

The MIRROR

Published Weekly
at the
Minnesota State
Prison

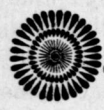
MINNESOTA
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY.

"IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND."

VOL. XVI.—No. 44.

STILLWATER, MINNESOTA, THURSDAY, MAY 21, 1903.

TERMS: \$1.00 per year, in advance.
Six Months 50 cents.



Our Nation's Cabinet.

A NATION is the aggregate intelligence, wealth, energy, traditions purpose and conscience of the people by whom its territory is inhabited. Like the individuals of which it is composed it has successive stages of existence, is born, becomes adolescent, matures, decays and dies. The government of a nation is the agency through which its sovereignty is exercised. Monarchy is the rule of one man; aristocracy of the wealthy and intelligent classes; democracy of the majority of free citizens. The differing in name and method, the functions to be performed by each are the same—the control and direction of the authority of the state in dealing with its own subjects and with the other members of the great family of nations.

Under each system there must be a chief executive, king, emperor or president, through him the nation's will is exerted; and the duties being more than one man can personally perform, he is assisted by subordinates entrusted with the affairs of different departments of the public service. Collectively the persons so employed are called in Europe the Ministry and in the United States the Cabinet. In Great Britain the ministry is formed by some prominent party leader who is designated by the sovereign to organize a cabinet. He selects from his political friends those who agree with him in policy, generally taking for himself the place of premier or prime minister. The official membership of the ministry is not always identical, and, as it is a body not recognized by the laws of England, its acts and orders are promulgated through the privy council. It contains members of the Lords and Commons, and whenever upon a test question the house of Commons votes against the policy of the cabinet, the ministers resign and are replaced by others who are in sympathy with the majority. The government of Great Britain is therefore actually a government by parliamentary committees, and is to that extent a representative democracy, reflecting the popular will more directly than that of the United States, where the president and his cabinet are frequently at variance with the majority of one or both houses of Congress.

Under the constitution of the United States the subordinate executive functions are distributed among nine departments, created by act of Congress and filled by appointment by the president, subject to confirmation by the Senate. They form a body of assistants, advisers and clerks to the president, for which the name cabinet has been adapted from the political nomenclature of England. The existing departments were established in the following order: War (then comprising the navy), August 7, 1789; Treasury, September 2, 1789; State (then called foreign affairs), September 15, 1789; Justice, September 24, 1789; Post Office (temporary) September 22, 1789; permanent, May 8, 1794; Navy, April 30, 1798; Interior, March 8, 1849; Agriculture, 1862; Commerce, 1903.

The postmaster general was treated as a subordinate of the treasury department until invited to attend the meetings of the cabinet by President Jackson in 1829. The secretary of state is regarded as first in rank among the members of the cabinet. He is charged with the duties pertaining to correspondence with public ministers and consuls of the United States, with representatives of foreign powers accredited to the United States, and to negotiations of whatever character relating to our foreign affairs. He is also the medium of correspondence between the president and the chief executive of the several states of the United States; he has custody of the great seal,

and countersigns and affixes such seal to all executive proclamations, to various commissions, to warrants of pardons, and to the extradition of fugitives from justice. He is the custodian of treaties made with foreign states, and of the statutes of the United States; grants and issues passports and the exequaturs to foreign consuls of the United States. He publishes the laws and resolutions of Congress, amendments to the constitution and proclamations declaring the admission of new states into the Union. He is also charged with certain annual reports to Congress, relating to commercial information received from diplomatic and consular offices. He has three assistant secretaries, six chiefs of bureaus and a large number of clerks and other employees.

The secretary of the treasury has charge of the financial affairs of the nation; prepares plans for the improvement of its revenues and the maintenance of its credit. He superintends the collection of taxes and customs duties; issues warrants for receipts and expenditures; controls the construction of public buildings; the coinage and printing of money; the collection of statistics; the administration of the coast and geodetic survey; the life saving, lighthouse, revenue cutter, steamboat inspection and marine hospital branches of the public service, and furnishes generally such information as may be required by either branch of Congress. The routine work is transacted in the offices of the supervising architect, director of the mint, superintendent of engraving and printing, supervising surgeon-general of the marine hospitals, general superintendent of the life saving service, supervising inspector-general of steamboats, bureau of statistics, lighthouse board, and in the division of warrants, estimates and appropriations, appointments, customs duties, public moneys, loans and currency, mercantile, marine and internal revenue, revenue marine, stationery, printing and blanks, captured property, claims and lands, mails and files, and special agents. He has two assistants, and under him are two comptrollers and six auditors of accounts, and several thousand clerks, laborers and other employees at Washington and in every state in the Union.

The secretary of war performs such duties as the president, who is commander-in-chief, may enjoin concerning the military service, and has superintendence of supplies and transportation for the army. The chiefs of the ten bureaus of this department are officers of the regular army and belong to the permanent military establishment of the country.

The secretary of the navy has general charge of the construction, armament, equipment and employment of vessels of war, and discharges whatever duties may be assigned by the president, who is also commander-in-chief of the navy. The eight bureaus of this department are in charge of regular officers of the navy, and are a part of the permanent naval establishment.

The secretary of the interior has supervision of public business relating to patents for inventions, pensions and bounty lands, and the public lands, including mines; the Indians; education; railroads; the public surveys; the census, when directed by law; the custody and distribution of public documents, and various hospitals and eleemosynary institutions in the District of Columbia. He also exercises certain powers and duties in relation to the territories of the United States. There are two assistant secretaries, a chief clerk, eight chiefs of different divisions, and a very large force of clerks, writers, copyists, laborers and watchmen employed at the capital and in different parts of the country. Considering the scope, variety and number of subjects embraced, this is the most important department in the government and should be subdivided. Pensions should be transferred to the war department, where the records are kept.

The postmaster general appoints all officers and employees in his department, except the three assistant postmasters general, who are designated by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; he appoints postmasters whose annual compensation does not exceed \$1,000; makes postal treaties with foreign governments, by and with the consent of the president; awards and executes contracts, and directs the management of the domestic and foreign mail service. He has four assistants and superintendents of railway mail service, of foreign mails, dead letters and of the money and order business.

The attorney general is the head of the department of justice and chief law officer of the government. He represents the United States in matters involving legal questions; gives his advice and opinion on questions of law when required by the president, or by the heads of the executive departments; exercises general superintendence and direction over United States attorneys and marshals in all judicial districts in the states and territories; and provides special counsel for the United States whenever required by any department. He is assisted by a chief clerk and other employees, and also by the law clerk, who is an examiner of titles and assists in the investigation of legal questions and in the preparation of opinions. There is also a solicitor general, who acts in the absence of the attorney general, and conducts and argues causes in the supreme court and the court of claims. The assistant attorney general for the department of the interior, the assistant attorney general for the post office department, the solicitor of internal revenue, treasury department, the navy solicitor, navy department, and examiner of claims, state department, exercise their functions under the supervision and control of the attorney general.

The secretary of agriculture is charged with the supervision of all public business relating to the agricultural industry. He appoints the officers and employees, with the exception of the assistant secretary, who is selected by the president, and directs the management of all the divisions and sections and the bureau embraced in the department. He exercises advisory supervision over the agricultural experiment stations, receiving support from the treasury, and has control of quarantine stations for imported cattle and interstate quarantine rendered necessary by contagious diseases. Under him are a statistician, an entomologist, a botanist, a pomologist, a chemist, a microscopist, an ornithologist; a bureau of experimental stations, of animal industry, of vegetable pathology, of forestry, of records, of illustration, of silk culture, of seed distribution, and of gardens and grounds. By recent act of Congress the signal service for weather forecasts and meteorological observation has been transferred from this department to that of war.

In addition to the above, a department of labor was established in 1888, now in charge of a commissioner, having no seat in the cabinet, who is directed to obtain and disseminate among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with labor, and especially upon its relation to capital; the hours of labor; the earnings of laboring men and women, and the means of promoting their material, social, intellectual and moral prosperity. He is also especially charged in accordance with the general design and duties prescribed by the law, at as early a date as possible, and whenever industrial changes shall make it essential, to ascertain the cost of producing articles dutiable in the United States in leading countries where such articles are produced, by fully specified units of production, and under a classification showing the different elements of cost of such articles of production, including wages paid in such industries.

The last Congress created a new cabinet office, the department of Commerce. The head of this branch of the public service has supervision over the railroads and over all corporations doing an interstate business. The members of the cabinet receive an annual salary of \$8,000. They meet in a chamber in the White House at stated intervals and whenever directed by the president; but their conferences are not public, and their consultations are seldom divulged. The president presides, but no journal of proceedings is kept, and the names of those who attend are not recorded. They report to the president annually in writing for transmission to Congress, and from time to time upon special matters if required by him. They hold their places entirely at his will, discharge their duties under his exclusive direction, and he can require their resignation at his pleasure. They are not responsible to Congress or to the people for their policy or conduct of the administration. This rests with the president alone. Within the broad and flexible limitation of the constitution, during his term no other ruler possesses such absolute authority and irresponsible power as the president of the United States.

ferent elements of cost of such articles of production, including wages paid in such industries.

The last Congress created a new cabinet office, the department of Commerce. The head of this branch of the public service has supervision over the railroads and over all corporations doing an interstate business.

The members of the cabinet receive an annual salary of \$8,000. They meet in a chamber in the White House at stated intervals and whenever directed by the president; but their conferences are not public, and their consultations are seldom divulged. The president presides, but no journal of proceedings is kept, and the names of those who attend are not recorded. They report to the president annually in writing for transmission to Congress, and from time to time upon special matters if required by him. They hold their places entirely at his will, discharge their duties under his exclusive direction, and he can require their resignation at his pleasure. They are not responsible to Congress or to the people for their policy or conduct of the administration. This rests with the president alone. Within the broad and flexible limitation of the constitution, during his term no other ruler possesses such absolute authority and irresponsible power as the president of the United States.

J. F. S.

Nicknames of States.

S TATES, like individuals, are generally known by some nickname; in fact, some of them have several names. These nicknames cling to the various states as tenaciously as their prototypes do to individuals. The majority of them are named after some product in which each particular state excels over its competitors, and some rather imposing and appropriate names have been evolved from this course of procedure. Other states, however, have selected other standards in choosing their nicknames, and the results are rather inimitable. Such names as the Hoosier, Sucker, Gopher and Badger states, are facetious affairs, and contain no distinguishing features which could not be applied to other states with equal force and aptness. The names of Hoosier and Sucker state are clownish to say the least.

Of course these appellations are nothing but verbose appendages which no one attaches any importance to; but, if they are worth clinging to, why not use some discretion in their selection? These nicknames should have the garb of respectability thrown around them. Surely the inhabitants of Illinois are not proud of being called Suckers. It certainly must warm the cockles of their heart to be referred to in such a "courteous" manner. No one imagines for a moment that the inhabitants of Indiana can be designated as Hoosiers. Each state contains a plethora of such gentry.

New York has a nickname which has some significance. She is called the "Empire State." These two words tell us of the marvelous grandeur and majestic greatness of the state within whose borders is located the richest and largest city in the western hemisphere. This name has been well chosen as to personal fitness. Altho it has a slight tinge of monarchy in its verbiage, there is absolutely nothing capable of double construction or vulgar in its make-up. No other state, however presumptuous, could appropriate this nickname and still have that vital significance which distinguishes New York from its associates. In finance her supremacy is international; and her motto, Excelsior, presages her future glory.

Next to New York, Pennsylvania has a nickname which strikingly reverses the old adage that there is nothing in a name. She is called the "Keystone State," a name which awakens visions in connection with the Revolution. This name was applied to

Pennsylvania with due care and thoughtfulness, because at the time of the formation of the constitution she was the central state of the Union.

While Pennsylvania has not quite such an imposing nickname as New York, her nickname is just as symbolic as that of Empire State. Today, however, conditions have greatly changed since the thirteen original states confederated. If we were now to group the forty-five states so as to form an arch, it is self-evident that Pennsylvania would form a part of the circle instead of the keystone. Nevertheless the name suggests what we once were and what we are today from a territorial standpoint.

"Gopher State," is the highly elevating nickname which hangs to Minnesota like a burr to a cow's tail. It is as incongruous as the name which is affixed to Wisconsin; and, unfortunately, she is known and referred to with pride as the "Badger State." Both of them are as inappropriate as it is possible to make them. Neither of these names represent animals which are distinct features of the states which bear their names. They suggest little or nothing and they might just as well have selected "Mud" and "Water" as representative names. Personally I have nothing against the little gopher or badger as animals. The thirteen striped gopher is a beautiful animal, but commercially he is not worth a sou. He has a good reputation—especially among the farmers—for being an expert at finding corn that has been planted by the grangers. No doubt if Minnesota was to choose another name, she would not select that of a pest upon whom thousands of dollars are spent annually in efforts to exterminate.

New Hampshire and Maine both have unusually good names—names which are a standing monument to their sound common sense. The former is known as the "Granite State," and the latter as the "Pine-Tree State." New Hampshire owes its nickname to the fact that she owns the best and most widely known granite quarries in the country, while Maine is called the "Pine-Tree State," because of the excellence of her forests which are in great demand by ship builders along the New England seacoast. Her timber, which is exceedingly tall and symmetrical, is admirably suited for masts and keels, and it has made that state famous among ship builders.

"Sucker State" is the name to which Illinois answers in the roll-call. It is outlandish and excessively slangy and rather vulgar. It is hardly the proper name to call a great state like Illinois which has within her borders such a wide-awake and enterprising city as Chicago, the pride of the West. This Bowers phrase is susceptible to double construction, and is as insulting and as exacerbatant as the name of "Hoosier State."

I could quote many more states which have some first-class nicknames, and still others which are practically meaningless. Those which I have mentioned show to what extremes these nicknames run. It also proves that good names are more plentiful than the cheap, slangy class which are such a conspicuous factor in the nicknaming of states. As I have exhibited a few of the more stately names as commendable examples to those states that are encumbered with mere shadows, it is now in order to make a few suggestions along the line of improvement, and which, perhaps, will be more in consonance with twentieth century ideas. As they now stand they are decidedly in need of reform, as many of them are just as applicable to one state as they are to another and others could be exchanged with profit.

As to Minnesota, for instance, I would toss the little gopher to the cat and adopt the nickname of "Mineral State." This is a more striking name and one which her limitless deposits of iron ore would eminently qualify her to assume. Wisconsin also has a nickname sorely in need of revision. The "Hemlock State" would be more suggestive and would be a happy substitute for her present one. In fact most anything would be preferable to the one which she now uses with much pride and elation.

However great the need of changing many of these nicknames, no change is possible unless popular opinion demands it. Even if changes were made it would require several generations to firmly establish the new names.