

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

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the deadliest battery, and to send it off with a raw crew, no matter how brave they were individually, would be to insure disaster if a foe of average capacity were encountered. Neither ships nor men can be improvised when war has begun.

We need a thousand additional officers in order to properly man ships now provided for and under construction. The classes at the naval school at Annapolis should be greatly enlarged. At the same time that we thus add the officers whom we need them, we should facilitate the retirement of those at the head of the list whose usefulness has become impaired. Promotion must be fostered if the service is to be kept efficient.

The lamentable scarcity of officers, and the large number of recruits and of unskilled men necessarily put aboard the new vessels as they have been commissioned, has thrown upon our officers, and especially on the lieutenants and junior grades, unusual labor and fatigue and has gravely strained their powers of endurance. Nor is there sign of any immediate let-up in this strain. It must continue for some time longer, until more officers are graduated from Annapolis, and until the recruits become trained and skillful in their duties. In these difficulties incident upon the development of our war fleet the conduct of all our officers has been creditable to the service, and the lieutenants and junior grades in particular have displayed an ability and a steadfast cheerfulness which entitles them to the ungrudging thanks of all who realize the disheartening trials and fatigues to which they are of necessity subjected.

There is not a cloud on the horizon at present. There seems not the slightest chance of trouble with a foreign power. We most earnestly hope that this state of things may continue, and the way to insure its continuance is to provide for a thoroughly efficient navy. The refusal to maintain such a navy would invite trouble, and if trouble came would insure disaster. Nations self-complacent or vain, or short-sightedness in refusing to prepare for danger, is both foolish and wicked in such a nation as ours; and past experience has shown that such faculty in refusing to recognize or prepare for any crisis in advance is usually succeeded by a mad panic of hysterical fear once the crisis has actually arrived.

Postal Progress

The striking increase in the revenues of the postoffice department shows clearly the prosperity of our people and the increasing activity of the business of the country.

The receipts of the postoffice department for the fiscal year ending June 30 last amounted to \$121,848,047.26, an increase of \$10,216,533.87 over the preceding year, the largest increase known in the history of the postal service. The magnitude of this increase will best appear from the fact that the entire postal receipts for the year 1890 amounted to but \$8,518,067.

Rural free-delivery service is no longer in the experimental stage; it has become a fixed policy. The results following its introduction have fully justified the congress in the large appropriations made for its establishment and extension. The average yearly increase in postoffice receipts in the rural districts of the country is about two per cent. We are now able, by actual results, to show that where rural free-delivery service has been established to such an extent as to enable us to make comparisons the yearly increase has been upward of ten per cent.

On November 1, 1902, 11,659 rural free-delivery routes had been established and were in operation, covering about one-third of the territory of the United States available for rural free-delivery service. There are now awaiting the action of the department petitions and applications for the establishment of 16,748 additional routes. This shows conclusively the want which the establishment of the service has met and the need of further extending it as rapidly as possible. It is justified both by the financial results and by the practical benefits to our rural population; it brings the men who live on the soil into close relations with the active business world; it keeps the farmer in direct touch with the markets; it is a potential educational force; it enhances the value of farm property, makes farm life pleasanter and less isolated, and will do much to check the undesirable current from country to city.

It is to be hoped that the congress will make liberal appropriations for the continuance of the service already established and for its further extension.

Irrigation of Arid Lands

Few subjects of more importance have been taken up by the congress in recent years than the inauguration of the system of nationally-aided irrigation for the arid regions of the far West. A good beginning therein has been made. Now that this policy of national irrigation has been adopted, the need of thorough and scientific forest protection will grow more rapidly than ever throughout the public-land states.

Legislation should be provided for the protection of the game, and the wild creatures generally, on the forest reserves. The senseless slaughter of game, which can by judicious protection be permanently preserved on our national reserves for the people as a whole, should be stopped at once. It is, for instance, a serious count against our national good sense to permit the present practice of butchering off such a state and beautiful creature as the elk for its antlers or tusks.

So far as they are available for agriculture, and to whatever extent they may be reclaimed under the national irrigation law, the remaining public lands should be held rightly for the home builder, the settler who lives on his land, and for no one else. In their actual use the desert-land law, the timber and stone law, and the commutation clause of the homestead law have been so perverted from the intention with which they were enacted as to permit the acquisition of large areas of the public domain for other than actual settlers and the

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18-inch Taffeta
Full line of colors, including black and white.
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Every known shade; usually 45c kind. For this sale, Per yard, **31c**

23-inch China Silks
A large variety of colors. Priced for this Sale **At 39c**

Black Satin Special Values
20-inch wide, worth 75c. **Sale Price, 40c**

24-inch wide, extra fine lustre, worth regularly \$1.00. **Sale Price, 65c**

Black Moire Antique, 21 inches wide, \$1.65 kind. **Sale Price, \$1.25**

Black Moire Velour
27 inches wide; this is a very choice number; regular worth \$1.33. This sale **98c**

Black Peau de Soie Silks
The 19-inch kind, worth regularly \$1.25. On sale at.... **97c**
The 23-inch kind; worth regularly \$1.35. On sale at.... **\$1.12½**
The 27-inch kind; worth regularly, \$1.65. This sale **\$1.25**
The 23-inch kind; much heavier; worth regularly \$1.60. This sale **\$1.39**

89c Pongee Silks Plain and Fancy. This Sale **50c**

Grenadines
White, pink and blue; regularly worth \$1.25. This sale **89c**

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consequent prevention of settlement. Moreover, the approaching exhaustion of the public ranges has led to much discussion as to the best manner of using these public lands in the West which are suitable chiefly for grazing. The sound and steady development of the West depends upon the building up of homes therein. Much of our prosperity as a nation has been due to the operation of the homestead law. On the other hand, we should recognize the fact that in the grazing region the man who corresponds to the homesteader may be unable to settle permanently if only allowed to use the same amount of pasture land that his brother, the homesteader, is allowed to use of arable land. One hundred and sixty acres of rich and well-watered soil, or a much smaller amount of irrigated land, may keep a family in plenty, whereas no one could get a living from one hundred and sixty acres of dry pasture land capable of supporting at the outside only one head of cattle to every ten acres. In the past great tracts of the public domain have been fenced in by persons having no title thereto, in direct defiance of the law forbidding the maintenance or construction of any such unlawful inclosure of public land. For various reasons there has been little interference with such inclosures in the past, but ample notice has now been given the trespassers, and all the resources at the command of the government will hereafter be used to put a stop to such trespassing.

In view of the capital importance of these matters, I commend them to the earnest consideration of the congress, and if the congress finds difficulty in dealing with them from lack of thorough knowledge of the subject, I recommend that provision be made for a commission of experts specially to investigate and report upon the complicated questions involved.

Legislation for Alaska

I especially urge upon the congress the need of wise legislation for Alaska.

It is not to our credit as a nation that Alaska, which has been ours for thirty-five years, should still have as poor a system of laws as is the case. No country has a more valuable possession in mineral wealth, in fisheries, furs, forests, and also in land available for certain kinds of farming and stock-raising. It is a territory of great size and varied resources, well fitted to support a large permanent population. Alaska needs a good land law and such provisions for homesteads and pre-emptions as will encourage permanent settlement. We should shape legislation with a view not to the exploiting and abandoning of the territory, but to the building up of homes therein. The land laws should be liberal in type, so as to hold out inducements to the actual settler whom we most desire to see take possession of the country. The forests of Alaska should be protected, and, as a secondary but still important matter, the game also, and at the same time it is imperative that the settlers should be allowed to cut timber, under proper regulations, for their own use. Laws should be enacted to protect the Alaskan salmon fisheries against the greed which would destroy them. They should be preserved as a permanent industry and food supply. Their management and control should be turned over to the commission of fish and fisheries. Alaska should have a delegate in the congress. It would be well if a congressional committee could visit Alaska and investigate its needs on the ground.

The Indian Problem

In dealing with the Indians our aim should be their ultimate absorption into the body of our people. But in many cases this absorption must and should be very slow. In portions of the Indian Territory the mixture of blood has gone on at the same time with progress in wealth and education, so that there are plenty of men with varying degrees of purity of Indian blood who are absolutely indistinguishable in point of social, political, and economic ability from their white associates. There are other tribes which have as yet made no perceptible advance toward such equality. To try to force such tribes too fast is to prevent their going forward at all. Moreover, the tribes live under widely different conditions. Where a tribe has made considerable advance and lives on fertile farming soil it is possible to allot the members lands in severalty much as is the case with white settlers. On the arid prairie lands the effort should be to induce the Indians to lead pastoral rather than agricultural lives, and to permit them to settle in villages rather than to force them into isolation.

The large Indian schools situated remote from any Indian reservation do a special and peculiar work of great importance. But, excellent though these are, an immense amount of additional work must be done on the reservations themselves among the old, and above all among the young, Indians. The first and most important step toward the absorption of the Indian is to teach him to earn his living; yet it is not necessarily to be assumed that in each community all Indians must become either tillers of the soil or stock-raisers. Their industries may properly be diversified, and those who show special desire or adaptability for industrial or even commercial pursuits should be encouraged so far as practicable to follow out each his own bent.

Every effort should be made to develop the Indian along the lines of natural aptitude, and to encourage the existing native industries peculiar to certain tribes, such as the various kinds of basket weaving, canoe building, smith work, and blanket work. Above all, the Indian boys and girls should be given confident command of colloquial English, and should ordinarily be prepared for a vigorous struggle with the conditions under which their people live, rather than for immediate absorption into some more highly developed community.

The officials who represent the government in dealing with the Indians work under hard conditions, and also under conditions which render it easy to do wrong and very difficult to detect wrong. Consequently they should be amply paid on the one hand, and on the other hand a particularly high standard of conduct should be demanded from them, and where misconduct can be proved the punishment should be exemplary.

Science's Aid to Farming

In no department of government work in recent years has there been greater success than in that of giving scientific aid to the farming population, thereby showing them how most efficiently to help themselves. There is no need of insisting upon its importance, for the welfare of the farmer is fundamentally necessary to the welfare of the Republic as a whole. In addition to such work as quarantine against animal and vegetable plagues, and warning against them when here introduced, much efficient help has been rendered to the farmer by the introduction of new plants specially fitted for cultivation under the peculiar conditions existing in different portions of the country. New cereals have been established in the semi-arid West. For instance, the practicability of producing the best types of macaroni wheats in regions of an annual rainfall of only ten inches or thereabouts has been conclusively demonstrated. Through the introduction of new rice in Louisiana and Texas the production of rice in this country has been made to about equal the home demand. In the Southwest the possibility of regressing overstocked range lands has been demonstrated; in the North many new forage crops have been introduced, while in the East it has been shown that some of our choicest fruits can be stored and shipped in such a way as to find a profitable market abroad.

The National Museum

I again recommend to the favorable

consideration of the congress the plans of the Smithsonian Institution for making the museum under its charge worthy of the nation, and for preserving at the national capital not only records of the vanishing races of men but of the animals of this continent which, like the buffalo, will soon become extinct unless specimens from which their representatives may be renewed are sought in their native regions and maintained there in safety.

District of Columbia

The District of Columbia is the only part of our territory in which the National government exercises local or municipal functions, and where in consequence the government has a free hand in reference to certain types of social and economic legislation which must be essentially local or municipal in their character. The government should see to it, for instance, that the hygienic and sanitary legislation affecting Washington is of a high character. The evils of slum dwellings, whether in the shape of crowded and congested tenement-house districts or of the back-alley type, should never be permitted to grow up in Washington. The city should be a model in every respect for all the cities of the country. The charitable and correctional systems of the district should receive consideration at the hands of the congress to the end that they may embody the results of the most advanced thought in these fields. Moreover, while Washington is not a great industrial city, there is some industrial life here, and our labor legislation, while it would not be important in itself, might be made a model for the rest of the nation. We should pass, for instance, a wise employer's liability act for the District of Columbia, and we need such an act in our navy yards. Railroad companies in the district ought to be required by law to block their frogs.

To Protect Railway Men

The safety-appliance law, for the

better protection of the lives and limbs of railway employees, which was passed in 1893, went into full effect on August 1, 1901. It has resulted in averting thousands of casualties. Experience, shows, however, the necessity of additional legislation to perfect this law. A bill to provide for this passed the senate at the last session. It is to be hoped that some such measure may now be enacted into law.

Too Much Printing

There is a growing tendency to provide for the publication of masses of documents for which there is no public demand, and for the printing of which there is no real necessity. Large numbers of volumes are turned out by the government printing presses for which there is no justification. Nothing should be printed by any of the departments unless it contains something of permanent value, and the congress could with advantage cut down very materially on all the printing which it has now become customary to provide. The excessive cost of government printing is a strong argument against the position of those who are inclined on abstract grounds to advocate the government's doing any work which can with propriety be left in private hands.

The Merit System

Gratifying progress has been made during the year in the extension of the merit system of making appointments in the government service. It should be extended by law to the District of Columbia. It is much to be desired that our consular system be established by law on a basis providing for appointment and promotion only in consequence of proved fitness.

White House Repairs

Through a wise provision of the congress at its last session the White House, which had become disfigured

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