

NEEDS OF POSTAL SERVICE

Extracts from Annual Report of Postmaster General Cortelyou.

MORE PAY FOR EMPLOYEES IMPERATIVE

Deficit for the Year is More Than Ten Millions Dollars-Increased Rural Facilities Are Discussed.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9.—The annual report of the postmaster general reviews the work of the department for the past year, gives in detail the postal revenue and expenditures, discusses important changes that have been made in departmental organization, and makes such suggestions and recommendations as appear to be warranted.

The following is a statement of the department's finances:

The receipts for the year were \$167,932,751.99; the expenditures, \$178,449,178.89; excess of expenditures over receipts, \$10,516,426.90.

Deficit.

After discussing various reforms in the organization of the department, the postmaster general says:

I repeat what I stated a year ago, that while it would be a gratifying circumstance if the Postoffice department were self-sustaining, I am less concerned about the deficit than about efficiency of administration. The public demand for postal facilities is constantly growing and the installation of the rural service has depended upon the existence of a surplus in revenues under the existing system of accounting, that service could not have been given.

The same considerations apply to a number of other branches of the department. Progress toward these improvements will open the way for investigations to determine the feasibility of the adoption of many important policies of administration—such as the savings banks, parcel post, postal telegraph and telephone, and others, the merits and defects of all of which should have in the not distant future the fullest consideration.

In 1906, upon the recommendation of the department, the present policy regarding fourth class postmasters was amended, showing a decrease of loss from all causes—including burglary, theft and fire—for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1906, of only 1.25 per cent over the previous year. Some private business enterprises may in certain directions yield better financial returns than the postal service, but a higher standard of integrity nor more faithful performance of duty.

The following are further extracts from the report:

Deputy Postmaster General.

While this department has a personnel of more than 20,000 and requires annual appropriations amounting to \$200,000,000, the general supervision of its affairs is entrusted to a postmaster general and but four assistants, the postmaster general and his assistants have put upon these officials burdens of which they should be relieved, and their tenure, which was of the nature of things dependent largely upon changes in the national administration, operates against the continuity of policy in the general operation of the department, which is most unfortunate.

To meet this situation, at least in some degree, I recommend that provision be made for a deputy postmaster general, who shall be the ranking officer below the postmaster general's assistants, whose tenure shall be permanent, whose compensation shall be commensurate with his position, and whose duties shall be of the nature of a general supervision of the service. If there were appointed to such a position an official of tried executive capacity and long experience in postal matters, he could relieve the head of the department of innumerable details which now consume the greater part of his time and preclude the proper consideration of important questions of general policy developed in our own and foreign postal administrations.

Compensation of Employees.

A year ago I invited attention to the supposition of a general increase of postal employees and stated that it was necessary that in many cases the salaries of postal employees be increased. This view is now being followed upon the great prosperity of the country. That the pay of many government employees is less than that of equally important employees of railroads is admitted, and while it may be said that the ranks of the government employees can always be recruited, it would seem that this department must inevitably see many of the best trained and most desirable among its personnel if nothing is done for their relief.

Especially do the foregoing comments apply to postoffice clerks, railway mail clerks, city carriers and rural carriers, many of whom are, in my opinion, inadequately compensated. This view is concurred in by the assistant postmasters general, having immediate supervision of the work of these employees and by many other officials of the department who have had occasion to investigate conditions surrounding their employment. A comprehensive plan for the readjustment of salaries of postoffice clerks and city letter carriers will be presented in the report of the first assistant postmaster general.

Rural Delivery.

June 23, 1906, marked the close of ten years' experience in the free delivery and collection of mails to and from the residents of rural districts in the United States. Living remote from the postoffice and previously debilitated from easy interchange of communication by letter with the outside world.

In the interval between 1897 and 1906 the annual appropriations for rural delivery had been gradually increased year by year from \$4,000,000 in 1897 to \$10,000,000 in 1906. It has been deemed imperative necessary in the absence of legislative regulations other than those before mentioned to establish some rules of administration which shall be applicable to the entire service.

The saving effectiveness of fourth class postoffices and star routes should have consideration in connection with the estimated aggregate net cost of rural delivery.

I recommend that provision be made for the carriage by rural carriers in the rate of postage of small parcels on rural routes, such as private letters, and that each case to the limits of the particular route on the parcel originates, or if found feasible, to all the parcels emanating from a single postoffice.

Good Roads and Rural Delivery. In co-operation with the Department of Agriculture, systematic efforts have been made during the year to secure the improvement of the roads traversed by rural carriers. Road officials in the states of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York and Wisconsin have been asked for and by instruction of this department have obtained information from rural carriers as to the condition of the roads, bridges and culverts upon rural routes, of what materials the roads are composed, how frequently and in what manner they are worked, and what road building materials are available in each vicinity. Postmasters of rural delivery routes in the states named have been requested by the department to aid the state and local officials in all efforts to secure the improvement of highways on which rural carriers are dispatched.

It is hoped that similar movements may be made in those sections of the country where heavy loads prevail, as well as in the Appalachian range extends.

Increased Facilities for the Public. During the year special attention has been given to the needs of the public for increased facilities for sending postage stamps and stamped paper, and for extending the regularity and order of service. Although no pronounced demand has yet manifested itself for books of stamps of other than the common denomination of 2 cents, the practicability of providing them is under advisement, and also of having the signs on postoffices indicate the name of the state in which it is located. Provision has already been made for additional facilities for obtaining postage stamps at railroad and ferry depots and at additional numbered postal stations, and also by the use of automatic stamp vending machines, with regard to which certain preliminary experiments have already been made.

Great care is also being exercised to have letter boxes, wagons and other portions of the department's equipment present a creditable appearance.

In concluding his report Postmaster General Cortelyou says:

The efficiency in any service can be obtained only by furnishing the natural and proper incentives of recognition and commendation and compensation. These are the essentials from which develop unity of purpose and unity of accomplishment in any large body of employees. One of the most important steps therefore that can be taken for the improvement of the postal service lies in the suggested increase of compensation for certain classes of employees. This is, however, but one of the many improvements that can be made.

Opportunities for Economy. There can be further economies in rural delivery without impairment of that service. By a more precise method of determining the basis of pay for the transportation of the mail the department can be relieved of an unbusinesslike feature of administration with a probable decrease in expenditures. The employment of a scribe law as to second class matter the department and reports to publishers can be placed upon a better business footing and incidentally credited with work for which it now receives no credit. And as a result of these and other needed changes the deficit, which is in fact only a paper deficit, can be altogether eliminated. Progress toward these improvements will open the way for investigations to determine the feasibility of the adoption of many important policies of administration—such as the savings banks, parcel post, postal telegraph and telephone, and others, the merits and defects of all of which should have in the not distant future the fullest consideration.

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BIG YEAR FOR INDIAN LAWS

Commissioner Leupp Reports Congress Has Been Active.

ONE RECOMMENDATION THAT FAILED

New Plan is Made for Authority to Make Longer Leases of Indian Lands So as to Permit Sugar Beet Raising.

(From a Staff Correspondent.)

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9.—(Special.)—No single session passed so much legislation of vital importance to the Indian population of the United States, and that part of the white population whose interests are more directly bound up with those of the Indians, as the Fifty-ninth congress in its long session." Commissioner Leupp says:

Besides several very generous appropriations of the accustomed order, I might mention the act postponing the full citizenship of an Indian allottee till he receives a patent in fee, authorizing the lease of such a patent to any allottee who satisfies the secretary of the Interior of his competency to take care of himself, and providing a friendly and inexpensive process for determining helmskip among Indians the authority conferred upon the president to extend the trust period of Indian allotments at his discretion; the extension of the ration privilege under certain conditions to mission schools; the protection of allotments released from trust tenure against the claims of the company contracted; the allowance of interest on moneys retained in the federal treasury; the grant of interest to companies willing to wage effective warfare upon the liquor traffic in the Indian country; the provision making Indian allottees and come sharers in government reclamation projects and making general enactments of far-reaching effect.

Long List of Special Laws.

Then comes a long catalogue of special or localized legislation, highly important in the regions concerned, such as that for a final disposition of the affairs of the Kiowa, Comanche and Apache Tribes in Indian Territory for the opening of the Osage reservation, the Lower Brule reservation and the big pasture reserves of the Kiowa, Comanche and Apache tribes; the provision of a number of long-standing controversies, like that between the factions of the Klamath Indians and the government, between the same Indians and the California and Oregon Land company, and between the Sisseton and Wapiniton Indians and the government.

But this is not all. Our first duty to the Indian is to teach him to work. In this process the sensible course is to tempt him by the pursuit of a gainful occupation, choosing for him at the outset the sort of work which he finds pleasant, and the Indian takes to best advantage as naturally as the Italian takes to art or the German to science. It has an attraction for him above all other things, because it affords employment for his whole family at once; the wife and children, who are so large factors in his life, can work in the beet fields side by side with him. The little parcel of land he is allowed to weed the rows just as the pickinny in the south can be used as a cotton picker. I am speaking by the card on this subject. For we send hundreds of Indians into the western beet fields every season to work as day laborers, and my present proposition has in view the utilization of these same laborers and many more, wherever practicable, at their own homes instead of at a distance, and in improving their own lands instead of the lands of other persons.

Teach Indian to Work.

On the subject of the sugar beet, the best sugar company for the same purpose goes in to make his Indian gang profitable, and he will not rest till he does it, because he knows that the solid dollars waiting for him at the paymaster's office depend upon what he can show to his employers, on their scales or in their balance sheet, as a substantial reason for their continuing him in their service. So it is the old saw may look at the first glance, it is money that moves the Indian, as it moves the capitalist. Invest in the corporation is the desire to make his accumulated wealth secure, and has entered to the home of the best families of the town.

Being glad he was not a turkey, the stout became glutton and gorged himself and planned to gorge more Thanksgiving day.

The other stork was the wise old bird. It ate moderately, attended to business and earned the admiration and respect of the mayor.

Thanksgiving morning, when the indolent stork was just getting ready to give further thanks because it was not a turkey, it just turned over and died. Overeating and idleness killed it.

Now the good stork lived to enjoy Thanksgiving dinner, in drawing pay for both and has entered to the home of the best families of the town.

Fine China—Copley, Jeweler, 215 S. 16th.

BE UTILIZED; BUY AT MARKET PRICES

By the Indians from leaving their own trawling lines out to the remote points in the leased district, to facilitate the movement of the crops of raw material to general regions such sidings and branch tracks as may be needed to bring the whole area of prospective transportation into relations with the great world outside. It would be out of the question, obviously, to build up an extensive railway system on no better foundation than the five-year leases now allowed by law; the lease period has to be extended to twenty or twenty-five years in order to make the project commercially practicable, but on the other hand, the capitalists are prepared to turn over to the Indians, as their own forever after, all the improvements put upon their premises.

"Chronic White Leaser."

Let us see what this would mean to the Indian. The Indian, in a small area, is allotted and in the prime of life, owning eighty acres of land in an irrigation district, he is engaged in the raising of wheat. He knows what to do with, and in saying this I am giving the Indian the best of the liberal estimate of his competency. His wife and children are, of course, incapable of taking care of their own affairs and would be unable to make effective use of their crops if they were left to themselves. This leaves the head of the family with the large area of prospective transportation into relations with the great world outside. It would be out of the question, obviously, to build up an extensive railway system on no better foundation than the five-year leases now allowed by law; the lease period has to be extended to twenty or twenty-five years in order to make the project commercially practicable, but on the other hand, the capitalists are prepared to turn over to the Indians, as their own forever after, all the improvements put upon their premises.

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