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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT  
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16th District

LOST BY A NOSE. When word went forth that the petition to bring forth the Wage-Hour Bill was to be filed on Friday, May 6, many members who wanted to sign the petition were out of town. Included was a lady member who immediately booked transportation on a plane for return to Washington. She arrived in time to sign, but in true feminine fashion, first loitered in the Speaker's corridor long enough to powder her nose before entering the chamber to affix her name. While she was wielding the powder puff, the last two names were signed and the petition automatically closed. Thus the lady lost by a nose in her race to get her name inscribed thereon.

AERIAL MAIL CARRIER REACHES 20. On May 15, the air mail observed its 20th birthday. It began officially on May 15th, 1918, when the first mail plane took off from New York, delivered its mail pouch to a relay plane at Philadelphia, which in turn coasted into a Washington airport before a huge throng. The first letters thus delivered by air were distributed by 190 Boy Scouts to the various addressees including the Vice President. The trip required 3 hours and 5 minutes. That same day, President Wilson looked on and gave his official blessing as a plane took off from Washington for Philadelphia and New York on a northbound run, but unfortunately the plane broke a propeller and landed in a field in Maryland 30 miles from the airport. The first official air mail route was but 218 miles. After 20 years, the domestic air mail now flies a route of 32,376 miles and the foreign air mail another 30,450 miles, thus bringing the world so much closer together. An amazing twenty years!

AERIAL TYPEWRITER. How we thrilled when some dashing pilot swept and zoomed thru the sky, emitting dense white smoke from the plane's exhaust which spelled the name of a cigarette, a gasoline or some other merchandise. Sky-writing they called it, but it never became very popular. Now comes a man from New York to ask Uncle Sam for a patent on a device for writing in the sky. It consists in the main of a keyboard located in the cockpit of the plane and a long smoke-laden pipe suspended from the plane. The operator punches the keyboard and makes huge letters 200 feet high at the rate of 15 per minute. Are we about to develop "sky-neck" from gawking in the sky to read some blurb about smoking "Dromedaries-Aged in the Wood" or like advertising?

TAX EXEMPT REAL ESTATE. The expansion of government activities, the construction of Federal and State buildings, the exemption of housing projects from general taxation, and the gradual growth of the idea of exemption of homesteads from taxation, calls attention to the vast amount of real property which is today exempt from general taxation. This becomes a real problem, since the increase in tax exempt property means an increase in the tax rate on non-exempt property in order to produce the necessary revenues with which to carry on the functions of State and local government. A recent survey by the Bureau of the Census of 52 cities with populations over 100,000 indicates that out of a total of 50½ billions worth of real estate, a little over 11 billions are exempt from general taxes. This

includes property owned by Federal, State, County, City, School, District and other units and property owned by educational, charitable, fraternal and other groups. Highest is Duluth, Minn., where 62.7% of all real estate is exempt. Lowest is Atlanta, Ga., where but 11.1% is exempt. Figuring that the assessed valuation of all real estate in these cities is \$2010 per capita, it means that property to the value of \$443 per capita pays no general taxes. Quite an item.

SO WHAT? The Federal Government has been rather generous with States and cities in the matter of loans and grants to meet distress. In view of this generosity, one would believe that old scores could be forgotten. Yet, there is a bill pending to audit the claim of the State of Vermont for funds advanced to the Federal Government during the war of 1812 and another bill to reimburse New York City to the extent of \$764,000 for subsisting and enlisting troops during the Civil War. So what?

THAT CANAL AGAIN. Two years ago, we heard much of the proposal to build a \$200,000,000 canal across the northern section of Florida. The bill was defeated in the Senate. But the Floridians are a persistent people especially when 200 millions are involved. For a long time, they have been sending out literature and propaganda and staging dinners in behalf of the Canal. On May 18, they managed to get the bill before the Rivers and Harbors Committee for a vote. The Committee consists of 26 members. Therefore 14 members must be present to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A quorum was present when the Committee met. Opponents to the Canal were on hand in great numbers. Advocates of the Canal were lacking. So a Florida member of the Committee stepped to a telephone to urge some of the canal advocates to hurry to the Committee. While so engaged, three members of the Committee departed and a quorum was not present. The Florida member returned and hastily summoned a few friendly members to rush to Committee to make a quorum. When they arrived, a New York member walked out and still no quorum was present. So the Committee adjourned and the Canal Bill is still pending.