

WOULD STRENGTHEN ARMY.

Secretary of War Root Makes a Strong Appeal to Congress.

Indicates Necessity for a Change in Methods of Promotion—America's Army Must Be Strengthened.

Washington, Feb. 27.—Secretary Root today appeared before the house committee on military affairs and made a strong appeal to the committee to report favorably the bill drafted by him to increase the efficiency of the army. The secretary said in part:

"The bill is limited to three subjects:

"1. Promotion in the line.
"2. Tenure of staff appointments and the relations between the staff and the line.

"3. Reorganization of the artillery. It is carefully framed to avoid raising the question of the size of the army, which it is understood congress is not now ready to discuss, and its provisions are made applicable to any army of whatever size congress may determine upon. The provision as to line promotion is that every third promotion to the office of major, lieutenant colonel and colonel shall be by selection, leaving the other two-thirds to be as at present, by seniority. This is designed to afford some slight opportunity for recognition of exceptional ability and gallantry. Under the present law, which permits promotion only by seniority, the president is prohibited from recognizing meritorious or gallant conduct, the most effective and brilliant service must go unrewarded, the thoughtful, devoted and ambitious young man is precluded from advancing himself by his own exertion a hairbreadth beyond the indolent, the dull and the inefficient man who is just able to perform duty to keep from being turned out of the service.

"The only objections to the proposed measures are that there may be favoritism in selections. The impartiality of the selection is safeguarded by the provision of the bill that the promotion shall be made from a list of three officers selected from the grade from which the promotion is to be made by a board of officers of superior rank convened for that purpose and sworn to make the selection according to the merits and fitness of the candidate as shown by his service records.

"From these three the president is to make the nomination which has again to pass the ordeal of confirmation by the senate. The officers of the army have its efficiency and honor and justice to their fellows more deeply at heart than anyone else in the world, and this bill puts in their hands the power and imposes upon them the solemn duty of confining these promotions strictly within the lines of justice.

"The section relating to staff organizations provide for the abolition of the present system of permanent staff appointments and for the substitution of details from the line for the staff for periods of four years, unless sooner terminated by the president, with the requirements that upon the expiration of a detail the officer shall serve at least one year in the line before he is eligible for another detail. The advantages of these provisions, I believe, will be manifold. I think the changes will break up and prevent the tendency to bureaucratic government, of which there is always danger, and will increase the efficiency both of the line and the staff, by breaking down the division between them; by giving to each a more intimate and personal knowledge and appreciation of the difficulties and the needs of the other, and by creating a large body of all round men, trained in every branch of the service and competent for any command, instead of men who have been trained in one branch only. The provision which permits the president to terminate a detail to the staff is of the highest importance. Nothing could be more unpractical than the present permanent tenure of the chief of a bureau.

"The president, as commander-in-chief, is responsible for the efficiency of the army. In time of war he is expected by the country to produce results by its use. He can determine who shall command the armies and can change generals in command as often as he chooses, but he is absolutely powerless as to the heads of these great departments which organize and assemble and feed and clothe and transport and arm and equip and care for the army. Victory or defeat is organized in the staff departments before a shot is fired. In efficiency in them means necessary disaster at the beginning, and the expenditure of countless lives. Yet no matter

how plainly inadequate to the task the head of one of these departments may be, the president is powerless to make a change unless the officer commits some distinct and heinous offense upon which he can be court-martialed and dismissed from the service."

The secretary said care had been taken to protect the rights of present incumbents of staff positions, and he understood the great majority of them were satisfied to accept the change cheerfully, but he understood there were a very few who were dissatisfied. Their opposition, he said, is purely personal and of the same kind which for years has undermined every attempt of improving army organization. Such consideration should not prevail.

He then explained the provisions of the bill in detail, dwelling especially on those relating to the artillery. An increase of 6500 men, almost all in the coast artillery, had been provided for, but the increase would be spread over five years, and in order to avoid raising any question as to the size of our army at this time, the 1300 increase each year could be made up by recruiting that many fewer in other arms of the service. The regimental organization was abandoned as to the artillery and the battery or company adopted as the unit of organization, substantially all military authorities being agreed that there was only a multiplication of red tape and no sense in trying to administer the artillery arm on regimental basis when only one battery as a rule was in one locality. A chief of artillery was provided in order that this, like other important branches, should have a responsible head.

Members of the committee asked many questions and showed great interest in the secretary's statement.

Details of Kimberly Siege.
Kimberley had been invested 123 days. The garrison consisted of 2500 men, including half a battalion of the Loyal North Lancashires, and a detachment of the Black Watch, and five bodies of local forces. Cecil Rhodes has been one of the chief organizers of a most gallant defence, and Colonel Kekewich has been a commander second only to Colonel Baden-Powell in resources and practical ability. He is a Devonshire man. The main episode of the siege was the sortie, led by Major Scott Turner, late in November. The presence of Cecil Rhodes made the capture of Kimberley an objective point of first importance, but it also armed the town with the resources of energy and capital for defence, since he has expended a fortune in providing a new water supply, strengthening fortifications, casting guns, employing natives and securing supplies. Now that Kimberley is relieved Rhodes sagacity in rushing to the defence of the diamond city at the outbreak of the war is recognized.

Repairing Steamers.
Many of the steamers which have been tied up for the winter here at Dawson and at various points up the river are now being overhauled and put in shape for business as soon as navigation opens.

Many of them are being changed as to passenger carrying capacity in that arrangements for additional facilities are being made, as it is confidently predicted that travel on both the upper and lower rivers will be double this year what it was during the past open season. Steamers were tied up last fall at irregular intervals from Dawson to Whitehorse, wherever a deep slough or protected cove could be found. There are also many steamers on the lower river, all of which are expecting an enormous season's business.

Scarcity of Wagons.
The sudden departure of the snow has caused the freighters of Dawson to awaken to the fact that there is a scarcity of wheeled vehicles in the city. The majority of the old timers, those who engaged in the business of freighting last season, are supplied and were prepared for the baring of the ground; but many new ones who started in the business since last fall are not supplied with anything but sleds, and now, on realizing the need of wagons, they find them very scarce and remarkably high priced.

The many horses and mules which have come in over the ice and which are still coming have been and are bringing sleds, and while there is probably more work stock in Dawson now than ever before in her history, much of this stock is today practically useless for the reason that no wagons are obtainable.

Although weather predictions go for as little in this country as in any on earth, yet there are many of the oldest residents who confidently assert that there will yet be good studding for at least two or three weeks; that clouds will form which will withstand the penetrating rays of the sun, and that light snow will fall, making the roads as good for a time as they have been

at any period during the winter. If the above prediction, which is based largely on hope, should prove true, there is sufficient business to employ every animal and sled in the city for three or four weeks steadily. Unless more snow falls, and in the absence of wagons, it is probable that pack trains of horses and mules will be operated to the creeks the same as they were on White Pass and on to Bennett previous to the building of the railroad.

Fin de Siecle.
Now that Spring has called the warm rays of the sun to kiss the pale and chilly face of nature the Dawson sport will hie himself to the luxurious bath and revel in the delight of invigorating cleanliness, particularly as a new thing has struck the town.

This is the "Sanitarium bath," recently added to the equipment of Ford's Club bath house. A Nugget man hearing of the innovation, placed himself literally in the skillful hands of attendant Nicholson and was shown to a neatly furnished room for disrobing.

From there the patient enters the steam room, where in a recumbent attitude he is left for about 10 minutes in dense clouds of heated steam the perspiration flowing from every pore. From there to the "slab" where he is thoroughly rubbed with salt, the action of rubbing creating a perceptible electrical effect which is very invigorating. Then the visitor is vigorously massaged and washed with soap and tepid water. The next operation is the cooling off which is done by means of a shower bath, leaving the skin in a healthy glow.

From here to the drying room is the next step, where the patient is treated to another massage and a camphorated preparation rubbed briskly on the skin. From here to the couch, where a rest of 15 minutes is indulged in before dressing. These baths are particularly recommended for rheumatism or nervous trouble, and well as any cutaneous diseases.

Yukon Theosophists.
The Yukon Theosophists entertained a large audience last evening. The petition to the Yukon council for the early establishment of a good central public nonsectarian school was thoughtfully discussed, and met the unanimous approval of the audience, who represented many shades of religious thought, but who all agreed that the broad, liberal, unbiased training of our country's youth in intellectual truth was of paramount importance, and transcended any onesided system of semi-religious education. Mr. Rudolph delivered his lecture on theosophy as a scientific guide, that when rightly understood and applied does not err in intelligently leading its devotees to realms of bliss, but when misunderstood leads in the opposite direction.

The mental attitude of the lecturer last evening proved the correctness of his thesis, for it was plainly evident that himself and the fascinating goddess were not in rapport. The sympathetic audience, however, utilized the lecture and showed their appreciation for the speaker by a generous round of applause. The club will present another intellectual treat on next Wednesday evening.

The Seductive Solitaire.
"Take my advice," said a man who has been married about two years to a friend who is shortly to follow suit. "Take my advice and never learn to play solitaire. I know what I'm talking about when I say that it is a despoiler of domestic happiness. I never played a game of solitaire in my life until I got married, and now I'm a regular slave to it, or fiend. I sit down at my desk in the evenings and play straight ahead until bedtime. I don't mean to when I start, but I simply can't stop. If I have any letters to write, I think, 'Well, I'll just play one game first.' That ends it, and the letters remain unwritten. I can't settle myself to reading, and I'm nervous and restless until I sit down to the cards. I'm worse than an old toper with his toddy. The worst of it is that I neglect my wife. She can't get me to go anywhere with her, and when we do stay home I sit and play solitaire while she sits and sighs and thinks I don't love her any more. My boy, as you value your future peace of mind, avoid solitaire as you would a pestilence." Philadelphia Record.

More Mules Arrive.
Twenty head of mules arrived from up the river yesterday evening with a various assortment of freight belonging to Matlock and Buzzard, and which has been laying up the river where it was frozen in since the latter part of last October; but as the goods are not such as would be injured by freezing, they are all in fine condition. Matlock and Buzzard had four scows frozen in fully one half the cargo of which consisted of hay and grain. Both the articles of feed are rather scarce in Dawson just

now, but the bulkiness of the former precludes hauling it from any great distance up the river. Staple groceries comprise the remainder of the big shipment.

Ice men, important. For sale one ice plow, complete; call at Shindler, 109 Front street.

D. A. Shindler has just received assortment of whips, Stilson wrenches, extra jaws, 1/4 and 1 inch return bends.

Private dining rooms at the Holborn. When in town, stop at the Regina. Shoff, the Dawson Dog Doctor, Pioneer Drug Store.

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