

This Judge Takes Charge of All Dead Men's Property

Though Handling Over \$10,000,000 of Other People's Wealth in His Job, Judge Crawford is Cheerful, Contented and is Not Looking for Anything Else

By A. R. GROH.

DID YOU ever see a contented man, gentle reader? No? Then gaze upon the features of Bryce Crawford, judge of the county court for Douglas county, for his is contented.

"I am satisfied with my job," he says. "I want to hang onto it as long as I can. I think it is as big a job as I can fill."

Not only contented, you see, but "not puffed up, vaunteth not himself."

Allowing, or the sake of argument, that it is as big a job as he can fill, he has filled it for two terms to overflowing. Though the volume of business increased by one-third, Bryce Crawford has dispensed justice with a hand at once just and energetic.

A well-known "law's delay" was given a swift punch in its loggy old carcass when Bryce Crawford imported businesslike methods from the police court to the more august county court. Attorneys soon found that there were ways of hearing cases besides the long-winded ways in which each lawyer seemed to try to outdo his opponent in the amount of verbiage he could add to the record. The new judge didn't drowse over their oratory. He pinned them down to cases. He asked one side what concessions it could make and he asked the other side what concessions it would make, thus shortening the trials both in time and expense and not interfering with justice, but only facilitating it.

That is but one count on which Judge Crawford and his methods move the cumbersome and encumbered machinery of the county court to grind faster, and even finer.

He works hard; he has the co-operation of his office force and runs things on a scientific and efficient system all the way through. The county court is a busy place. People must call there at two out of the three most important events in life—marriage and death—before the former and after the latter if there is an estate to be settled.

Since Judge Crawford has been in charge 1,796 estates have been settled in the court, aggregating in amount well over \$10,000,000 and varying in size from one estate of over \$1,000,000 to estates with a few hundred dollars in savings accounts.

He has appointed guardians for 798 persons having property varying from \$1,500,000 down to a few dollars each.

Besides this, 2,598 civil cases have come into the court.

He has collected over \$67,000 in inheritance taxes. One estate paid \$14,816. Another paid \$9,903.24 and the rest were for considerably smaller amounts.

To 9,390 couples he has issued licenses to wed and live happily ever afterward, if possible. He also holds preliminary hearings on crimes committed in the county, but outside of Omaha.

The earning of the court paid all salaries and expenses and yielded more than \$7,000 besides, which went to the county treasury. This was the largest surplus ever returned by the office.

"It was due," this modest judge hastens to add, "entirely to the increase in the business of the office."

To look at Judge Crawford, good people, you'd never in the world think he was a judge. Remember how Lord Shakespeare painted the judge in his famous "Seven Ages of Man:"

And then the judge
In fair round belly, with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances,
And so he plays his part.

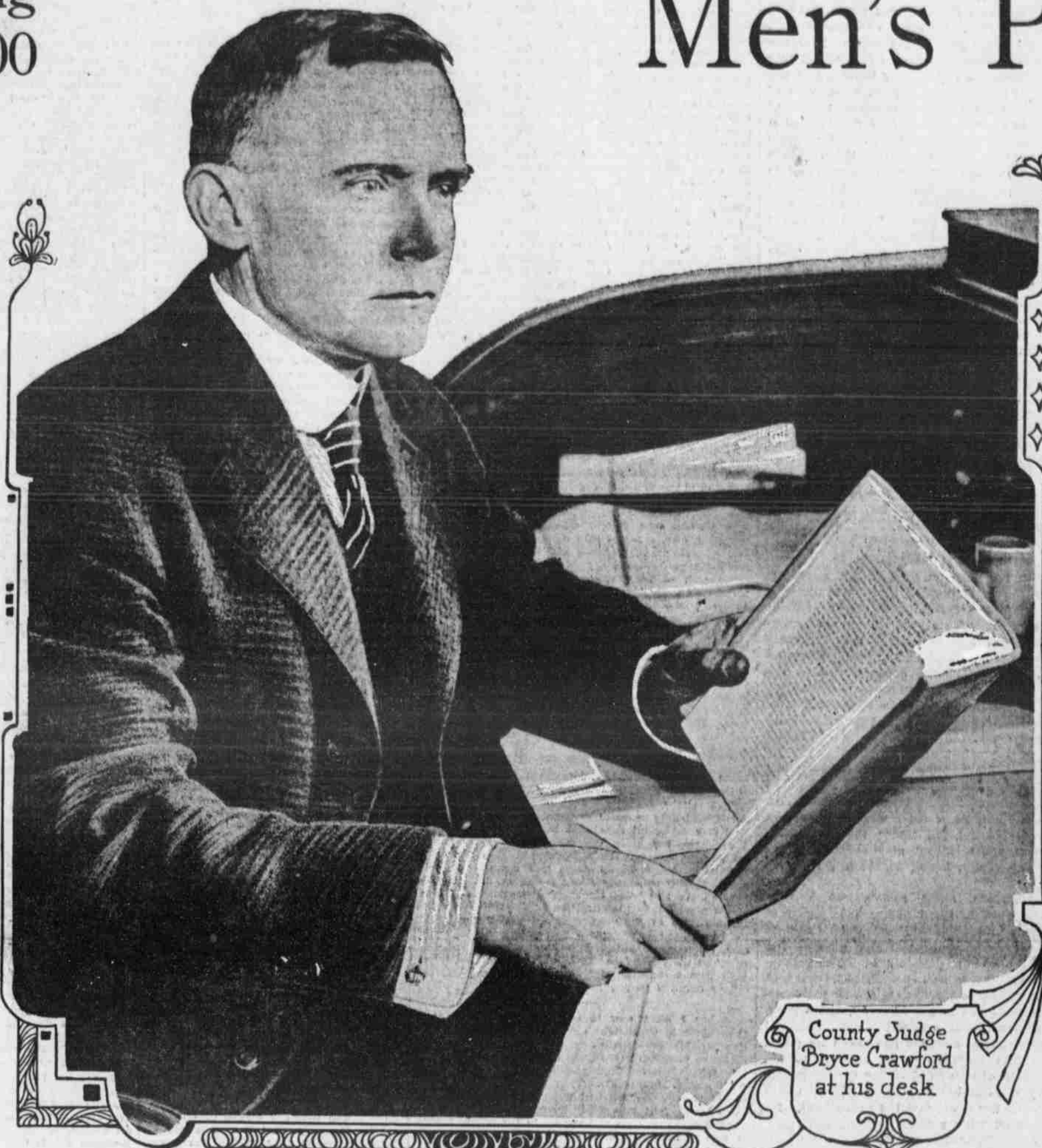
Judge Crawford doesn't answer to a single one of these characteristics. His figure is rather small and slender. His eyes are not severe, but blue and friendly. His beard is not of formal cut or of any cut at all for he is clean shaven. He is not full of wise saws and modern instances.

He is full of stories and modern jokes and he likes to tell 'em and make people laugh, and he usually tells 'em well, too, even if he is a Scotchman by descent on both sides of the house.

He is a good conversationalist and a good listener. He has the rare quality of making the person with whom he is talking feel that he is interested sympathetically in his affairs. He believes there is a time for laughter and a time for tears.

The judge might wear a long-tailed coat as a sort of badge of his judicial dignity. But he doesn't. Ordinary sack suit just like other men wear is good enough for him. He couldn't decide cases better in a long-tailed coat than in a sack coat. Therefore why the long-tailed variety?

Unassuming and genuine are adjectives honestly bestowed here. He treats the employes of his office as equals. He fixes no Argus eyes upon them. He doesn't bring them up "on the carpet." He simply expects them to do their work. And they do it. And when he hears a good story (or what a man with a Scotch sense of humor thinks is a good story) he tells it to the boys in his office.



County Judge Bryce Crawford at his desk

Well, wouldn't you stretch a point to laugh at your "boss' " story?

Though he gets through with a great amount of work, he has that faculty possessed by most great accomplishers of appearing to have nothing to do. Calm and deliberate, his movements are never hurried. But all the time he is going straight to the objective point by the shortest route. Let us see if that poor, overworked word is too tired to appear here. No, it can appear—"efficiency."

Judge Crawford was "raised" in Omaha. He was living with his parents in Kansas City when he decided to investigate the works of Blackstone et al. So he went to the University of Kansas, where he slaked his thirst at the legal fountain for several years and was admitted to the bar in 1893.

He began to practice law in Omaha. After several years he became interested in politics and ran for police judge. He was "yo'h honah" and "jedger" for five years and then it occurred to him that he would be a mighty good man for the people to have up in the county court. He mentioned this conviction to the people and they elected him by a handsome majority. In fact, he ran far ahead of his ticket.

So there he is, contented with his "job," executing it well; and the people contented with him. He's moving the wheels of justice and giving no chance for such cases as that told of in the old poem:

For sixteen years the case was spun,
And then stood where it first begun.

"Fiat justitia, ruat cælum." A bit of Latin doesn't go bad in a writup of a lawyer, eh?

His favorite pastimes are smoking and playing golf. He says he smokes too much and smokes "anything that'll burn."

As for golf, he goes twice a week out to the Happy Hollow links. He can go around in 95, which entitles him to membership in the "dub class."

He is decidedly a home man and spends most of his time at this "club" with his wife and two sons. He helps the boys to get their young ideas to shooting, for they are in the high school. They're foot ball players, too. His daughter is in the state university, and we have her happy father's word for it that "she is of the yellow-haired, pink-cheeked kind that the boys like." So he fears she won't get to teach French, in which she is specializing.

By the way, the judge is the sixth of his name in the generations of his family, and he has a son, Bryce Crawford, the seventh.

Hello, who's this putting his head in at the door of the judge's private office. Oh, it's Joe Sherry, file clerk.

"All right, Joe, I'll be with you in one minute," says the judge.

Joe Sherry is the proud possessor of an automobile. Most people admit they're automobiles, anyway. Yea, it's a Ford. And every noon Joe takes the judge home in his machine to lunch because Joe lives within a couple of blocks of Judge Crawford. After they've both lunched he calls for him and takes him back again.

Ask Wilson to Bring Bride to 'Frisco Fair

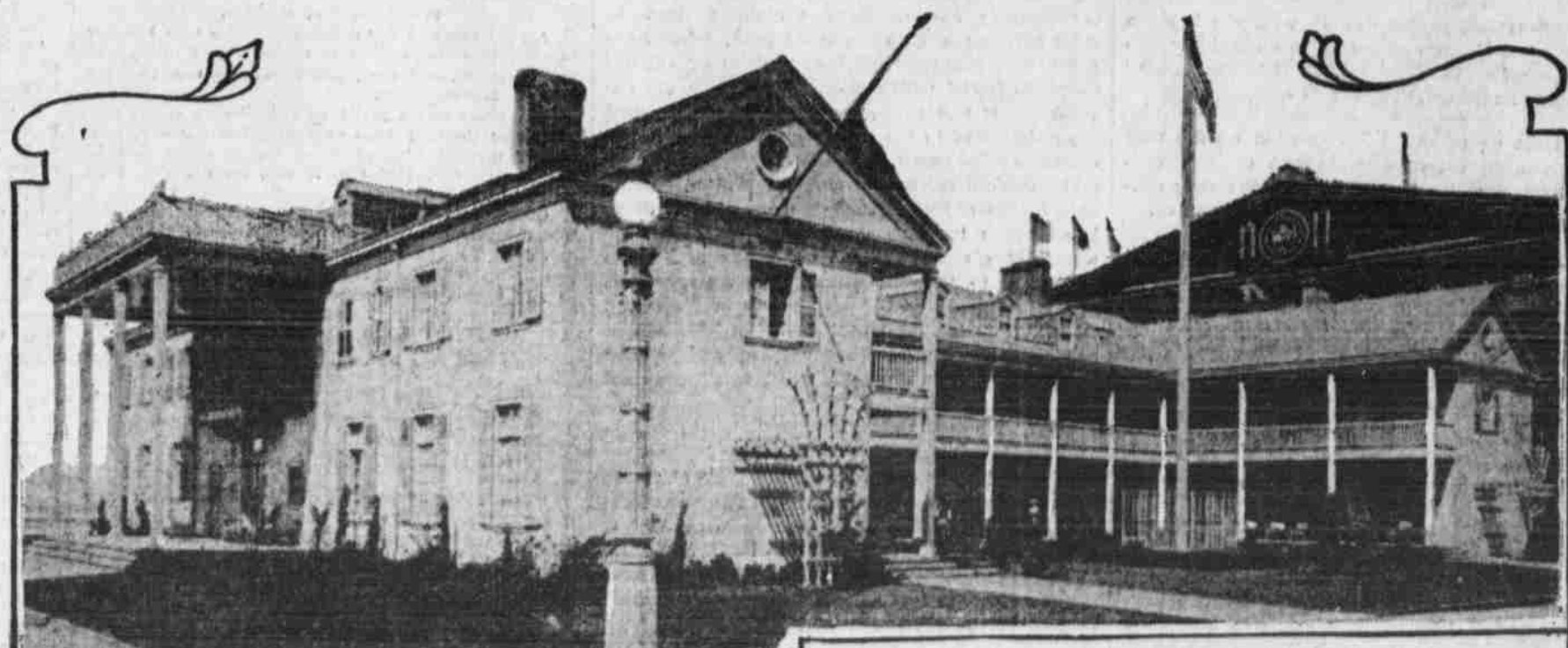
GREAT hopes are held in San Francisco that President Wilson and his bride will be able to visit the exposition. Indeed, the president has already given assurance to the special commission sent to present the invitation that he will do so if he possibly can.

This commission, headed by Mrs. Gaillard Stoney, secretary of the Women's board of the exposition, accompanied by the Misses Esther Bull, Altha McEwen and Dorothy Starr, presented to President Wilson a monster roll of names of many thousands of Californians, including those of the school children of California, inviting President Wilson to visit the exposition. The president was delighted at the spirit shown, and with the gifts so thoughtfully prepared, and said that it was his earnest wish to be able to visit the exposition.

Hope for the president's visit has by no means been abandoned, and it is thought that if Mr. Wilson does not visit the exposition before its close on December 4, he may be able to pay the visit during the Christmas holidays, in which event, it is pointed out, that the exposition would be reopened during the period of the president's visit. The step would permit the fulfillment of a long expressed wish of the chief executive to see the fair as a part of a journey to the west.

While in San Francisco Thomas A. Edison and Henry Ford were so impressed with the earnestness with which the exposition officials and San Franciscans are looking forward to a visit from Mr. Wilson that they sent the president a telegram urging that he accede to the invitation of the Californians. As an important exposition official said, California does not wish to be impertunate in urging the president to visit the coast, but now that the stress of his position has somewhat relaxed, his visit would be esteemed as the greatest possible distinction that could be conferred upon the people of the west at this time, and an appreciated recognition of the deep interest which it is realized that President Wilson feels in the exposition.

Should President Wilson and his bride visit San Francisco, they would undoubtedly make their headquarters in the New Jersey State building, which was built with the presidential visit in mind, and is equipped with a presidential suite. This building reproduces the famed Trenton Barracks, and is delightfully situated in the central portion of the section devoted to the state and national pavilions.



New Jersey Building, reproducing the Trenton Barracks and equipped with Presidential suite.

Telegram sent by Thomas A. Edison and Henry Ford urging President Wilson to visit the fair on his honeymoon

WESTERN UNION DAY LETTER

Agencies in S. F. 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

SEND the following Day Letter, subject to the terms of the contract, which are hereby agreed to:

To: President Woodrow Wilson
1616 House
Washington, D.C.

We heartily join in the invitation sent to you by the people of California that you visit this glorious exposition before it's close.

Thomas A. Edison
Henry Ford