

GOVERNMENT TO BUY FORT HAMILTON LAND

Secretary Taft Plans to Enlarge the Reservation.

SITE FOR A WAR CAMP

Ground In Rear of Batteries Needed in
Case of Mobilization—More
16-Inch Guns.

Secretary of War Taft, who is in New York to meet Mrs. Taft, who is expected to arrive from Europe to-day on the Red Star liner Kroonland, said last night that the next Congress would in all probability be asked to condemn forty-five acres of land near Fort Hamilton. The land is wanted for the improvement of the reservation, with the special object in view of accommodating additional troops in time of war.

The land which the Government hopes to acquire is behind the batteries. As Secretary Taft pointed out, in case of war additional troops would necessarily be sent to reinforce the regular garrison at Fort Hamilton. This new space, he said, was to be used as a camp ground for the accommodation of these troops.

The Secretary said that on his visit to the Sandy Hook proving grounds on Saturday he had been much impressed with the big sixteen-inch gun, which is to be mounted in the Sandy Hook fortifications.

"We are now waiting," said Secretary Taft last night, "for the construction of a suitable carriage for this gun, and we will then be able to test it at various elevations. So far the gun has been fired ten times, with very satisfactory results. This gun fires a 2,400-pound projectile, and is a very formidable weapon."

The Secretary said it was not true that the Government intended to abandon the construction of more ordnance of that type.

He was asked as to the present status of the work on the Panama Canal, the construction of which, it was decided a few days ago, should remain under the supervision of the War Department.

"Since my return from the Philippines," said the Secretary, "I have had very little opportunity to look into the work. Mr. Shonts and the engineers are now on the Isthmus, and exactly what has been accomplished I will not know definitely until I get Mr. Shonts's report. Concerning the yellow fever situation in Panama, I understand that there have been no cases for a month. Between Gov. Magoon, who is practical, and Dr. Gorgas, the medical officer in charge, who is scientific, this yellow fever problem appears to have been very successfully handled.

"In Panama," added the Secretary, "a native very seldom has yellow fever. A year's residence makes one immune. It is only the new-comer who is attacked. However, we have sent a lot of new-comers down there, and that so few of them have had fever is very gratifying."

"How about the President's trip to New Orleans; do you think he will endanger himself by going there before the fever is stamped out?" Secretary Taft was asked.

"It is very certain," he replied, "that any doubt as to the safety of the trip will not deter the President. He will enjoy his visit there, too, for I know of no place where the people are more hospitable than in New Orleans. In New Orleans everybody, individually and collectively, does everything possible to make visitors as comfortable and happy as possible."

If the Kroonland arrives in New York before noon, Secretary Taft probably will leave for Washington on an early afternoon train.