

# The Outlook

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## PRESIDENT TAFT'S LAND WITHDRAWALS

The President has withdrawn from entry over forty-three million acres of coal lands, water power sites, phosphate lands, and petroleum lands, and also the lands in National forests in Alaska in which workable coal is known to exist. Whether this withdrawal covers other lands in which coal and other mineral deposits *may* exist we do not know. In our judgment no such lands should be thrown open to settlement until the United States Government has had an opportunity to ascertain the facts. We trust that the Geological Survey, on whose recommendations the withdrawals have been made, has included not only lands *known* to contain, but also lands which *may* contain coal and other valuable deposits. The effect of the President's withdrawal, as we understand the facts, is in part to repeat the similar act of his predecessor, President Roosevelt, and of his own Administration. The right of the President to make such withdrawals without specific Act of Congress directing it has been questioned, although, as readers know, we do not regard it as reasonably subject to question. Congress has, however, at the request of President Taft, passed an Act specifically authorizing the withdrawal, and the most skeptical cannot question the legality of the present Executive orders. Of the total acreage now withdrawn by President Taft, nearly half, according to the report in press despatches, is now withdrawn for the first time. These orders will have the effect to prevent any future entry on these lands until they have been thrown open to settlement; and it may be safely assumed that the President will not throw them open to settlement until Congress has an opportunity to formulate

and enact a policy for the future treatment of lands of this description. Good reasons could be assigned for giving away agricultural lands in small sections to actual settlers who would build homes and cultivate the soil. No such reasons exist for giving away mineral and forest lands and water power sites to great corporations which will operate them for the benefit of non-resident owners. The action of the President has no effect on the Cunningham claims. It has, that is, no retroactive effect. If the Cunningham claims were legal before, they are still legal; but if they were illegal, this Executive order will make impossible any substitution of new claims.



## THE PRIZE FIGHT MOVING PICTURES

The prize fight at Reno, Nevada, on July 4, in which the negro, Johnson, "knocked out" the white man, Jeffries, was followed by race riots in many parts of the country. In several cases the encounters between whites and negroes resulted in deaths, sometimes by lynching, sometimes by plain murder. This sequel to the degrading exhibition at Reno was bad enough. But there seems likelihood that the race conflicts will be renewed and extended if the moving pictures portraying the fight are exhibited throughout the country. Fortunately a movement to prevent the exhibition of the pictures is rapidly spreading and gaining strength. In city after city the authorities have declared that the pictures shall not be shown if they find that they have the power to stop them. In San Francisco, Indianapolis, New Orleans, Little Rock, Baltimore, Cincinnati, the District of Columbia, Kansas City, Milwaukee, Buffalo, St. Louis, Louisville, Savannah, the

official determination has already been announced. Mayor Gaynor, of New York City, where the most extensive race riots occurred, has declared that if he can find a law applicable to the case he will act promptly. The United Society of Christian Endeavor, with four million members throughout the country, is making a determined fight to prevent the display of the moving pictures in every city and town. Mr. B. F. Keith, the owner of fifteen moving picture theaters in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and other States, has refused, doubtless at considerable financial sacrifice, to permit the pictures to be shown in his houses. With so good a start already made, it only needs an aroused and united public opinion to reduce to a minimum the reproduction, before the throngs of men, women, and children who find a good part of their entertainment in the moving picture shows, of the degrading spectacle at Reno. The Outlook believes in boxing contests. They have real value in developing good qualities in young men, particularly in such parts of the big cities as the East Side of New York. But boxing contests, properly and decently conducted, are a very different thing from a prize fight like that which has just taken place. When two men stand up in the presence of thousands of spectators and hammer one another, without gloves or with gloves that are no real protection, until one or the other is knocked out, it is a brutal exhibition worthy of the days of gladiatorial combats in ancient Rome. Something, however, can be said even for such a contest; it requires on the part of the pugilists physical training beforehand and physical courage in the encounter. But nothing can be said in favor of presenting to the boys and youths of our cities pictures of this contest which stimulate to no training and inspire no courage, and which only incite almost inevitably to contests more or less brutal and sordid by boys and young men. If it is right to prohibit indecent pictures because they stimulate to vice, it ought to be right to prohibit brutal pictures because they stimulate to brutality. If it is right to prohibit prize fights within a State, it ought to be right to prohibit graphic representations of prize fights. And the same public opinion which has put an end

to prize fighting in almost every State of the Union ought to put a stop to the exhibition of moving pictures of prize fights.

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#### A REFORMED FOURTH

Much to the surprise of most of the inhabitants of the city, the Fourth of July in New York was endurable. So accustomed have the American people become to the thought that discomfort and danger must accompany the celebration of the Nation's birthday that it is a matter calling for comment when the biggest city of the country has succeeded in making the day really pleasurable. The surgeons in the hospitals were really astonished that the number of accidents did not mount up to the figures recorded on the Fourth of July in other years. It is true that in this city of some four millions four people were killed as possibly a result of the celebration—the same number that lost their lives a year ago. One death, however, was due to an accident in a public exhibition of fireworks, and two of the other deaths were due to pistol shots from unknown sources, which may not have been due to the celebration at all. On the other hand, the day itself in New York City was one of comparative quiet, although it was a day of festivity. A parade from Twenty-sixth Street and Fifth Avenue to the City Hall, and then exercises at City Hall Park, provided a part of the municipal recognition of the day. Athletic sports in the parks and a relay race for forty blocks on Fifth Avenue also contributed to the day's events. An Independence Day Committee headed by Dr. John Finley provided a programme that was carried out in different parts of the city. In the evening a fireworks company displayed fireworks in forty-one parks and squares throughout the city. From the beginning to the end of the day the sick and the injured in the hospitals and in the homes of the city were given the opportunity of resting in peace, and, if not of enjoying the day, of at least blessing a new order of things. What has been accomplished in New York has already been accomplished elsewhere. Last year the city of Washington provided a "safe and sane" mode of celebrating, and this year made it still more elaborate. A