

WASHINGTON NOTES

Mr. Risley's Letter—White House Reception—Foreign Trade—Stock of Gold—New Cabinet Officer

Washington, D. C., Jan. 5, 1902.—(Special Correspondence.)—Nearly 8,000 people were present at what is declared to have been the most successful and satisfactory New Year's day reception at the White house in the history of the country.

Any protectionist will tell you that one of the strongest arguments for the continuance in force of the Dingley tariff law is that it builds up our foreign trade. This statement will be all the more interesting, now that the last report of the government shows that for the first eleven months of 1902 there was a decrease of \$115,000,000 in exports and but \$74,000,000 increase in imports over the corresponding period of 1901.

Uncle Sam is rich in gold these days, far richer than ever before. There is now in the treasury building in this city and in the various treasuries throughout the country \$615,319,367 in gold, a sum larger than any government has ever possessed. These holdings are four times as much as those of the Bank of England twice as much as the Imperial Bank of Russia, four times as much as the Imperial Bank of Germany and one and a half times as much as the Bank of France.

In the past year 4,239,273,696 ordinary postage stamps were issued by the postoffice department, as compared with 4,603,200 issued from June, 1847, to June, 1852. Postage stamps were first issued under the act of March 3, 1847. There were 772,839,000 issued last year, and the number of pieces of mail of all kinds mailed was 7,424,390,329.

The latest bit of gossip in official life is to the effect that Associate Justice Shiras will resign from the United States supreme bench and be succeeded by William H. Taft, now civil governor of the Philippines.

It seems probable that the bill to establish a new cabinet office will pass this congress and in that event Secretary to the President Cortelyou will likely become a member of the president's official family.

Assistant Secretary Spaulding of the treasury department has resigned his position on account of failing health and old age and will be succeeded by R. B. Armstrong, a former newspaper reporter. Mr. Armstrong is but 29 years of age, but is said to have the head of a veteran.

Friction between Secretary of the Interior Hitchcock and Blinger Hermann, commissioner of the general land office, has caused the resignation of the latter. He will be succeeded, of course, by an Ohio man. About three out of every four of the government's employees are from Ohio, Virginia or Maryland. None others need apply.

More scandal in the postoffice department is daily being brought to light. Superintendent Machen, of the rural free delivery service, went into office a poor man on a \$4,000 yearly salary and in five years is rated at \$300,000. By virtue of being one of the officials in the postoffice combine, he is enabled by "farming out" contracts on mail boxes, and his fellow

conspirators on wrapping paper, twine, etc., to make a \$4,000 position pay ten times that amount. Machen was appointed by Cleveland, and, hence, it was not hard for him to follow his maker into the republican camp and support McKinley. By so doing, he has been able to hold onto his own job, and incidentally get two brothers, a nephew and a brother-in-law all on Uncle Sam's pay roll. The higher officials are trying to hush these revelations, but have done nothing looking to an investigation of the charges. The president is just now having considerable trouble with the allotment of federal offices in the southern states. Nine out of every ten republicans in Dixie are negroes, and the movement to establish a "white republican" party there has nearly caused civil strife. The bulk of the southern delegates to republican national conventions are negroes, and, as is well known, are purchaseable; hence the danger to Roosevelt in the distribution of federal pie.

Both in the north and south, the black people cling to the republican party with singular tenacity. They nearly unanimously vote the republican ticket in national, state and local campaigns, and this fact is very largely responsible for continued republican supremacy.

In the following table are included all the republican states of the north having any considerable negro population, and also certain border states now held by the republicans, or which are considered sometimes doubtful, in which there is a heavy negro vote. Indian territory and Oklahoma are set down because there is some probability that they will be admitted as states before the close of this congress. The total negro population of each state, by the census of 1900, is stated and all colored males twenty-one years of age and over, or voters, as shown by the same census. None but persons of negro descent are included:

Table with columns: States, Negro Population 1900, Negro Population 1900, Vote 1900. Lists states from Massachusetts to West Virginia with corresponding population and vote data.

While the total elimination of the colored vote would not have affected the result of the presidential election of 1900, an analysis of the returns indicates that it would have elected every democratic candidate for the presidency since 1872 and placed Bryan in the White house in 1896 with a comfortable margin to spare. While it would not have wiped out the present republican majority in the senate, it would have given the democrats control of the next congress.

It is obvious that if the blacks in the north would abandon their blind idolatry of the republican party, the long domination of that party in several states would at once cease, and become precarious in as many more. Such sweeping political reaction is not anticipated by either party, however. It is apparent that republican successes in Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia and Kentucky have been wholly dependent upon the black vote, while in a number of close contests in the last thirty years the loss of the negroes would have lost the republicans the election in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and with them congress and the presidency. The secession from the republicans of the black vote in New York would have disastrously defeated Roosevelt for governor in 1898, and also Odell at the last election. Even in Iowa and Michigan there have been years that even their small negro contingent could have changed the result by going over to the opposition.

And yet the northern negro gets no consideration from the republican party for his loyalty, and, despite the solicitude of republican papers for the oppressed negroes of the south, lynchings in the north of negroes are becoming as common as in the south. A negro was lynched in Kansas but two weeks ago for an unrepeatable crime, yet when the southerner attempts to avenge a woman's honor he is accused of violating the constitution by denying to the blacks all the privileges of American citizenship!

H. W. RISLEY.

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