Essex County Herald.

O. B. BOYCE, Editor. DEVOTED TO LOCAL, POLITICAL AND GENERAL NEWS, AND THE INTERESTS OF ESSEX COUNTY. Terms: $1.50 per Annum, in Advance.

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tending over 14,866 miles of railroad routes and performing an aggregate service of 34,925 miles daily.

The number of letters exchanged with foreign countries was 27,459,185, an increase of 3,096,685 over the previous year, and the postage thereon amounted to $2,021,310.86. The total weight of correspondence exchanged in the mails with European countries exceeded 912 tons, an increase of 92 tons over the previous year. The total cost of the United States Ocean Mail Steamship Service, including $725,000 paid from special appropriations to subsidized lines of mail steamers was $1,047,271.35.

New or additional postal conventions have been concluded with Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Germany, Canada, Newfoundland and Japan, reducing postage rates on correspondence exchanged with those countries, and further efforts have been made to conclude a satisfactory postal convention with France, but without success.

I invite the favorable consideration of Congress to the suggestions and recommendations of the Postmaster General for an extension of the free delivery system in all cities having a population of not less than 10,000; for the repayment of postage on newspapers and other printed matter of the second class; for a uniform postage and limit of weight on miscellaneous matter; for adjusting the compensation of all postmasters not appointed by the President by the old method of commissions on the actual receipts of the office, instead of the present mode of fixing the salary in advance upon special returns; and especially do I urge favorable action by Congress on the important recommendations of the Postmaster-General for the establishment of United States postal savings depositories.

Your attention is also again called to a consideration of the question of postal telegraphs, and the arguments adduced in support thereof, in the hope that you may take such action in connection therewith as in your judgment will most contribute to the best interests of the country.

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

Affairs in Utah require your early and special attention. The Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of Clinton against Englebrecht, decided that the United States Marshal of that territory could not lawfully summon jurors for the district courts, and these courts hold that the territorial marshal cannot lawfully perform that duty because he is elected by the legislative assembly and not appointed, as provided for in the act organizing the territory. All proceedings at law are practically abolished by these decisions, and there have been but few or no jury trials in the district courts of that territory since the last session of Congress. Property is left without protection by the courts, and crimes go unpunished.

To prevent anarchy there it is absolutely necessary that Congress provide the courts with some mode of obtaining jurors, and I recommend legislation to that end; and also, that the probate courts of the territory now assuming to issue writs of injunction and habeas corpus, and to try criminal cases, and in questions as to land titles, be denied all jurisdiction not possessed ordinarily by courts of that description.

THE BANKRUPTCY LAW.

I have become impressed with the belief that the act approved March 2, 1867, entitled "An act to establish a uniform system of bankruptcy throughout the United States," is productive of more evil than good at this time. Many considerations might be urged for its total repeal; but, if this is not considered advisable, I think it will not be seriously questioned that those portions of said act, providing for what is called involuntary bankruptcy, operate to increase the financial embarrassments of the country. Careful and prudent men very often become involved in debt in the transaction of their business, and though they may possess ample property, if it could be made available for that purpose, to meet all their liabilities, yet, on account of the extraordinary scarcity of money, they may be unable to meet all their pecuniary obligations as they become due, in consequence of which they are liable to be prostrated in their business by proceedings in bankruptcy at the instance of unrelenting creditors. People are now so easily alarmed as to monetary matters that the mere filing of a petition in bankruptcy by an unfriendly creditor will necessarily embarrass and oftentimes accomplish the financial ruin of a responsible business man. Those who otherwise might make lawful and just arrangements to relieve themselves from difficulties produced by the present stringency in money are prevented by their constant exposure to attack and disappointment by proceedings against them in bankruptcy; and, besides, the law is made use of in many cases by obdurate creditors to frighten or force debtors into a compliance with their wishes, and into acts of injustice to other creditors and to themselves.

I recommend that so much of said act as provides for involuntary bankruptcy on account of the suspension of payment, be repealed.

CLAIMS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT.

Your careful attention is invited to the subject of claims against the government and the facilities afforded by existing laws for their prosecution. Each of the Departments of State, Treasury and War has demands for many millions of dollars upon its files, and they are rapidly accumulating. To these may be added those now pending before Congress, the Court of Claims and the Southern Claims Commission, making in the aggregate an immense sum. Most of these grew out of the Rebellion, and are intended to indemnify persons on both sides for their losses during the war, and not a few of them are fabricated and supported by false testimony. Projects are on foot, it is believed, to induce Congress to provide for new classes of claims and to revive old ones through the repeal or modification of the statute of limitations by which they are now barred. I presume these schemes, if proposed, will be received with little favor by Congress, and I recommend that persons having claims against the United States, cognizable by any tribunal or department thereof, be required to present them at an early day, and that legislation be directed as far as practicable to the defeat of unfounded and unjust demands upon the government.

And I would suggest as a means of preventing fraud that witnesses be called upon to appear in person to testify before those tribunals having said claims before them for adjudication. Probably the largest saving to the National Treasury can be secured by timely legislation on these subjects of any of the economic measures that will be proposed.

You will be advised of the operations of the Department of Justice by the report of the Attorney-General, and I invite your attention to the amendment of existing laws suggested by him with the view of reducing the expenses of that department.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

The policy inaugurated towards the Indians at the beginning of the last administration has been steadily pushed, and I believe with beneficial results. It will be continued with only such modifications as time and experience may demonstrate as necessary.

With the encroachment of civilization upon the Indian reservations and hunting grounds disturbances have taken place between the Indians and whites during the past year, and probably will continue to do so until each race appreciates that the other has rights which must be respected. The policy has been to collect the Indians as rapidly as possible on reservations, and as far as practicable within what is known as the Indian Territory, and to teach them the arts of civilization and self-support. Where found off their reservations and endangering the peace and safety of the whites, they have been punished and will continue to be for like offences. The Indian Territory south of Kansas and west of Arkansas is sufficient in area and agricultural resources to support all the Indians of the Rocky Mountains. In time, no doubt, all of them, except a few who may select to make their homes among white people, will be collected there as a preparatory step for this consummation.

I am now satisfied that a territorial form of government should be given them, which will secure the treaty rights of the original settlers, and protect their homesteads from alienation for a period of twenty years.

The operations of the Patent Office are growing to such magnitude, and the accumulation of material is becoming so great that the necessity for more room is becoming more obvious day by day.

THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT.

I respectfully invite your attention to the reports of the Secretary of the Interior and Commissioner of Patents on this subject. The business of the general land offices exhibits a material increase in all its branches during the last fiscal year. During that time there were disposed of out of the public lands 13,030,606 acres, being an amount greater by 1,165,631 acres than was disposed of the preceding year. Of the amount disposed of 1,626,266 acres were sold for cash, 214,940 acres were located with military land warrants, 3,793,612 acres were taken for homesteads, 653,446 are were located with agricultural college scrip, 6,083,536 acres were certified by railroads, 76,576 acres were granted to wagon roads, 238,548 acres were approved to states as swamp lands, 138,681 acres were certified for agricultural colleges, common schools, universities and seminaries; 190,775 acres were approved to states for internal improvements, and 14,222 acres were located with Indian scrip.

The cash receipts during the same time were $3,408,515.50, being $190,415.50 in excess of the receipts of the previous year. During the year 30,488,132 acres of public land were surveyed, an increase over the amount surveyed the previous year of 1,037,193 acres, and added to the area previously surveyed, aggregates 616,554,895 acres which have been surveyed, leaving 1,218,443,500 acres of the public land still unsurveyed.

The increased and steadily increasing facilities for reaching our unoccupied public domain, and for the transportation of surplus products, enlarges the available field for desirable homestead locations, thus stimulating settlement and extending, year by year, in a gradually increasing ratio, the area of occupation and cultivation.

The expressed desire of the representatives of a large colony of citizens of Russia to emigrate to this country, as it is understood, with the consent of their government, if certain concessions can be made to enable them to settle in a compact colony, is of great interest, as going to show the light in which our institutions are regarded by an industrious, intelligent and wealthy people desirous of enjoying civil and religious liberty, and the acquisition of so large an immigration of citizens of a superior class would without doubt be of substantial benefit to the country. I invite attention to the suggestion of the Secretary of the Interior in this behalf.

There was paid during the last fiscal year for pensions, including the expenses of disbursement, $29,185,289.62, being an amount less by $984,050.98 than was expended for the same purpose the preceding year. Although this statement of expenditures would indicate a material reduction in the amount compared with the preceding year, it is believed that the changes in the pension laws at the last session of Congress will absorb that amount the current year. At the close of the last fiscal year there were on the pension rolls 99,804 invalid military pensioners and 112,088 widows, orphans, and dependent parents of deceased soldiers, making a total of that class of 211,892; 18,266 survivors of the War of 1812, and 5,053 widows of soldiers of that war pensioned under the Act of Congress of February 14th, 1871, making a total of that class of 23,319; 1,430 invalid navy pensioners and 1,770 widows, orphans, and dependent relatives of deceased officers, sailors, and marines of the navy, making a total of navy pensioners of 3,200, and a grand total of pensioners of all classes of 238,411—showing a net increase during the last fiscal year of 6,182.

During the past year the names of 16,405 pensioners were added to the rolls, and 10,223 names were dropped therefrom for various causes.

The system adopted for the detection of frauds against the government in the matter of pensions has been productive of satisfactory results, but legislation is needed to provide, if possible, against the perpetrating of such frauds in the future.

The evidently increasing interest in the cause of education is a most encouraging feature in the general progress and prosperity of the country, and the Bureau of Education is earnest in its efforts to give a proper direction to the new applicants and the increased facilities which are being offered to aid the educators of the country in their great work.

The ninth census has been completed, and the report thereof published and distributed and the working force of the bureau disbanded. The Secretary of the Interior renews his recommendation for a census to be taken in 1875, to which subject the attention of Congress is invited. The original suggestion in that behalf has met with the general approval of the country; and even if it be not deemed advisable at present to provide for a regular quinquennial census, a census taken in 1875, the report of which could be completed and published before the one hundreth anniversary of our independence, would be especially interesting and valuable as showing the progress of the country during the first century of our national existence. It is believed, however, that a census every five years would be of substantial benefit to the country, inasmuch as our growth hitherto has been so rapid that the results of the decennial census are necessarily unreliable as a basis of estimates for the latter years of a decennial period.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Under the very efficient management of the governor and the Board of Public Works of this district, the city of Washington is rapidly assuming the appearance of a capital of which the nation may well be proud. From being a most unsightly place three years ago, disagreeable to pass through in summer, in consequence of the dust rising from unpaved streets and almost impassible in the winter from the mud, it is now one of the most sightly cities in the country, and can boast of being the best paved. The work has been done systematically; the plans, grades, location of sewers, water and gas mains being determined upon before the work was commenced, thus securing permanency when completed. I question whether so much has ever been accomplished before in any American city for the same expenditures.

The government having large reservations in the city, and the nation at large having an interest in their Capital, I recommend a liberal policy towards the District of Columbia, and that the government should bear its just share of the expenses of these improvements.

Every citizen visiting the Capital feels a pride in its growing beauty, and that he, too, is part owner in the investments made here.

I would suggest to Congress the propriety of promoting the establishment in this district of an institution of learning, or university of the highest class, by the donation of lands. There is no place better suited for such an institution than the National Capital. There is no other place in which every citizen is so directly interested.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

In three successive messages to Congress I have called attention to the subject of Civil Service reform. Action has been taken so far as to authorize the appointment of a board to devise rules governing methods of making appointments and promotions, but there never has been any action making these rules or any rules binding, or ever entitled to observance, where persons desire the appointment of a friend or the removal of an official who may be disagreeable to them.

To have any rules effective they must have the acquiescence of Congress as well as of the Executive. I recommend, therefore, the subject to your attention, and suggest that a special committee of Congress might confer with the Civil Service Board, during the present session, for the purpose of devising such rules as can be maintained, and which will secure the service of honest and capable officials, and which will also protect them in a degree of independence while in office.

Proper rules will protect Congress as well as the Executive from much needless persecution, and will prove of great value to the public at large.

COLORADO.

I would recommend for your favorable consideration the passage of an enabling act for the admittance of Colorado as a State in the Union. It possesses all the elements of a prosperous State, agricultural and mineral, and I believe has a population to justify such admission.

A WESTERN CANAL.

In connection with that, I would also recommend the encouragement of a canal, for purposes of irrigation, from the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains to the Missouri River. As a rule, I am opposed to further donations of public lands for internal improvements owned and controlled by private corporations, but in this instance I would make an exception.

Between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains there is an arid belt of public land from three hundred to four hundred miles in width, perfectly useless for the occupation of man, for want of sufficient rain to secure the growth of any products.

An irrigating canal would make productive a belt as wide as the supply of water could be made to spread over across the entire country, and would secure a cordon of settlements connecting the present population of the mountain and mining regions with that of the older states.

All the land reclaimed would be clear gain. If alternate sections are retained by the government I would suggest that the retained sections be thrown open to entry under the homestead laws, or sold to actual settlers for a very low price.

GENERAL AMNESTY.

I renew my previous recommendation to Congress for general amnesty. The number engaged in the late rebellion yet laboring under disabilities is very small, but enough to keep up a constant irritation. No possible danger can accrue to the government by restoring them to eligibility to hold office.

CIVIL RIGHTS.

I suggest for your consideration the enactment of a law to better secure the civil rights which freedom should secure, but has not effectually secured, to the enfranchised slave.

Signed, U. S. GRANT.

Executive Mansion, December 1, 1873.

A Chicago bachelor has recovered $4,500 from a railroad company for ejecting him from the ladies' car. He can afford to get married now.

United States Navy.

The Secretary of the Navy, in his report to the President, says there are now in the navy 165 vessels, carrying, exclusive of howitzers, 1,269 guns, which is a reduction since his last annual report, by sale and otherwise, of 13 vessels. A general enumeration of these vessels presents 63 steamers, other than ironclads and tugs, carrying 826 guns; 29 sailing vessels, 322 guns; 48 iron-clad vessels, 121 guns, and 25 tugs, used for navy yard and freight purposes. Of this number there are at present in commission for sea service, distributed on the several foreign stations and on our own coast, 45 vessels, carrying 407 guns.

THE CRUISING OR ACTIVE FORCE

of the navy, as they may be called, and which is controlled by the appropriation made and the seaman authorized by law, is about the same as last year, the places of those vessels which have been put out of commission within the past twelve months from the expiration of the cruises or for other causes having been supplied by commissioning and sending to sea a corresponding number of others. The list will show a force slightly decreased in number by the sale of some useless vessels, which were, while we retained them, only a source of expense, and it is somewhat weakened also in strength by the condemnation and laying up of several of our white oak cruisers which have reached the limit of their cruising life and can be no longer used with safety on the seas. Many of the ships now on the navy list, and which serve to swell the number to the figures above given, are far from being such as are really needed, and their true condition, which has been often officially represented to Congress, can be fully understood and appreciated by reference to the reports of the bureaus.

LIVE OAK CRUISING SHIPS.

In the meanwhile, however, we have been engaged in completely repairing six of our live oak cruising ships, which are now in various stages of forwardness at the several navy yards. These are all of moderate size, and none of them sufficiently advanced to be of present use; but they are adapted to the wants of our cruising navy, and will in a few months add materially to its strength and efficiency.

THE EIGHT SLOOPS

of war authorized by the last Congress are all in process of building—one-half at the various navy yards, three under contract in private yards, and the remaining one under private contract in the navy yard at Kittery. The building of these ships, with their engines and machinery, is progressing rapidly, and the work, widely distributed at more than a dozen naval stations and private establishments, is contributing to the remunerative employment of several thousands of workmen and to the maintenance of the very large number of persons dependent upon their labor for support and education. It is not without gratification the Secretary is able to report that, besides the great value and importance of this work to the service, we have also been able so to utilize the liberality of Congress as to contribute materially to the business interests of the country and to the support and comforts of many producing and dependent people. The valuable work thus begun should not be discontinued, but the department should be provided with a moderate amount of funds and authorized to commence each year to build a certain number of tons to supply regularly the regular yearly expenditure of naval force which will of necessity occur.

The work of putting

OUR IRON-CLAD FORCE

in efficient condition, referred to in the Secretary's last report, has been proceeded with as fast as the means necessary for the extraordinary work could be spared from the current appropriations for the support of the navy. The wisdom of this action needs no illustration from him at this time. Without it we would have been left not only powerless to assert our own rights, but almost defenceless against arrogance or aggression. But the expenditure required has crippled our working bureaus in their general work, and it is necessary that this should be reimbursed to them if they are to proceed steadily and efficiently.

THE STATIONS

have been unchanged during the year. As now established, they are designated as:—The European, the Asiatic, the North Atlantic, the South Atlantic, the North Pacific and the South Pacific. Over these, embracing the frequented waters of the globe, are scattered in cruising force of less than forty vessels which, by their presence, are relied on to encourage our citizens and, if required, to protect them and their property in all lands to which, by their inclination or interest, they are drawn.

The Secretary gives an account of the several stations.

THE NAVY YARDS.

The Secretary says of the Navy Yards:—I beg to renew the recommendations made in my annual reports of former years in reference to our navy yards, and to urge that their resources may be increased and developed to meet the emergencies of these wars to which even the most peace-loving nations are liable, and which are best averted by a readiness for action should they be thrust upon us. At the most of our navy yards little could be done during the past year beyond making the repairs to keep them from falling to decay.

AT MARE ISLAND,

our only naval establishment on the Pacific, the new dry dock and the iron working shop for construction are well in hand and will add largely to its resources. We have great naval interests on the Pacific, and I cannot too strongly express the hope that Congress may strengthen them by liberal appropriations to develop this admirably placed arsenal.

ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR.

The estimates for the next fiscal year are $19,252,235, and to this is added the sum of $864,589 for current repairs of buildings, docks, and incidental expenses in the navy yards, &c. These estimates are less than those of last year by rather more than $2,000,000, but they do not include any extraordinary expenditure for the permanent improvement of the navy nor the amounts necessary either for the repair of our iron-clad fleet nor for the continued prosecution of some of the great works necessary to the proper condition of our naval establishments.

THE VIRGINIUS DIFFICULTY.

I have felt it to be my duty, under the existing circumstances, to take promptly every means in my power to put our available force in the best possible condition for immediate and active service. All the power and means of the department are now devoted to this end, greatly aided already by the enthusiastic activity of the officers in every grade of the service. Difficult of accomplishment as our purpose at first seemed, difficulties, and even apparent impossibilities, are found to fade away before determination and organized activity, and the navy is already in such a condition that those to whom our interests and honor are entrusted may be relieved from the embarrassments of a situation where just determination might be thwarted by the humiliating consciousness of inability. It is neither necessary nor proper that I should enter here into details of our preparations. Suffice it to say that a respectable force of war vessels and monitors is already on the sea and concentrating at the station nearest the scene of our possible difficulties; that our whole available iron-clad fleet is in hand, and every war vessel that will float in active preparation at the various naval stations. These will be ready for sea, fully fitted, as fast as proper crews can be provided for them, and if the country requires, they will be followed by others as fast as they can be built. If the time for it arrives, all there is of the American Navy which can be put afloat on the Atlantic Ocean will be in a condition and position to take its proper part. Inadequate as this force may be deemed to the responsibilities and pretentions of a government like ours, and greatly at disadvantage, as we may be held to be, in respect to the number and character of our vessels in a contest with the fleets of any respectable naval power, I believe that the activity, skill, science and experience of our navy will be found equal to any difficulty which a courage or skill can meet or overcome. They will be found, as they are thoroughly imbued with the spirit, educated in the customs and experienced in the like duties of their profession, skilled in the use of all the terrible weapons of modern warfare, and of a mind to meet any crisis without shrinking from danger. Thus prepared and in this spirit, they are

READY TO MEET ANY OF THEIR COUNTRY'S ADVERSARIES

with the means with which their country provides them. In taking the action above referred to, the Navy Department has been forced to assume considerable expense, and has been forced to assume some responsibilities unusual in time of peace, but, convinced of the wisdom of prompt and decided action, I have not shrunk from these responsibilities, and have felt that in the approval of the President, to make warlike preparations in the interests of peace and humanity. I confidently rely for the support and sanction of this institution upon the good sense of the American people and their representatives, who must recognize and remember that our naval condition is the result of causes which have been constantly pressed upon their attention, and which have failed to receive full attention, doubtless on account of more pressing present requirements and obligations, and who will clearly realize that duties constantly postponed are certain to be more difficult and much more expensive when performed in haste, under the pressure of imperious necessity. The department has had

NO NECESSITY TO OVERSTEP ITS APPROPRIATIONS,

even if it were lawful to do so; but the pressing demands of the present will consume now what was provided for the service of the year in several of the working bureaus. These must be promptly relieved, if their work is to go on. The occasion has clearly shown, I think, that our navy as it exists should at least be put in a condition for active service, and, in any event, a moderate appropriation for this purpose ought at once to be made, and if war should by any possibility come, we must be liberally provided to utilize the means we have and to provide others to meet the emergency.

THE POLARIS.

The Secretary, in speaking of the Polaris, says her cruise has been decidedly the most successful of Arctic expeditions. The geographical knowledge of the Arctic regions has been largely advanced. A very particular questioning of every one of the officers and crew of the Polaris and of the scientific corps, except the three persons as yet unexamined, has completely satisfied his associates and himself that Capt. Hall's death occurred from purely natural causes; that his medical treatment was judiciously adapted to his case, and that he was tenderly nursed and cared for to the last. The evidence has also made it manifest that Capt. Hall was always faithful to the trust reposed in him in assigning him the command of the expedition; that he was kind, firm, and humane in the exercise of his authority; that he was earnest in his desire and in his attempts to reach a high northern latitude, and, if practicable, the Pole itself, and that his untimely death was an irreparable loss to the expedition. It is also apparent that Capt. Buddington, who succeeded to the chief command on the death of Capt. Hall, proved himself to be a good seaman, and that in all dangerous positions in which the Polaris was placed his conduct as her commander was skillful and judicious, the natural result of long experience at sea and in command in north-ern latitudes. The department takes occasion to express its indebtedness to the officials of the Danish Government in Greenland for their uniform courtesy to the officers of the United States Navy connected with the recent expeditions to the Polar seas, and for the facilities extended to those expeditions to promote their success.

INTEROCEANIC CANAL.

The expeditions organized under the authority of Congress for the survey of the Darien and Nicaragua routes, with the view to the construction of an interoceanic canal, have completed the duties intrusted to them.

DARIEN SURVEY.—The favorable report of Commander Selfridge of the survey of the Isthmus of Darien, in 1871, rendered it desirable to explore more thoroughly the summit of the Nappi, and to definitely settle now far the surveys to the south could be profitably carried on in the valley of Atrato. Commander Selfridge was accordingly ordered to organize another expedition, which arrived in Panama in January last. The Tuscarora, Commander Belknap, of the Pacific fleet, was ordered to cooperate with it, and form a base for the desired surveys. It is very gratifying that the expedition has been so successful as to materially improve upon the route already discovered and surveyed, and has marked out a line for this great enterprise that can be constructed within the limit of an expenditure more moderate than could have been expected, when compared with the immensity of the undertaking, and the great benefits that cannot fail, upon its completion, to occur to our commercial interests.

Briefly stated, the route selected by Commander Selfridge, includes 100 miles of river navigation of the Atrato, which has been carefully sounded, and found to be fully capable of being navigated by the largest class of ocean steamers. Between Atrato and the Pacific a canal of artificial construction is 28 miles in length. The canal for 22 miles of this distance passes through a plain, with a gradual rise of 99 feet. This will then remain six miles to the Pacific, of which there are a moderate open cut and three miles of tunneling. It is estimated that the whole will cost between $50,000,000 and $60,000,000, and that it can be completed within ten years. A careful survey and soundings of the Atrato resulted in the fact that, though capable of navigation for steamboats, even in its lowest stage, to Quibdo, the head of ship-navigation was reached but a short distance above the line selected for the canal. Surveys of the interior settled the fact that it would not be profitable to explore south of the Nappi; but only because the westerly trend of the coast made the area that would have to be canalized broader in extent, but also that it was traversed by numerous streams, forming the water-shed of mountainous ridges that would have to be cut transversely. Moreover, the Cordilleras, which present a marked depression near the headwaters of the Nappi, increase rapidly in altitude as you proceed south. The health of the expedition has been as satisfactory as the preceding ones. These surveys, which include the whole Isthmus of Darien have not resulted in the loss of a single life through climatic causes. Much of this immunity from disease in a sickly climate and an arduous duty, is due to the provident care and well-laid plans of the officers in command.

NICARAGUA SURVEY.—The Nicaragua surveying expedition, in charge of Commander E. P. Lull, sailed from the United States in December, 1872, and returned in July last. The result of its labors prove the existence of a practicable route for an interoceanic ship-canal, having Lake Nicaragua at its summit level. It is proposed to connect the lake with the Pacific by a canal 16.33 miles in length, beginning at the mouth of the Rio del Medio, and terminating at Brito. The first 7.50 miles will require an excavation averaging 54 feet in depth, and will be the most expensive part of the whole work. The profile for the rest of the distance is lower than the proposed level of the surface of the water; embankments will be built up with the material excavated. Ten locks and one tide-lock will be required between the lake and the sea. There will be 56 miles of lake navigation; 26 feet of water can be carried within 1,350 feet of the mouth of the Rio de Medio. On the east side a channel will have to be deepened, from six to eight feet for nine miles. The bottom is a firm mud without a single rock.

Slack-water navigation in the San Juan, from its head to the mouth of the San Carlos, is considered perfectly feasible; and it is proposed to improve the river by four dams, one each at Castillo Rapids, Balas Rapos, Machuca Rapids, and at the mouth of the San Carlos, at all of which places excellent locations for dams exist. A short section of canal with one lock will be required to get around each of the upper three dams. From just above the fourth dam to Greytown an independent canal will be required 41 miles in length, of which 36 miles will require an excavation less than the prism of the canal; the remaining four miles are made up of short reaches, where the line cuts through hills. Seven locks, besides those at the dams, will be necessary; these should be located in the hills in order to take advantage of the natural rock foundation. Some improvement will be required to be done in the river-bed, for which the amount has been computed and the cost estimated.

The total length of the proposed canal is 61.74 miles, of which 47.37 miles are in excavation and embankment. The average depth of excavation throughout is but nine feet above the prism of the canal. No tunnel is required. The harbor of Greytown has been partially destroyed by a shift of the currents, through the fork of the San Juan, and the branch of the river leading to Greytown has become so much filled up that it is now, at the lowest stage of the water, but 324 feet wide and six inches deep at the fork. It is proposed to shut off the branch entirely and send all the salt-bearing water through the Colorado mouth, which empties into the sea 18 miles from Greytown, and to admit to the harbor only the water of the canal, which being drawn from the main river above the mouth of the San Carlos will be perfectly clean. The harbor then once cleared out will have no tendency to deteriorate it again. A short breakwater will be required to protect the entrance from the surf, also one at Brito, both of which are included in the estimate for the work. Careful gauges at the lowest stage show that Lake Nicaragua will supply 58 times the maximum possible demand of water. The climate is considered perfectly healthy for temperate people who adopt the simplest sanitary precautions. Part proof of this is the expeditions lately operating in the country, though constantly subjected to severe labor and exposure.

There are many excellent reasons for not sleeping in church. Here is a new one: In North Adams a somnolent young gentleman upon awakening found his false teeth lying upon his bosom, with many heartless neighbors enjoying the spectacle.

"Jury," said a Western judge, "You kin go and find a verdict. If you can't find one of your own, get the one the las jury used." The jury returned a verdict of suicide in the ninth degree.

War Department.

THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

The annual report of the Secretary of War shows that the estimates for military purposes for the year ending June 30, 1874, were $33,826,378.78. The estimates for the same purpose for the year ending June 30, 1875, are $34,440,722.89, the excess of the next year over the current one being $584,344.11. The appropriation for military purposes for the year ending June 30, 1874, was $32,917,971.37. Congress is asked to appropriate $22,000,000 for building and arming forts. He suggests that some action be taken toward the passage of a positive law to punish recruits who have deceived recruiting officers by falsely swearing to their age or physical condition, and says: "In my judgment he should be immediately turned over to a proper tribunal, and the United States law officer in whose district a recruit may have committed an offense, should be required to prosecute him for the false oath he has taken, and for the great expense he has given the Government."

The head of the Executive Department, on March 15, 1873, caused an order to be issued directing that no army officer, either active or retired, shall, directly or indirectly, without being called upon by proper authority, solicit, suggest, or recommend action by members of Congress, for or against military affairs.

Fifty railroads at the close of the war, under Executive orders, purchased from this department railroad material to the appraised value of over $7,500,000, thirty of them having paid their debts in full. The remaining twenty are still in our debt to the amount of $4,658,924.07. The total amount collected from these sales, with interest and expenses, has thus far been $5,116,605.63.

In regard to headstones for soldiers' graves in the national cemeteries, he states that contracts have been awarded. Particular care has been taken to have these headstones permanent when once erected. The entire cost of these slabs and blocks, under the contract as awarded, should they be entered into by the successful bidders, will amount to $770,045.48.

SEA-COAST DEFENSES.

I feel great hesitation in recommending increased appropriation at this time, but I deem it my duty to say that the armament of our sea-coast defenses, which involves the question of the defense of our principal sea-board cities from attack, in case of war with a naval power, is a subject demanding the earnest attention of Congress. The principal cities on our coast are in a very defenseless state, and the tedious and costly work of preparation cannot be commenced on the breaking out of a war with the hope of accomplishing any adequate result. The work must be done in time of peace, without waiting for an imperium period in search after perfection in gun-construction. The importance of this subject increases with the earnest and continued efforts on the part of all nations to supply their forts with the most improved armament, and should war find this country without proper defense against iron-clads and their great guns, the responsibility cannot rest on this Department, as the importance of the subject has been brought to the attention of Congress. An appropriation of $1,449,532 is estimated for by the Chief of Ordnance for the next fiscal year for the purchase of smooth-bore guns and for carriages, which sum will provide for one-sixth, only, of the guns and carriages that will be required for fortifications which will be ready by the 30th of June, 1874. This amount is not embraced in the regular estimates of appropriations for the army, as heretofore alluded to, but it is a subject of great importance, and the question of these appropriations is respectfully submitted.

TORPEDOES.

With the small appropriations granted for trials with torpedoes, the investigations upon this subject have been continued, to the benefit of our system of submarine mines. This accessory for the defense of our harbor in recent years has developed into one of great importance among the maritime powers, and to investigate the recent electrical methods and systems of torpedoes, as well as to procure certain materials, two officers of engineers were sent during the summer to Europe. The results of their mission are the collection of valuable information on this subject, and a saving of expenditure to the Government.

RIVER AND HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS.

The river and harbor improvements mentioned in my last annual report have been continued, and the works and surveys connected therewith have been carried on during the past year with vigor. Detailed information in regard to each specific improvement, and the results of surveys directed to be made by the River and Harbor Appropriation acts, may be found in the report of the Chief of Engineers.

The improvement of our rivers and harbors consists chiefly in giving increased width and depth to existing channel-ways and basins, and protecting them, or increasing new channels and basins and giving them protective works. The operations to this end comprise the removal of obstructions of various kinds, such as rock in place and bowlders, bars of clay, sand, gravel, and mud, logs, snags, and other alluvial matter; of rafts, often extending from the surface of the river nearly to the bottom, formed by masses of drifting trees, or the accumulation of slabs, edgings, and sawdust; of timber and other constructions placed in channel-ways to obstruct or close them; the construction of dikes, dams, wing-dams, and revetments, and the building of canals, breakwaters, and piers, all tending to promote the general interests of commerce and navigation, by furnishing increased facilities of communication and giving greater security to trade.

The river and harbor improvements, mentioned in the last annual report, have been continued, and the works and surveys connected therewith have been carried on during the past year with vigor.

A board of experienced officers, of which Gen. A. H. Terry was President, was convened in September, 1872, for the selection of a breech loading system for the muskets and carbines of the military service. After an exhaustive trial of all the systems presented, the board selected the Springfield breech-loading system as the one of all those brought before it, which is best calculated to meet the demands of our military service. The report of the board was approved, and the Springfield system of breech-loader will henceforth be used for muskets and carbines of the army. At the same time the calibre of all small arms for the service—rifles, carbines, and revolvers—has been fixed at 45-100 of an inch.

UNITED STATES ARMY.

Gen. Sherman, the head of the army, says in his report to the Secretary of War, that the aggregate showing is 25,535 enlisted men of cavalry, artillery, and infantry, and 3,970 non-combatants—the whole aggregating 29,505, or 495 less than the number (30,000) limited by law. In the active regiments the number of men sick and on the necessary details about any post will fully equal twenty five per cent; so that the actual strength for military service does not exceed 19,652 men. He recommends that Congress be asked to fix the limit of the enlisted force at such a figure as will give 30,000 enlisted men for the regiments of the line, and to provide specifically for the non-combatant detachments as an extra force, which will increase the actual number of enlisted men to about 45,000 men.

The number of regimental commissioned officers on duty or belonging to the several departments and divisions number 1,224; in the aggregate, 1,552; present for duty 1,224; absent on leave or detached, 298.

The foregoing does not include the thirty-one Second Lieutenants recently appointed from civil life, now under orders to join their regiments.

XLIIId. CONGRESS.

SENATE.

The Senate meets daily at 12 M.

Mr. Sumner introduced a bill to amend the Constitution so as to elect the President for six years, to abolish the electoral-college system, and to abolish the office of Vice-President. Also a bill to authorize the issue of compound interest notes as a substitute for legal tenders. Also, a bill to protect persons against inveigling from abroad or kidnapping, forcible restraint, or involuntary servitude.

Bills were introduced to repeal the bankrupt-cy act and to fix the date for the resumption of specie payments.

HOUSE.

Mr. Hale introduced a bill to repeal the increase of salary law.

Mr. Starkweather presented a petition for pensions to all the soldiers of the war of 1812.

EGG CAKE.—Two cups of sugar, one egg, a piece of butter the size of an egg, one cup of sour milk, one teaspoonful of soda, a little salt and nutmeg, one teaspoonful of lemon, three cups of flour; beat the white of an egg separately, the sugar and yolk and butter together; bake in a thoroughly heated oven.

The Currency Question.

The report of the Controller of the Currency has the following with reference to the panic of 1873:

The monetary crisis of 1873 may be said to have had its beginning in New York City on Sept. 8, by the failure of the Warehouse Security Company and of two houses which had lent their regular business to embark in enterprises foreign thereto, which were followed on the 13th by the failure of a number of leading stock broker firms in New York. The suspension of currency payments followed, and was at first confined to banks of New York City, but afterward extended to other large cities, because the New York banks could not respond to the demands of their correspondents in those cities, and these in turn could not respond to the demands of their correspondents. The exchange on New York, which would otherwise have commanded a slight premium, was at a discount, and to a considerable extent unavailable. The suspension of the banks in other leading cities almost without exception followed, and their partial or entire suspension continued for forty days, until confidence was in a measure restored by the resumption of the New York City banks on the first day of November.

The harvest was nearly or quite complete, and the bins and granaries were full to overflowing. The manufacturing and mining interests had also been prosperous during the year, and there was good promise that the fall trade, which had opened, would be as large as during previous years. The value of the cereals, potatoes, tobacco, and hay, for 1872, is estimated by the Department of Agriculture at $1,324,385,000. An estimate based upon the census returns of 1869 gives the probable aggregate value of marketable products of industry that year as $4,036,000,000, and a similar estimate upon the same basis and upon the returns to the Agricultural Department, gives an increase of $1,768,000,000 for 1873 over the amount for 1868.

The immediate cause of the crisis is apparent. The money market had become overloaded with debt, the cost of railroad construction for five years past being estimated to have been $1,700,000,000, or about $340,000,000 annually, while debt based upon almost every species of property, State, city, town, manufacturing corporations, and mining companies had been sold in the market. Such bonds and stock had been disposed of to a considerable extent in foreign markets, and as long as this continued, the sale of similar securities was stimulated, and additional amounts offered. When the sales of such securities could no longer be effected abroad, the bonds of railroads and other enterprises of like nature which were in process of construction, were thus forced upon the home market, until their negotiation became almost impossible. The bankers of the City of New York who were burdened with the load could not respond to the demands of their creditors. The numerous holders of similar securities became alarmed, and the panic soon extended throughout the country.

Many measures of reform are proposed in order that the lessons of the crisis may not be lost, and others be led hereafter to commit similar errors. Unity of action among the leading courts of the great cities will do more to reform abuses than any Congressional enactment, for unless such corporations shall unite and insist upon legitimate methods of conducting business, the laws of Congress in reference thereto will be likely soon to become inoperative, such enactments be observed in their true spirit by the few, while the many evade them and thus invite a repetition of similar disasters. If, however, the banks are disinclined to unite for such a purpose, the legislation required of Congress will be such as will induce associations outside of the City of New York to retain in their vaults such funds as are not needed at the commercial centre for purposes of legitimate business.

The Controller in his statement says that the whole amount of National Bank currency, legal tender notes and fractional currency in circulation up to October 13th was $756,315,135. November 1st the amount had increased to $759,161,239.

The Interior Department.

The Secretary of the Interior says: On the 31 of March last, an act was approved, entitled "An act to encourage the growth of timber on Western prairies, the first section of which provides:

That any person who shall plant, protect, and keep in healthy growing condition for ten years forty acres of timber, the trees thereon not being more than twelve feet apart each way, on any quarter section of any of the public lands of the United States, shall be entitled to a patent for the whole of the said quarter section, at the expiration of the said ten years, on making proof of such fact by not less than two credible witnesses; Provided, that only one quarter in any section shall be thus granted.

The Commissioner of the General Land Office, in preparing rules and regulations under the sixth section of the above act, in order to carry its provisions into effect, refused to permit more than one entry of a quarter section to be made by any one person. It is claimed on the other hand that this act permits any person to make entry of as many quarter sections as he sees fit. While it may be perfectly clear that the ruling of the Commissioner is according to the true legal interpretation of the act, it seems to me that it is in accord with the general purpose of Congress in disposing gratuitously of the public domain, and to allow a contrary interpretation would be to encourage the incumbrance of the public domain, by persons whose circumstances enable them to make the necessary expenditures, whereby the public lands would be withdrawn from the free and easy settlement now secured to persons of moderate means; and that, in this manner, considerable inconvenience and injustice to prospectors and homestead settlers would necessarily ensue. I have deemed it best, therefore, to sustain the construction put upon the act by the Commissioner of the General Land Office, and to invite the attention of Congress to the subject, so that, if deemed necessary, they may declare distinctly the right of any one individual to make as many locations as he sees fit under the aforesaid act.

THE PACIFIC RAILROAD.

The Secretary of the Interior publishes, as a part of his report to Congress, a statement of the Pacific railroads and their branches of the Union and Central Pacific railroads. He says that the stock subscribed to the former amounts to $36,783,600, and that this, within a fraction, has been paid. As to the latter, $62,608,000, of which $54,275,000 has been paid. The Union Pacific owes the government now in interest for it $27,336,512, and the Central, $27,855,680; in all, $55,192,192.

The Cunning Thrush.

There is much more intellect in birds than people suppose. An instance of this occurred the other day at a slate quarry belonging to a friend, from whom we have the narrative. A thrush, not aware of the expansive properties of gunpowder, thought proper to build her nest on a ridge of the quarry, in the very centre of which they were constantly blasting the rock. At first, she was very much discomposed by the fragments flying in all directions, but still she would not quit her chosen locality. She soon observed that a bell rang whenever a train was about to be fired, and that, at the notice, the workmen retired to safe positions. In a few days, when she heard the bell, she quitted her exposed situation, and flew down to where the workmen sheltered themselves—dropping close to their feet. There she would remain until the explosion had taken place, and then return to her nest. The workmen observed this, narrated it to their employers, and it was also told to visitors who came to view the quarry. The visitors naturally expressed a wish to witness so curious a specimen of intellect; but as the rock could not be always blasted when visitors came, the bell was rung instead, and for a few times answered the same purpose. The thrush flew down close to where they stood, but she perceived that she was trifled with, and it interfered with the process of incubation; the consequence was, that afterward, when the bell rung, she would peep over the ledge to ascertain if the workmen did retreat, and if they did not, she would remain where she was.

The Signal Service.

The whole number of stations from which regular meteoric reports are now received is 92, of which 78 are in the United States, 11 in Canada, and 3 in the West Indies. The regular telegraphic reports from Havana began on August 6, from Kingston, Jamaica, on Sept. 18, and from Santiago de Cuba on Sept. 29. Three other points in Porto Rico, Guadeloupe, and Barbados will be equipped as soon as observers can be designated. It is a matter of regret that there is no international arrangement with the authorities of any of those islands, nor is there at present any return of weather telegrams provided for or officially requested. Steps are in contemplation by which it is hoped the necessary arrangements will be effected. A plan has been adopted whereby a synopsis of the reports and the probabilities have been forwarded to many points in the interior not reached by telegraph, and this plan has given satisfaction to the farming and interior population. There are nineteen special river stations from which reports of the depths of water in the principal rivers of the United States are daily made by telegraph at particular seasons during which danger from freshet may be anticipated. River reports are also made from twenty of the regular stations. These data are widely published and distributed along the line of the rivers, and contribute to the convenience and safety of the river commerce by the constant and accurate knowledge given of the depth of water in the channels. The benefits resulting from these reports now in the second year of their issue, have been fully acknowledged by the various interests they have advanced. The total number of special river bulletins issued have been 23,210. Eight thousand nine hundred and eighty-two printed copies of the weather report are displayed daily. The ascertained comparative accuracy of deductions from reports styled "probabilities" has been more clearly presented in this than in preceding years. The percentage of verification has been mathematically computed for each of the geographical districts mentioned in the reports. The department acknowledges, as in previous years, the general support of the popular opinion of scientific men and of the press in its efforts successfully to carry on this work. Errors have occurred, but it has been generally recognized as inevitable that some must occur in the present condition of science. The great utility of the work is no longer doubted. It has achieved results the promise of which a few years ago could hardly be hoped for. It is mentioned in connection with this subject that arrangements have been made with the meteorological offices of Russia, England, and Turkey, to commence Jan. 1, 1874, an exchange with the United States of the daily reports taken simultaneously at the different stations throughout the great extent of the Russian and Turkish Empires, the British Islands, and the United States. The co-operation of the systems of other nations is expected.

Starvation in Iowa.

A Harrowing Story of Poverty and Suffering.

A citizen of Iowa has written to the Des Moines *Register* from Jefferson, that State, a sad story of the hardships and sufferings of many of the settlers in the North-western portion of that State. He says: "I have just had a long interview with a former soldier comrade, now a homesteader in Osceola County, and from him learn something concerning the present and future wants of the hundreds of good people making themselves homes in that and other counties. It will be remembered that in 1872 good crops were raised in that section, and that all had plenty and to spare. In the spring of 1873, every preparation was made for a great crop of small grain, and it prospered exceedingly until about the first of June, when the grasshoppers came, and the fields of waving grain were made desolate—entirely ruining the crop. A great many homesteaders at once left, realizing the coming of the present condition of matters. But hundreds of families had not the means at command to pay their expenses of travel, and hence were compelled to stay. A little corn was saved in some sections, but of very inferior quality. Plenty of hay was made, of the best grade, so the stock will at least have that much for support. But as to the people? My informant makes this statement: "Nearly every man is poor—very poor, and a great majority are ex-soldiers of the Union, with young families to support. When the grasshoppers took the crops, we did the best we could for the coming winter. We went to the lakes and caught barrels of fish, but we did not have the means to properly care for them; so they spoiled. Stock was sacrificed to the sharks that infest our section, at the next to nothing of a price, and many of us have thus eaten up and worn out the horses and work-cattle that had been our main stay. We could buy no fuel, and when I left, twisted hay and rank reed grass was the only fuel nine-tenths of the people were using. Much sickness prevails, brought on by a long abstinence from wholesome and nutritious food. One family I know of has the father down with the rheumatism, three out of six children were down with the measles, while the mother was about worn down herself. Corn-meal, grated from frost-bitten nubbins, was the only food in the house, if the sod and board shanty may be called such. The people bear with each other, and mutually extend aid as much as possible. One young man from Jasper County, who happens to be a good shot, has valiantly taken upon himself the task of keeping all invalid families supplied with meat, wild game, and the day I left brought some geese and ducks to the family I have mentioned. But that will soon end, with cold weather. You want to know what they need? They need everything—fuel, clothing, and provisions. The women and children are suffering greatly already for the want of clothing. I know of several women who died soon after giving birth to children because they could not have even the common luxury of a cup of tea, or anything nutritious to aid them in regaining strength, coupled with the want of proper bed covering. The most of the counties can extend no aid, for the reason that thieves have been running the affairs, and have stolen all, just as they did some years ago in Clay County. Many families will leave on foot, having sold their cattle or horses to keep them alive. Some general way of relieving those who must remain must be put in operation right away, else the first snap of real cold weather will send many a good man or women or child to death—frozen, because they will be so weak and emaciated that they cannot stand the rigors of winter, even in its weakest appearance." The person who makes this statement I know to be reliable. It will be seen from this, then, that aid cannot be sent too soon, and that a general plan of relief must not be delayed longer than necessary.

A Mr. Kingan, of Indianapolis, has authorized the benevolent societies to draw on him for $100 per week for charitable purposes during the winter.