

departments in the city, we can obtain the same service for \$720 and \$660."

Americans are proverbially generous and civil servants should be well paid but they should not be over paid nor unnecessarily numerous. If they are their coworkers, the taxpayers, whom they serve, are subjected to unjust burdens.

One would not expect that persons chosen for public positions with regard principally to the effect their selection would have in advancing partisan ends would, by some public good fortune, prove to be those best adapted to performing the duties for which they were nominally appointed. Before adding to the evidence already adduced upon this subject it is only fair to the many able, honest and faithful employees who have borne the humiliations and hardships of the spoils system to observe that the good qualities of intelligence and worth are so bountifully distributed among the people of the United States that no matter how little account may be taken of their possession in making selections for office, those who share them in large measure, cannot by any system be entirely excluded. So highly must we honor the noble men and women who have toiled and struggled under the humiliating consciousness of owing their places to personal favor that we believe that they should not be compelled to submit longer to such conditions or to associate in their work with persons of less integrity, inferior capacity, or lower dignity.

A member of the house of representatives indicated the way spoilsmen regard the public service in these words, spoken on the floor of the house February 10, 1897:

"If, then, the victors in that strife which results in bloodshed are the only ones entitled to pensions—then in every civil contest, in every war of opinion, only the victors should participate in what some gentlemen are pleased to denominate spoils. Tammany is invincible in the face of all the influences that its enemies can bring to bear. It is because Tammany respects her friends. Tammany pensions her friends and not her enemies."

We have occasionally heard from the enemies of reform of a civil pension list that they allege may some time and in some manner never fully explained result from the operation of the merit system. It is no part of the reform system, for merit tenure is efficiency tenure and ceases whenever efficiency no longer continues, but here is a proposition to require the taxpayer to pension those who have succeeded in carrying an election by paying them salaries for which they cannot give an equivalent.

**Pension Bureau and Census Bureau.**

The present commissioner of pensions has recently pointed out how the baneful consequences of the spoils system

still continue to demoralize his office and to interfere with the interests of the people. He testified that if allowed to make his selections he could dispense with 100 clerks without detriment to the public service. But he added:

"You know that cannot be done. When I assume to select, or attempt to select, clerks for discharge, then the political pressure for retention will begin to come. People who have the least merit for doing work have the most influence, and they spend their time in getting influence."

Honorable Carrol D. Wright, the greatest living statistician, who was for several years in charge of the Eleventh Census, though deprived of nearly all control over the personnel of the force in his charge, estimated that the wastes in that office, directly attributable to the impairment of efficiency caused by the spoils system, amounted, during the period of his administration to one-third of the total expenditure.

Further, the spoils system wastes the time of congressmen and appointing-officers, destroys the organization of the departments, encourages derelictions of duty, and subordinates the interests of the service to the personal interests of politicians. All this at the direct expense of and in absolute robbery of taxpayers.

However unpalatable the truth may be to some, no one who carefully examines the social tendencies of the present can doubt that the functions delegated to various governmental agencies, particularly those of a local character, are about to increase in number and importance. Industrial experiments on the part of cities are multiplying with great rapidity and appear to be the expression of a public sentiment that is steadily growing. Whether this is desirable is not material to our present discussion. The fact is one of the conditions of the civil service problem. With increasing duties governments will require the services of an increasing number of civil servants, and efficiency and ability in the civil service will become more and more indispensable; more and more a matter of vital importance to each member of the social organization. Civil service reform is therefore no longer a matter which can be postponed to some more convenient season. It must be maintained and perfected, every point so far gained must be held with courage and determination, and unceasing effort must be made to extend the system wherever practicable. Otherwise a large portion of the people will be robbed continuously of opportunities which all require, of independence and self-respect and of political authority; and the money of the taxpayers will be in increasing quantities unjustly diverted to the pockets of political parasites.

"Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it

off," is a text to be borne in mind by every reformer, and every honest citizen who has not yet cast his influence into the scale in behalf of good government should consider earnestly the urgencies of the present situation. Good government must be paid for by the unceasing vigilance and energy of good citizens.

**PENAL COLONIES. THE CONSERVATIVE**

has never been counted an advocate of jingoism nor regarded as friendly to the establishment of colonial dependencies for the government and people of the United States to support and defend. Nevertheless there may arise conditions which may create a cause for the instituting of penal colonies on some of our newly acquired islands.

The associated press despatches of May 30, from Havana contain the following: "La Discussion attacks the 'system of giving Americans preference in the custom houses.' It publishes a list of positions, incumbents and salaries, and says that the best jobs are given to Yankees, especially Nebraskans. 'The natives of Mr. Meiklejohn's state,' says La Discussion, 'are protected by an administration which is a sad reminder of Spain's government.'"

The fertility of agricultural Nebraska seems only a parallel for the fecundity of political Nebraska. And while corn crops are enormous and cattle and hogs abundant the yield, per acre, of male persons, who are willing and zealous to hold office, is unprecedented elsewhere. Hence "the natives of Mr. Meiklejohn's state" must necessarily be in demand for exportation. The republican surplus of statesmen who are ready upon opportunity to leave Nebraska to take paying positions in the Philippines or in Cuba is more than gigantic; it is incomputable. This tremendous crop of executive ability has been developed, logically, by teaching that governments are organized to support the few in protected industries, and in office holding, by taxing the multitude. The obsolete idea that each citizen is, in patriotic duty, bound to support the government has become only a pathetic reminiscence. And the idea that the government is in duty bound to support every partisan of the administration in power is in full vigor.

La Discussion is, however, unnecessarily severe upon the Spaniards when it cruelly and with evident malice, fiendishly remarks that "the natives of Mr. Meiklejohn's state are protected by an administration which is a sad reminder of Spain's government." Nothing worse has ever been written in derogation and reprobation of Spanish misrule in Cuba. And the question, shall we establish penal colonies either in the West Indies or the Philippines, presents itself for solution!