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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.
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16th District.

PROFITABLE CELEBRATION. Next year marks the 150th anniversary of the formation of the Constitution and the Commission which was created by Congress to carry on the sesqui-centennial observance is quite busy. This week, they requested an initial appropriation of \$200,000 to carry on the work and in the course of the discussion it was disclosed that the celebration instead of being an expense will return huge dividends to the Federal Treasury. Among other things that will be published, issued and provided to make the nation Constitution-conscious will be lithographs of the signing of the Constitution, portraits of the signers, facsimile copies of the Constitution, medals, certificates, special commemorative stamps, motion pictures, songs, flag charts, outlines, handbooks, plays, poems, essays, orations, posters, banners and every other kind of written and pictorial art. It is estimated that this celebration will return a profit of 2 million dollars in sales of stamps and other items.

THIRTY YEARS AFTER. In 1906, the United States entered into a treaty with Mexico with reference to water rights on the Rio Grande River. This river flows thro the very heart of New Mexico from North to South and then forms the western boundary of Texas, separating Texas from Mexico. Because of this fact, the northernmost point of Mexico is about 1500 miles north of the southernmost point of Texas. Under this treaty, the U. S. guaranteed to deliver to Mexico 60,000 acre-feet of water annually. This means a quantity of water one foot in depth over an area of 60,000 acres. Reason for the treaty of course is that since the Rio Grande rises in the United States, we might conceivably divert or dam the water and deprive Mexico of her legal water rights. Year in and year out however, we have not been able to deliver the treaty requirement of water because there is no dam belonging to the U. S. whereby the water could be controlled and measured. This situation has existed since 1930. This week Congress passed a bill, providing 3 millions for the building of a dam near El Paso, Texas to control the water. Such is the delay in adjusting international disputes. The project involves many considerations.

GETTYSBURG 1862-1937. Under a boiling July sun in 1862 at Gettysburg, Pa., within 80 miles of the nation's capital was fought the most memorable battle in American history. There, for three days, with antiquated field pieces discharging volleys of grape shot and cannister, the lines of blue and gray, charged and receded in the wheat fields, the peach orchards, the barley fields and determined that the Union should live. Two years later, the magnanimous Grant and the noble Lee came to terms at Appomatox Court House and the war came to an end. Soldiers in blue returned to their homes to form the Grand Army of the Republic. Soldiers in grey returned to form the United Confederate Veterans. Year in and year out, these gallant comrades have kept up the traditions and maintained the vigil for their departed comrades until that day when all shall have been touched with the finger of immortality and answer the last roll call. In July 1937, America will witness a grand pageant when the blue and the gray gather in final reunion at Gettysburg. How, easy it will be then, to visualize the battle of Little Round Top, Longstreet's charge, Fickett's ride and those other epic exploits of that great battle. To aid in the celebration, Congress has authorized the minting of commemorative half dollars to help defray the expense of this final reunion - where sabre gives way to friendly handclasp and musket gives way to a cane.

THE ART OF DEBUNKING. When a Committee of the House was considering the bill providing funds to make us Constitution-conscious, one member objected to expenditures on the ground that he could find all he wanted to know about it in a 10¢ book that was being sold in Washington for souvenir purposes. This little book, published by a leading publisher and done in red, white and blue, contains the Constitution, some historical pictures, a copy of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and the Declaration of Independence. Forthwith, the proponents of the celebration obtained copies of the book, looked it over and noticed certain mistakes. Thus inspired, they purchased hundreds of copies and pasted slips to each page, carefully typed showing mistakes in indentation, arrangement, punctuation and in facts. Page 51 of the book stated in connection with the Declaration of Independence that "The Liberty Bell proclaimed the tidings ..." Along come the de-bunkers and add that "The Liberty Bell did not proclaim the tidings." Rep. Martin of Colorado, who served in Congress 20 years ago, and came back in 1932, and whose faith in Santa Claus is still intact was so exercised about it that he made a speech protesting against the debunking of cherished traditions. To that we add a personal Amen. There is something sweet and inspirational about believing that the Liberty Bell announced the glad news of liberty and we prefer to believe it.

JETTISON. is a marine term, meaning to throw the cargo and other dispensible items on a ship overboard in time of peril to lighten the ship. As Congress approaches adjournment time, there is always the danger that various groups seeking the enactment of a special measure or group of measures, will consolidate and prevent adjournment. Or there may be a long list of bills reported by committees, whose enactment would take considerable time and imperil adjournment. That is when the leaders go into a huddle and determine to jettison some of these measures. From present appearances, with the National Conventions set down for the second week in June, this jettison will include the Pure Food and Drug Bill, the Robinson Patman price discrimination bill, the Wheeler Rayburn Bill to protect displaced railway labor, the ship subsidy merchant marine bill, the lobby registration bill, the Kerr-Coolidge Immigration Bill and the bill to

expand the powers of the Federal Trade Commission over industry. Jettison is an annual affair and affects good and bad bills alike.

HOUSING TENDENCIES. So alluring are the potentialities of a housing program as a solution of the unemployment problem, that the best minds of the nation are concentrating on a program that can build low cost houses for millions of people. Latest development is the all-steel house made of sheet-steel walls with an insulation filler. Completely air-conditioned, such a house, consisting of 5 rooms, single story is now being quoted for \$4500 with assurances that in quantities, the price would be much less. It requires about 15 tons of steel per home. Advantages cited are that it will wear forever and is termite-proof. In a year or two, this country will see an amazing change in housing trends.

PAGE SHERLOCK HOLMES. Consider what might happen to a person who smuggles liquor into this country. He might be picked up by anyone of the 289 Customs Agency Operatives in any one of the 13 Customs Districts with a Central headquarters in Washington; or he might be apprehended by any one of the 271 Secret Service Men in any one of the 38 Secret Service Divisions with a Central Office in Washington; or he might be caught by anyone of the 1710 operatives in the Enforcement Division of the Alcohol Tax Unit of the Bureau of International Revenue in anyone of the 15 administrative divisions with a Central office in Washington. A single shipment of liquor may involve all of these because it involves evasion of customs, counterfeiting of stamps and violation of the liquor revenue laws. It has become so prolix that it's hard to tell who has jurisdiction of a violator and what shall be done with him. To remedy this labyrinthine condition, a consolidation of these agencies is to be effected under a single bureau to be known as the Treasury Agency Service. Such is Government bewilderment.

GREATER THAN THE PRESIDENT. In a sense, John R. McCarl, Comptroller General of the United States, who holds office for 15 years and cannot be removed except by impeachment has far more power than the President because it is up to him to determine the legality of virtually all expenditures of the Government and whether they are in conformity with the law. He has 3850 persons working for him. He is a strict interpreter of the law. His 15-year term expires on June 30, 1936. In those 15 years, he has remained aloof from the social life of Washington and free from all political entanglements. Speculation is now rife as to his successor.

THE TASK OF SOCIAL SECURITY. On August 14, 1935, the President approved the Social Security Act passed by Congress. The three most important provisions of the Act are (1) Unemployment Compensation (2) Old Age Assistance and (3) Old Age Benefits. Funds for providing compensation to the unemployed for a limited period are raised by a payroll tax on employers amounting to 1% in 1936, 2% in 1937, and 3% in 1938 and thereafter. Funds for Old Age assistance or Pensions are provided by the states with the provision that the Federal Government shall reimburse the states for one half of what they pay but not to exceed \$15 per month per person as Uncle Sam's share. Funds for Old Age Benefits are raised by a payroll tax on employers and an excise tax on employees. Benefits become payable at age 65, based upon the amount of money which a person has earned after Dec. 31, 1936 and before he reaches age 65 with a maximum monthly benefit of \$85.00. To gather the necessary information and establish permanent records for carrying out the Social Security Act, it will be necessary for the Social Security Board to consult and question 3,500,000 employers and 26,000,000 employees. It is estimated that it will cost 60¢ per employee to gather this data and record it on cards. Truly a herculean task!

UPPITY-UPPITY. Years ago, we heard much of an unwelcome feller named Hi Cost 'o Living. He is in evidence again. Here's a bit of proof dug from an obscure paragraph in the 100 page Relief and Deficiency Appropriation Bill. Weeks ago when the War Department Appropriation Bill was passed, the cost of feeding our soldiers was estimated at 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per day. Now it develops that it costs 47 $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ per day so Congress had to appropriate an additional \$3,750,000 for that purpose. In providing fuel oil for the Navy, the original estimate was 76.17¢ per barrel. Now it appears that oil will cost 86.46¢ per barrel. That required an additional \$750,000. Rations for our Marines were estimated at 43¢ per day. In fact however it will take 44.87¢ which requires an additional \$90,000.