

CORTELYOU'S BIG JOB

A CHAT WITH THE POSTMASTER GENERAL ABOUT UNCLE SAM'S MAILS.

(Special Correspondence of the Desert News by Frank G. Carpenter.)

WASHINGTON, D. C.—I have just had a long talk with a cabinet minister who knows his job. I refer to George B. Cortelyou, our postmaster general. He entered the postoffice department as a stenographer when he first came to Washington, 15 years ago, and worked there four or five years, holding various confidential positions before he was promoted to the White House. As the friend, clerk and secretary of Presidents Cleveland, McKinley and Roosevelt he has been closely associated with our justice business, and I venture that there is not a public man in the United States who now understands it better than he.

OUR BIG POSTAL JOB.

It is something to know a business like this, and the man who handles it must have brains, nerve, honesty and executive ability. Let me show you how big the job is. The postmaster general has given me the figures, but I use only round numbers and translate his words into simple comparisons. It is big in the money handled. We spent \$167,000,000 on it last year, and it brought in \$152,000,000. Nevertheless these sums are small in comparison with the job. For that sum we carried the mails of 23,000,000 souls, and it cost each of them only 17 cents for the year's service.

The job is a big one in the hands employed. Mr. Cortelyou has 280,000 men under him, and his clerks carry our letters over so many routes that if they could be placed and to end they would reach from the earth to the moon and back, and leave more than 6,000 miles to spare. In our own country alone the different classes of domestic mail travel altogether a half billion miles in one year, and the number of pieces handled on the railways amount to 18,000,000,000. Such figures are inconceivable.

ARE GOVERNMENT CLERKS HONEST?

During the talk I asked the postmaster general as to graft in the department.

Registered matter and special delivery letters must be delivered in person to the addressee, and the carrier is required to take them to the patron's door if within one mile of the route. He is required to carry a sufficient supply of stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards and newspaper wrappers; and he can receive matter for registration and give receipts for the same. He must also accept money for the purpose of money orders, for which he must give receipts.

"How about the boxes—does Uncle Sam furnish them?"

"No, they are put up at the cost of the persons who desire the service, and the boxes must be erected by the roadside, so that the carrier can reach them without dismounting from his vehicle. The department fixes the size, shape and material of the boxes, and directs that each must be equipped with a signal by which the carrier may know whether there is mail in it."

"As to the cost of the rural delivery service, it was over \$24,000,000 last year, and the appropriation for this year is more than \$23,000,000. The actual revenue on the mail matter dispatched by the patrons of the service amounts to about 18 per cent of the cost, but it is believed that the service brings the department an increased revenue from other sources. It is very popular and has been valuable in the general increase of business and in the diffusion of intelligence."

UNCLE SAM'S POST OFFICE BUILDINGS.

"Do you not think that Uncle Sam should own his own postoffices?"

"There is a difference of opinion on that subject," said the postmaster general. "It is safe to say that the government should have buildings for all the first-class postoffices and for the larger offices of the second class. I think we should build more with regard to the demands of the future. As it is now a government building is hardly ready for occupancy before the postal business for which it is intended has so grown that it is barely large enough to accommodate it. As to our rental buildings, we pay low rates for postal accommodations in most quarters and

An Army of Employes Who Handle Millions—Graft in the Post Office—Are Government Clerks Honest?—The Rural Delivery Service—Should Uncle Sam Own His Own Post Office Buildings?—The Mails of Our Colonies—Postmen as Express Agents—The Picture Card Craze—Politics and the Civil Service—Organizations of Clerks Must Not Mix In.



READY TO START ON HIS ROUTE. One Sixth of the People of the United States Now Receive Their Mail by Rural Delivery.

two ounces. This could be done with out changing our present arrangements and all merchandise parcels of under four pounds would then be carried in our ordinary pouches at one-half the present rates. This would enable light packages to be sent many places not reached by the express companies, and the postage would be high enough to pay the government for the actual cost of transportation.

"I understand that reductions are to

be made in our foreign letter rates, Mr. Postmaster General?" said I.

"That is true. The matter came up before the Universal Postal congress at Rome, and it has been provided that beginning with Oct. 1, 1907, the rate for first class matter between the countries of the postal union shall be reduced. At present the rate is 5 cents per half ounce. After October of next year the foreign rate for this country will be 5 cents for the first ounce and

3 cents for each additional ounce, so that one can then send for 8 cents first class matter which now costs him 20 cents. Another change made by that congress enables one to prepay the reply to a letter which he sends abroad by means of a coupon which costs about 8 cents. Such coupons will be on sale at our postoffices, and they will be exchangeable in the countries to which they are sent for the postage stamps there to the value of 25 centimes or 5

cents. The congress also provided that messages may be written on the addressed sides of postal cards. This will be especially interesting to Americans traveling in Europe who wish to send picture postals home."

PICTURE POSTALS AND THE MAILS.

"How about picture post cards? Have they increased our postal business?"

"They undoubtedly have," replied the postmaster general, "and that in a most profitable way. These post cards are of uniform size and weight. They are easily handled because they occupy but small space and are no great burden to the letter carriers. It takes about 120 of them to make a pound, and as the postal rate for such is 1 cent the revenue we get from a pound of such cards is \$1.20. This is also true of the United States postal cards."

"Have they come to stay?"

"That is a matter which time must answer. Many people regard them as a fad and think their use will eventually die out. They are very convenient reminders, however, and enable one to let his friends know he is thinking of them without writing a long letter. In that respect they are popular."

FOREIGN POSTAL CARDS.

"I suppose most of the picture postals come from abroad?"

"Yes, we have a large number in the foreign mails. Millions are sent to this country, having been mailed in foreign countries to friends and relatives at home. I have no means of knowing absolutely, but I believe that the quantity of picture post cards which comes into the United States from foreign countries is many times greater than the number of postal cards we use at home. Of course the revenue from such cards, mailed in foreign countries addressed to citizens of our country, is to the advantage of the foreign countries where they are mailed. Foreigners do not travel in America as extensively as Americans travel in foreign countries. The balance of trade in this line is therefore in favor of the foreigners, inasmuch as post cards are handled reciprocally. Indeed, it is believed that three or four foreign post cards come to the United States for every United States post card sent abroad."

POLITICS AND THE POSTOFFICE.

"How about civil service in your department, Mr. Postmaster General? Is it a political machine run for the benefit of the party in power?"

"Not at all," was the reply. "The civil service rules prevail. Our employes are treated without regard to their political affiliations and we are having fewer complaints than ever as to any improper partisan activity on their part."

"How about organizations of government clerks? Should they be encouraged?"

"It depends upon the organizations and their objects. If they are formed

for social enjoyment, mutual aid or improvement, or for the benefit of the public, they may be unobjectionable and even desirable. With any other purpose in view they are detrimental to the service to their members and to the public. It is my duty to advise upon efficient work from every angle any organization with every member clerk as an individual and only as an individual. He is to be appointed, promoted, transferred and treated upon his merit alone. The postoffice department is operated under the law and its officers have to consider the interests of all the people and pay such salaries and make such assignments as are authorized by Congress. The only criterion of merit and the public interest should be the law and the public interest, and it should be clearly understood that the officials of the postoffice department are the proper persons to present the department's needs to Congress and not the officials or members of any organization of employes."

THERE'S NO USE.

"Talking you can't beat Hoode for the treatment of rheumatism. It is a cure for suffering humanity. If you are afflicted with rheumatism, try Hoode's Pills. You will put it in its proper position. Hoode's Pills cure for Constipation, Biliousness, Dyspepsia and all the troubles that attend the bowels. Try a bottle and you will know anything else. Sold by C. M. I. Dept. 12 and 14 South Main Street, St. Paul, Minn."

EVERY MOVEMENT HURTS.

When you have rheumatism, muscles feel stiff and sore and joints are painful. It does not pay to suffer long from this disease when it may be cured so promptly and perfectly by Hoode's Sarsaparilla. This medicine goes right to the spot, neutralizes the acidity of the blood, which causes rheumatism, and puts an end to the pain and misery. Biliousness is cured by Hoode's Pills.

EASTERN EXCURSIONS.

Nov. 18, Dec. 20

COLORADO MIDLAND RY. One fare plus two dollars for round trip. Limit 60 days. Stop overs. Call at Midland ticket office for full particulars.

FOR SALE CHEAP.

24 Oak Casks, capacity about 12 gallons each.
A. FISHER BREWING CO.
Salt Lake City, Utah.
Both phones No. 265.

\$300 FREE.

If it's photos you want, see Secomb's \$1.00 per dozen cabinet plus 212 Main street.



HON. GEORGE B. CORTELYOU, A Cabinet Minister Who Thoroughly Knows His Job.

ment, putting the blunt question as to whether a government clerk of a dollar's salary could be expected to be honest. The postmaster general replied: "I answer emphatically, yes, and if you ask whether they are equal to the average business employes in efficiency, I will again say yes. Take our registered mail in 1904. This department handled 28,000,000 pieces, containing billions of dollars and other valuable matter. How much of that do you think we lost? Just about three-thousandths of 1 per cent, and that percentage includes losses from fire and flood, as well as from stealing. It means a loss of 3 cents in \$4,000, and a total money indemnity to be paid of less than \$2,000. I don't believe there is a private enterprise in the world that can show a better record."

UNCLE SAM'S POSTAL DEFICIT.

"By your report, I see that the post office department spent last year just about \$14,000,000 more than it took in. Does not our postal service pay, and if not, how can that be remedied?"

"By the word 'pay' I infer that you mean to ask whether the department is self-sustaining. The so-called deficit for the last fiscal year was more than you state by about one hundred dollars; but that is due to the fact that the revenue from certain classes of mail matter is not equal to the cost of maintaining their parts of the service. It could be remedied by giving the department credit for all free matter handled by the different government departments and by members of Congress or by placing a higher tariff upon one of several classes of mail matter, and especially upon second class matter. I think it would be better business to have each department pay its own postage. We should then know just what it costs to maintain each branch of the government and the postoffice department would get credit for its services."

"As to second-class matter," continued Postmaster General Cortelyou, "that makes up two-thirds of the bulk weight of our mails, and a large part of it is handled at a loss. Some of that handled by the publishers is carried free, and the remainder is at a nominal postal charge of a cent a pound. Upon all such matter it is estimated that the revenue is only about eight-tenths of a cent a pound, and the enormous sums which we receive come mainly from the high rate upon the other three classes. If the rate on second class matter were raised and if all the mail which it carried paid, there would be no deficit. As it is now the amount lacking has to be supplied by a draft upon the treasury for moneys received from other sources of government revenue."

THE RURAL DELIVERY SERVICE.

"Tell me something about the rural delivery mail."

"The rural delivery service has been pretty well established throughout the United States. We have now more than 25,874 routes and we employ 35,765 rural mail carriers. Almost all these deliver and collect mail along their routes every day. They deliver letters to more than 3,000,000 families or to almost 14,000,000 persons. Making the population of the United States at the round number of 83,000,000, fully one person in every six gets his daily mail by rural delivery."

"Just what are the duties of a rural mail carrier?"

"He is required to deliver to the box of a patron all mail addressed to his family and to collect all mail deposited in the box for dispatch.

in some places we have leases at the nominal rental of a dollar a year, the contract including heat, light and all other such requirements. You see, the postoffice is often an advantage to a locality and to other businesses, and in such cases we meet and agree to accommodate us at the lowest possible rent."

HOW ABOUT A NEW POSTOFFICE BUILDING FOR WASHINGTON?

"I do not think we need another building for the department just at this time, although we should have larger quarters soon. The city postoffice of Washington may some day be transferred to near the new railroad terminal. This matter has been considered by the department. There is no doubt but that a better service could be given by having the local postoffice as close as possible to the railroad station."

IN OUR FAR-AWAY COLONIES.

"What is your department doing in the Philippines, Hawaii and Porto Rico?"

"The postal service of the Philippines is not under this department," said the postmaster general. "It is under the supervision of a Philippine director of posts, who is accountable to the local civil government of the Philippines. We handle the mails for Hawaii and Porto Rico and have agents in both colonies to supervise the mail transportation. In Hawaii there are 65 mail routes, aggregating more than 12,000 miles, and in Porto Rico 48 routes, having a length of 3,500 miles. We have recently established a rural delivery service in Guam, and altogether the postal accommodations of the colonies are good."

THE SERVICE IMPROVING.

"I have noted the postmaster general as to improvements in the service. He replied: "We have made a number of important changes. During the past year the department has been entirely reorganized, and Congress has approved of the reorganization. Many of my recommendations have been adopted and with the readjustment of salaries the extra appropriations for rural delivery, the pneumatic tube service and the general acceptance of the department's policy regarding the appointment of postmasters, the outlook for the future is bright."

THE POSTMAN AS EXPRESS AGENT.

"But are there not many ways in which the postal service could be extended?" I asked. "All over Europe packages are carried by post and both farmers and merchants do an express business through the mails."

"I think the conditions are somewhat different here," replied Mr. Cortelyou. "Our distances are so great that it would be difficult to establish such a service and maintain a uniform rate of postage. We should either have to have a high rate or a temporary deficit. The express companies would compete with us in handling packages under the same system for short distances. The result would be that Uncle Sam would get all the long distance parcels and the express companies all the short distance parcels. The government would therefore work at a great disadvantage. Indeed I doubt whether it would be wise at this time to ask Congress for a separate parcel post, although in my last annual report I recommended that third and fourth class mail matter should be charged for at the rate of 1 cent for



BEAUTIFUL WAISTS.

It's easy to be right as wrong, once you know how. Ah, there's the rub. How many really know? We show nothing but what is right in FABRIC, DESIGN, FIT AND FINISH To wear correct raiment you must wear our handsome new waists.

A Beautiful line of Sample Robes, bought at a Discount from a very prominent manufacturer, together with exquisite creations taken from our regular stock. We will offer these Monday and while they last at Reductions amounting to 20% to 50%

- Dainty White and Lavender Net Robes, beautifully ruffled and tucked, \$10.00 value **\$4.95**
- White and Pink Net Robes, only one each. Handsomely made with Valenciennes lace trimming, \$27.50 value **\$18.00**
- Embroidered Prunella Cloth Robes, Street Shades, \$37.50 value **\$16.50**
- Alice Blue Chiffon Cloth Robe, with Chenille Trimming, a handsome Gown. One **\$37.50** only, \$75.00 value.
- Black Lace Robe, with Velvet and Chiffon Trimmings, value \$65.00, **\$42.50** at
- Six Beautiful Black Spangled Robes, elaborately designed, \$20.00 to \$35.00 value **1-3 off**

Women's Fashionable Fall Suits.

Our suit section is noted for the extremely wide variety as well as the correctness of its styles.

Every coat which we show is practical and dressy.

The styles this season which we offer are distinguished by tasteful touches not shown by most stores. Nothing else in merchandise varies quite so much in quality as women's garments. It is our study to know quality and style and where to buy the right things at the right price.

Demi Tailored Suits.—Fine quality chiffon broadcloth.

Green, brown, navy, black and burgundy in pony styles, also eon and blouse coats, imported novelties and handsome copies of the French designs from \$35.00 to \$95.00

White wool batiste, plain fine pin tucked yoke; also in plain tucked, embroidered and lace trimmed; short and long sleeves. A charming assortment from \$3.45 to \$9.75.

Attention is directed to tailored waists in linen Damask and mercerized waistings; white and pongee color; stock or white linen collar; long and short sleeves. \$1.95 to \$4.45.

Aside from the numbers mentioned above we are showing an elaborate collection of Battenberg and Princess Lace Dresses, in White and Black, together with a full line of Black Lace and Spangled and a Gorgeous Array of Iridescent Spangled Gowns. All included in this 20 per cent to 50 per cent Discount Sale.

Gowns in all the leading shades and popular materials.

Allover lace, messaline, chiffon and crepe, Princess styles, also two piece dresses. We carry an extensive line and a range of prices from \$25.00 to \$250.00.

Street coats in mixtures, broadcloth and light weight Kerseys.

All the leading shades wraps a handsome line of evening wraps. Ask to see the "Mantle la Mode," one of the very late Parisian models and handled by us exclusively.

We are showing a fine stock of wool serge, albetross, batiste, brilliantine and rajah silk, in Peter Pan and shirt style, at prices ranging from \$2.45 to \$4.45.

