

WILSON'S YEAR'S WORK

Selected Extracts from
Annual Report of
Department of Agriculture.

After a laborious and careful estimate of the value of the products of the farm during 1904, made within the census scope, it is safe to place this amount at \$4,000,000,000, after excluding the value of farm crops fed to live stock in order to avoid duplication of values. A similar estimate made for 1903 gives \$4,450,000,000, and, and the census total for 1902 is \$3,742,000,000. It is by no means to be admitted that these figures represent fully the value of the wealth produced on farms. Within the limits of ascertainable values the farms of 1904 produced an aggregate wealth with a farm valuation that was 9.65 per cent above the product of 1903 and 11.28 per cent above the figures for the census year 1902.

An occupation that has produced such an unthinkable value as one aggregating nearly \$4,000,000,000 within a year may be better measured by some comparisons. All of the gold mines of the world have not produced since Columbus discovered America a greater value of gold than the farmers of this country have produced in wealth in two years; this year's product is over six times the amount of the capital stock of all national banks; it comes within \$10,000,000 of equalling the value of manufactures of 1904, less the cost of materials used; it is twice the sum of our exports and imports for a year; it is two and a half times the gross earnings from the operations of the railways; it is three and a half times the value of all minerals produced in this country, including coal, iron ore, gold, silver and quartz stone.

TO HEAD A JUNKET.



Early in the summer Secy. Taft will head one of the most remarkable junkets that has ever left our shores. The party will leave Washington June 1, and will travel 25,000 miles.

The junketers will cross the American continent from Washington, sail across the Pacific ocean, make short stops at Chinese and Japanese ports, spend a week in Manila, and will make a tour of the Philippine Archipelago, visiting in Luzon, the Moro province, the Sulu archipelago, Mindanao and Celebes.

Business is the ostensible purpose of the junket, and while it is true that the members of the party will gather much important information which will enable Congress to legislate for the Philippines, it is true, nevertheless that the trip is one of pleasure. This expensive and extraordinary junket will be taken at the instance of the Philippine government, which is anxious that some American statesman shall have an opportunity to see for themselves what the islands are like, how the people live, what are their needs, and whether they will ever be qualified for self-government—which privilege or right, it is safe to say, will never be accorded them.

GENERAL GROSVENOR TO GO.



Congressman Grosvenor of Ohio, the old war horse of the Republicans, is going with Taft. Lots of fun for the crowd, and the taxpayer foots the bill.

of very great importance to farmers throughout the clover region, is being investigated. New varieties of clover which appear to possess some advantages over the standard varieties grown in this country have been secured and are being propagated with a view to introducing them generally in the clover region as soon as sufficient seed is available. Some of our native clovers are being grown under farm conditions in order to determine whether or not they are worthy of domestication. One or two of them are promising, particularly for sections of the country where red clover does not thrive.

The increase of the area of alkali lands in the irrigated districts of the west has given added importance to plants that may be grown upon such lands. Several such plants are available, and the bureau is investigating the forage value of these plants, as well as methods required for their cultivation. A few years ago the Australian saltbush was shown to be adapted to lands of this character, and a great deal of interest in this plant was aroused among western farmers. Recent investigations by the bureau indicate that the cultivation of the plant has practically ceased. There is no question of the value of the Australian saltbush as a forage plant or of its adaptability to strong alkali lands. The principal difficulty with the plant seems to be that proper methods of utilizing it have not been worked out. The bureau has undertaken to find what

place it can be made to occupy in western agriculture and the methods by which farmers can take advantage of its demonstrated value. Considerable areas of a number of other forage plants known to be adapted to alkaline conditions are being grown with a view to determining their forage value.

In the breeding and improvement of corn important advances are being made. The main object of this work has been the selection of strains of corn best adapted to the different sections of the United States. The work is being conducted in co-operation with 29 or more state experiment stations and many farmers. Each year the department obtains pure seed from the originators and breeders of the leading strains of corn in various sections of the country, and is sending the seed to different localities for comparative tests. At the same time extensive hybridization work is proceeding for the purpose of securing sweeter, more tender and more productive strains of sweet corn for table use. Connected with this work, also, there are being studied problems relating to the handling of seed corn and selection, etc.

Extensive breeding investigations of oats have been carried on, mainly for the purpose of producing a profitable variety for the rich farm lands of the great corn-growing states, where oats are used in rotation with corn. The production of a more desirable oat for feed would be a vast improvement. Some very promising hybrids have been obtained from the naked oat of China—the so-called "European hull-less oat."

Extensive practical tests were made the past season with nitrogen-fixing bacteria for use in connection with leguminous crops. The results have been even more successful than we had anticipated. Hundreds of applications have been sent in from every state in the Union for material with which to inoculate crops. Practically all of these requests have been complied with in such a way that a record of the results could be obtained. The results show conclusively that where the organisms are used in accordance with the directions issued by the bureau increased yields ranging from 15 to 25 per cent are secured. Furthermore, many farmers have been successful in getting stands of clovers and other crops on soils where failure has resulted heretofore. The several strains of bacteria sent out from the department have proved valuable even on soils containing the uncultivated.

In parts of the northwest where sheep grazing is an extensive industry very great losses have been experienced in many sections, due to the so-called "loc disease." This disease is commonly attributed to the eating of the loco weed, by which parts of the range are almost monopolized. In one county in one of the northwestern states in which sheep grazing has been the chief industry the disease has made such inroads that many stockmen have been obliged to give up sheep grazing altogether, with the result that land values have depreciated and the sheep from this region are viewed with suspicion by buyers. During the past two years investigations have been made to test the relation between this devastating trouble and the so-called "loco weed" prevalent in this section of the country. The successive advances which have been made by Congress of recent years in the appropriation for the bureau of forestry offer one of the best evidences of the commendation which its work has received. More and more money has been given to it to spend because it has proved year by year its capacity

to do more and more practical, good work. It prosecutes its researches solely that it may discover and diffuse information which contributes to our national well-being. Within six years its force has increased sixteenfold and its expenditure increased, but neither of these facts is an adequate measure of its advance in practical efficiency or of its success in changing former conditions. By a single discovery—that the cup and gutter system, devised by one of its agents, could be commercially applied to the production of crude turpentine it is now saving many times more annually to the naval-store industry than the total expenditures of the bureau during the whole six years.

We are bringing plants from all foreign countries to diversify our industries and enable our husbandmen to grow what has been and still is costing us large amounts of money. A knowledge of the character of the soils from which they come and on which they have been developed is imperative, and suggests to us the wisdom of becoming familiar with the soils as well as the climates to which we introduce them, if we are to maintain them here in their excellence or improve them, giving them better conditions than they had in the countries where we found them. Within the limits of our climate and soils we hope to improve everything we import through a superior aggregation of scientists who are making research into all the conditions of plant life, the soil being of greatest importance.



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Our Monday Special

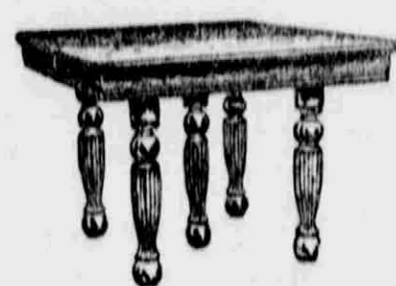
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Senator Daniel, of Virginia, is in on the good things and is to be one of the guests of Uncle Sam on the 25,000 mile tour under the auspices of Secy. Taft.