels are to be built in the United States the experience of England will be profited by. Great strength is required for such a craft as is contemplated, for to drive her through the water at twenty-three knots will require more than 6,500 horse power in her engines, and will place a great strain on the hull.

The Senate committee put itself very decisively on record as opposing the construction of any more ships in navy yards, and cut out all the provisions for additional ship and engine building plants. When the bill goes back to the House some of these items will be tacked on again without doubt. The one providing for the rebuilding of the shops burned down at the Kittery (Me.) yard is almost sure to be, for Kittery is in the district represented by Speaker Reed, and Mr. Boutelle is Chairman of the House Naval Committee.

The Secretary of the Navy to-day ordered Pay Director Gilbert E. Thornton to take charge of the navy pay office at New-York as the successor of Pay Inspector Stewart, appointed Paymaster General. Pay Director Thornton has been in charge of the pay office at Washington for the last two years, and was a prominent candidate for the Paymaster Generalship. This order will be a great disappointment to Pay Inspector Ambrose J. Clark, who is in Europe on leave of absence, and who is understood to have cabled application for the New-York office as soon as he learned of the vacancy, and departed immediately on his return to the United States.

Pay Director Edward May, now in charge of

the Norfolk pay office, has been ordered to succeed Pay Director Thornton in Washington, and Pay Inspector Clark will probably have to go to Norfolk, which will be very distasteful to him, as he is said to have gone on his present leave to avoid being ordered there.

The Secretary of the Navy still has under consideration the bids received last week for gun lathes for the ordnance foundry at the Washington Navy Yard. The Bureau of Ordnance has recommended the acceptance of the joint bids of Bement, Miles & Co. and William Sellers & Co. of Philadelphia. These bids were not the lowest received, and the Secretary is considering the question as to whether the machines offered are sufficiently superior to warrant the extra outlay.