

lie domain by persons having a bona fide intent to make a home of the selected lands. Where this intent is well established and the requirements of the law have been substantially complied with, the claimant is entitled to a prompt and friendly consideration of his case. But where there is reason to believe that the claimant is the mere agent of another, who is seeking to evade a law intended to promote small holdings, and to secure by fraudulent methods large tracts of timber and other lands, both principal and agents should not only be thwarted in their fraudulent purpose, but should be made to feel the full penalties of our criminal statutes. The law should be so administered as not to confound these two classes and to visit penalties only upon the latter.

The unsettled state of the title to large bodies of land in the territories of New Mexico and Arizona has greatly retarded the development of the territories.

Provision should be made by law for the prompt trial and final adjustment before a judicial tribunal or commission of all claims based upon Mexican grants. It is not just to an intelligent and enterprising people that their peace should be disturbed and their prosperity retarded by these old contentions. I express the hope that differences of opinion as to methods may yield to the urgency of the case.

PENSIONS.

The law provides a pension for every soldier and sailor who was mustered into the service of the United States during the civil war, and is now suffering from wounds or disease having an origin in the service and in the line of duty. Two of the three necessary facts, viz., muster and disability are usually susceptible of easy proof, but the third, origin in the service, is often difficult, and in many deserving cases impossible to establish. That very many of those who endured the hardships of our most bloody and arduous campaigns, are now disabled from diseases that had a real though not traceable origin in service, we do not doubt. Besides these are another class composed of men, many of whom served an enlistment of the full three years, and of re-enlisted veterans who added a fourth year of service, who escaped the casualties of battles and the assaults of disease, who were always ready for any detail; who were in the very battle line of their command, and were mustered out in sound health, and have, since the close of the war, while fighting with the same indomitable and independent spirit, in the contests of civil life been overcome by disease or casualty.

I am not unaware that the pension roll already involves a very large annual expenditure; neither am I deterred by that fact from recommending that Congress grant pensions to such honorably discharged sailors and soldiers, of service during the war, as are now dependent on their own labor for maintenance and by diseases or inability are incapacitated for earning it. Many of

them who would be included in this form of relief are now dependent upon public aid, and it does not, in my judgment, comport with national honor that they shall continue to subsist upon the local relief indiscriminately given to paupers, instead of upon the special and generous provision of the nation they served so gallantly and unselfishly. Our people, I am sure, will very generally approve such legislation, and I am equally sure that the survivors of the army and navy will feel a grateful sense of relief when this worthy and suffering class of their comrades are faithfully cared for. There are defects in the existing law that should be remedied. To some of these the Secretary of the Interior has called attention.

It is gratifying to be able to state that by the adoption of new and better methods in the war department, the calls of the pension office for information as to the military and hospital records of claimants are now promptly answered, and the injurious and vexatious delays that heretofore occurred are entirely avoided. This will greatly facilitate the adjustment of all pending claims.

THE NEW STATES.

The advent of four new States, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana and Washington, into the Union under the Constitution, in the same month, and the admission of their duly chosen representatives to our National Congress, at the same session, is an event as unexampled as interesting. The certification of the votes cast, and the constitutions adopted in each of these states was received by me as required in the 8th section of the act of February 22, 1889; the Governors of said Territories respectively having after a careful examination found that the several constitutions and governments were republican in form and not repugnant to the constitution of the United States, that all provisions of the act of Congress had been complied with, and that a majority of the votes cast in each of the said proposed states was in favor of adopting the Constitution, I did so declare by a separate proclamation as to each; as to North Dakota and South Dakota, on Saturday, November 2; as to Montana, on Friday, November 8, and as to Washington, on Monday, November 11.

Each of these States has within its resources, the development of which will employ the energies and yield comfortable sustenance to a great population. Of these new States the smallest—Washington—stands twelfth and the largest—Montana—third, among forty-two in area.

The people of these States are already well trained, intelligent and patriotic American citizens, having common interests and sympathies with the older states, and a common purpose to defend the integrity, and uphold the honor of the nation.

THE INTER-STATE COMMISSION.

The attention of the inter state commission has been called to the urgent need of congressional legislation for the better protection of the lives and limbs of those engaged

in operating the great freight lines of the country and especially yardmen and brakemen. A petition signed by nearly 100,000 railway brakemen, was presented to this commission asking that steps be taken to bring about the use of automatic brakes and couplers on all freight cars.

At a meeting of State railroad commissioners and their accredited representatives, held at Washington in March last, upon the invitation of the Inter-state Commerce Commission, a resolution was unanimously adopted urging the commission to consider what can be done to prevent the loss of life and limb in coupling and uncoupling freight cars and in handling the brakes of switch cars.

During the year ending June 30, 1888, over 2000 railroad employees were killed in service and more than 20,000 injured. It is competent, I think, for Congress to require a uniformity in the construction of the cars used in inter-State commerce, and the use of safety appliances on such trains. Time will be necessary to make the needed changes, but an intelligent and earnest beginning should be made at once. It is a reproach to our civilization that any class of our workmen should, in the pursuit of a necessary and useful vocation, be subjected to peril of life and limb as great as that of soldiers in time of war.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

The creation of an executive department to be known as the department of agriculture, by the act of February 9 last, was a wise and timely response to a request which had long been respectfully urged by the farmers of the country, but much remains to be done to perfect the organization of the department so it will fairly meet the expectations which existed. In this connection, attention is called to the suggestions contained in the report of the Secretary, which is herewith submitted. The need of a law office for the Department such as is provided for the other executive departments is manifest. The failure of the last Congress to make the usual provision for the publication of annual reports should be prominently remedied. The public interest in the report and its value to the farming community, I am sure, will not be diminished under the new organization of the department.

I recommend that the weather service be separated from the war department and established as a bureau in the Department of Agriculture. This will involve an entire reorganization, both of the weather bureau and the signal corps making of the first a purely civil organization, and of the other purely military staff corps. The report of the chief signal officer shows that the work of the corps, on its military side, has been deteriorating.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

The interest of the people of the District of Columbia should not be lost sight of in the pressure for consideration of the measures affecting the whole country. Having no legislature of its own, either