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MESSAGE

OF

PRESIDENT HAYES.

(Continued)

THE NAVY.

The report of the secretary of the navy shows that we have six squadrons now engaged in the protection of our foreign commerce and other duties pertaining to the naval service. The condition and operations are also shown. The total expenditures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1877, were \$14,077,374.54. There are unpaid claims against the department chargeable to the last year, which are presented to the consideration of congress by the report of the secretary. The estimates for the fiscal year commencing July 1st, 1878, are \$16,238,234.40, exclusive of the sum of \$2,314,231 submitted for new buildings, repairs and improvements at the several navy yards. The appropriations for the present fiscal year commencing July 1st, 1877, are \$18,592,932.90. The amount drawn from the treasury from July 1st to November 1st, 1877, is \$9,245,067.49, of which there is estimated to be available \$1,029,523.80, showing the amount of actual expenditures during the first four months of the present fiscal year to have been \$4,313,509.10.

POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

The report of the postmaster general contains a full and clear statement of the operations and condition of the postoffice department for the year ending June 30, 1877, including receipts from the money order business and from official stamps and stamped envelopes, and from the sale of postage stamps. The total receipts for the year ending June 30, 1877, were \$27,531,535.26. The additional sum of \$6,013,000 was realized from appropriations from the general treasury for various purposes, making the receipts from all sources \$33,544,535.26. The total expenditures during the fiscal year amounted to \$33,456,323.44, leaving an excess of total receipts over total expenditures of \$1,068,211.82, and an excess of total expenditures over ordinary receipts of \$5,954,737.18. Deducting from the total receipts the sum of \$6,332,618.41 received from international money orders of the preceding fiscal year, and deducting from the total expenditures the sum of \$1,163,818.20 paid on liabilities incurred in the previous fiscal year, the expenditures and receipts pertaining to the business of the last fiscal year are as follows: Expenditures, \$32,322,504.24; receipts, ordinary, \$27,531,535.26; business, for official postage stamps, \$27,468,323.42; excess of expenditures, \$4,854,168.42. The ordinary revenue of the postoffice department for the year ending June 30th, 1877, are estimated at an increase of 3 per cent. over those of 1876, making \$29,084,098.28, and the expenditures for the same year are estimated at \$30,427,771, leaving an estimated deficiency for 1877 of \$7,393,392.02. The additional legislation recommended by the postmaster general for improvement of the mail service and to protect the postal revenues from the abuses practiced under existing laws, is respectfully commended to the careful consideration of congress.

JUDICIAL.

The report of the attorney general contains several suggestions as to the administration of justice, which I invite your attention. The pressure of business in the supreme court and in certain circuit courts of the United States is now such that serious delays to the great injury and even oppression of suitors occur, and a remedy should be sought for this condition of affairs. Whether it will be found in the plan briefly sketched in the report, increasing the number of circuit courts and by means of this addition to the judicial force of creating an intermediate court of errors and appeals; or whether some other mode can be devised for obviating the difficulties which now exist, I leave to your mature consideration.

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

The present condition of the Indian tribes on the territory of the United States and our relations with them are fully set forth in the reports of the secretary of the interior and the commissioner of Indian Affairs. After a series of most deplorable conflicts, the successful termination of which, while reflecting honor upon the brave soldiers who accomplished it, cannot lessen our regret for the trouble. We are now at peace with all the Indian tribes on our borders, and to preserve that peace by a just and humane policy will be the object of our earnest endeavor. Whatever may be said of their character and the savage propensities of the difficulties of introducing among them the habits of civilized life, and the obstacles they have offered to the progress of settling in certain parts of the country, the Indians are certainly entitled to our sympathy and to a conscientious respect on our part for the claims upon our sense of justice. They were the aboriginal occupants of the land now possessed. They have been driven from place to place; the purchase money paid to them in some cases for what they called their own has still left them poor; in many instances when they have been driven upon land assigned to them by compact and began to support themselves by their own labor they were rudely jostled off and thrust into the wilderness again. Many if not most of our Indian wars have had their origin in broken promises and acts of injustice upon our part, and the advance of the Indians in civilization has been slow, because the treatment they received did not permit it to be faster and more generous. We cannot expect them to improve and to follow our guidance unless we keep faith with them in respecting the rights they possess, and unless instead of depriving them of their opportunities we lend them a helping hand. I cordially approve the policy regarding the management of Indian affairs outlined in the reports of the secretary of the interior and of the commissioner of Indian Affairs. The gradual performance of our promises is the first condition of a good understanding with the Indians. I cannot too urgently recommend to congress that prompt and liberal provision be made for the conscientious fulfillment of all agreements entered into by the government with Indian tribes. To withhold the means necessary for the performance of a promise is always false economy, and is apt to prove

disastrous in its consequences. Especial care is recommended to provide for Indians settled on their reservations, cattle and agricultural implements to aid them in whatever efforts they may make to support themselves and by the re-establishment and maintenance of schools to bring them under the control of civilized influences. I see no reason why Indians who can give satisfactory proof of having by their own labor supported their families for a number of years, and who are willing to detach themselves from tribal relations, should not be admitted to the benefits of the homestead act and the privileges of citizenship. I recommend the passage of a law to that effect. It will be an act of justice, as well as a measure of encouragement. Earnest efforts are being made to purify the Indian race, and every year are appearing in congress shall redound to the benefit of the Indians. Beneficial efforts will have my firm support. With an improved service and every possible encouragement held out to the Indians to better their conditions and to elevate themselves in the scale of civilization we may hope to do at the same time a good work for them and for ourselves.

PUBLIC TIMBER.

I invite the attention of congress to the importance of the statements and suggestions by the secretary of the interior concerning the depletions of our public timber lands. It is believed that the measures taken in pursuance of existing law to arrest the depletion will be entirely successful if congress by appropriation for that purpose, renders their continued enforcement possible. The experience of other nations teaches us that a country cannot be stripped of its forests without its ruin, and we shall expose ourselves to the gravest consequences unless the wasteful and improvident manner in which the forests in the United States are destroyed be effectually checked. I earnestly recommend that the measures suggested by the secretary of the interior for the suppression of depletions on the public timber lands of the United States, for the selling of timber from the public lands and for the preservation of forests be embodied in a law, and that considering the urgent necessity of enabling the people of certain states and territories to purchase lumber from the public lands in a legal manner, which at present they cannot do, such a law be passed without avoidable delay.

DESERT LANDS.

I would also call the attention of congress to statements made by the secretary of the interior concerning the disposition that might be made of the desert lands not irrigated west of the one hundredth meridian. These lands are practically unusable under the existing laws, and the suggestion is worthy of consideration that a system of leasehold tenure would make them a source of profit to the United States, while at the same time legalizing the business of cattle raising which is at present carried on upon them.

AGRICULTURE.

The report of the commissioner of agriculture contains the gratifying announcement of the extraordinary success which has rewarded the agricultural industry of the country for the past year. The method of cultivation which obtain for the products of the soil especially for the surplus which our people have to export are made confidently turn to this as the most important of all our resources for the revival of the depressed industries of the country. The report shows our agricultural progress during the year and contains a statement of the work done by the department for the advancement of agricultural industry, upon which the prosperity of our people so largely depends. Matters of information are included of great interest to all who seek by the experience of others to improve their own methods of cultivation. The efforts of the department to increase the production of important articles of consumption, will, it is hoped, improve the demand for labor and advance the business of the country, and eventually result in saving some of the many millions that are now annually paid to foreign nations for sugar and other staple products which habitual use has made necessary to our domestic everyday life.

CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION.

The board on behalf of the United States executive departments at the international exposition of 1876, has concluded its labors. The final report of the board was transmitted to congress at the last session. As these papers are understood to contain interesting and valuable information and will constitute the only report emanating from the government on the subject of the exhibition, I invite attention to the matter in this report, which is herewith published for general information.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Congress is empowered by the constitution to regulate the city of exclusive legislation over the District of Columbia, in which the seat of government of the nation is located. The interests of the district having no direct representation in congress are entitled to special consideration and care at the hands of that great government. The capital of the United States belongs to the nation, and it is natural that the American people should take pride in the seat of their national government and desire it to be an ornament to the country. Much has been done to render it beautiful, convenient and attractive, but much remains to be done which its permanent inhabitants are not likely to do. To impose upon them a large proportion of the cost required for public improvements, which are in a great measure planned and executed by the national government, and to require that for the many thousands of visitors who temporarily reside in the capital of the nation, is an evident injustice. Special attention is asked by the commissioners of the district in their report, which is herewith transmitted, to the importance of a permanent adjustment by congress of the financial relations between the United States and the district involving the regular annual contribution by the United States of its just proportion of the expenses of the district government and of the outlay for all needed public improvements, and such measure of relief from the bur-

den of taxation now resting on the people of the district as in the wisdom of congress may be deemed just. The report of the commissioners show the affairs of the district are in a condition as satisfactory as could be expected in view of the heavy debt resting upon it and its very limited means for necessary expense. The debt of the district is as follows: Funded debt, \$8,379,631.96; 3 65 bonds guaranteed by the United States, \$13,743,250; total bonded debt, \$22,122,881.96; to which should be added certain outstanding claims as explained in the report of the commissioners, \$1,182,204.62, making the total debt of the district \$23,310,146.48. The commissioners also ask attention to the importance of the improvement of the Potomac river, and the reclamation of the marshes bordering the city of Washington, and their views upon this subject are concurred in by the members of the board of health whose report is herewith transmitted. Both the commercial and sanitary interests of the district will be greatly promoted, I doubt not, by this improvement. Your attention is invited to the suggestion of the commissioners and of the board of health for the organization of a board of charities to have supervision and control of the disbursement of all money for the purpose from the district treasury. I desire also to ask your special attention to the efficiency of the public schools of the district by supplemental aid from the national treasury. This is especially true in the case of number of those attending the schools are children of employees of the government. I earnestly commend to your care the interests of the people of the district who are so intimately associated with the government establishments, and to whose enterprise the good order and attractiveness of the capital are largely due, and I ask your attention to the request of the commissioners for legislation in behalf of the interests entrusted to their care. The appropriations asked for the care of reservations belonging to the government within the city by the commissioners of public buildings and grounds are also commended to your favorable consideration.

WASHINGTON MONUMENT.

The report of the joint commissioners created by the act approved August 2d, 1876, an act providing for the completion of the Washington monument, is also herewith transmitted, with accompanying documents. The joint board of engineers and officers detailed to examine the monument in compliance with the second section of the act, have reported that the foundation is insufficient. No authority exists for making the expenditure necessary to acquire its stability. I therefore recommend that the commission be authorized to expend such portion of the sum appropriated by the act as may be necessary for the purpose. The present unfinished condition of the monument, began so long ago, is a reproach to the nation. It cannot be doubted that the patriotic sense of the country will mainly respond to such prompt provision for the completion of its completion at an early day, and I urge upon congress the propriety and necessity of immediate legislation for this purpose.

EDUCATION.

The wisdom of legislation upon the part of congress in aid of the state for education of the whole people in those branches of study which are taught in the common schools of the country is no longer a question of the intelligent judgment of the country, but goes still further regarding it as also both constitutional and essential for the general government to extend to technical and higher education such aid as is deemed essential to the general welfare and to our due prominence among the enlightened and cultured nations of the world. The ultimate settlement of all questions of the future, whether of administration or finance or of true nationality of sentiment depends upon the virtue and intelligence of the people. It is vain to hope for the success of a free government without the prompt settlement of all questions of those who are the source of power. No less than one-eighth of the entire voting population of our country are yet unable to read and write. It is encouraging to observe in connection with the report of the commissioner of the states in which slavery formerly existed, evidences of increasing interest in universal education, and I shall be glad to give my approval to any appropriate measures which may be enacted by congress for the purpose of supplementing with national aid the local systems of education in those states, and all states; and having already invited your attention to the report of the board of Columbia with respect to its public school system, I here add that I believe it desirable, not so much with reference to the local system of the district, but to the great and lasting benefit of the entire country, that this system should be crowned with a university, in all respects in keeping with the national capital, and thereby realize the cherished hopes of Washington on this subject.

NATIONAL MUSEUM.

I also earnestly commend the request of the reports of the Smithsonian institute that an adequate appropriation be made for the establishment and conduct of a national museum under their supervision.

CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY.

The request of providing for the preservation and growth of the library of congress is also one of national importance. As the depository of copyright publications and records, this library has contributed to the provisions for its accommodation, and the erection on such site as the judgment of congress may approve to a fireproof library building to preserve the treasures and enlarge the usefulness of this valuable collection is recommended. I recommend also such legislation as will render available and efficient for the purpose of instruction, so far as is consistent with the public service, the cabinets of minerals, of invention, of surgery, of education and of agriculture, and other collections, the property of the national government. The capital of the nation should be something more than a mere political center. We should avail ourselves of all the opportunities which Providence has here placed at our command to commit the general intelligence of the people and increase the conditions most favorable to the success and perpetuity of our institutions. (Signed) R. B. HAYES, December 3d, 1877.

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