

REPORT

OF THE

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, December 5, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to submit for your information, and the consideration of Congress, the following synopsis of results attained during the past year in those branches of the public service which have been placed by law under the supervision and control of this department.

From the foundation of the government to the present time the management and disposal of the public lands have engrossed a large share of the public attention. Of the two thousand millions of acres embraced in the territorial extent of the United States, one thousand four hundred millions belonged to the public domain.

By a liberal policy in granting and selling lands, about one-third of this vast patrimony has been disposed of, leaving about one thousand millions of acres still the property of the government. About one-fourth of all the laws that have been enacted by Congress relate to the public lands, and to the settlement of the land claims derived from the governments which formerly had jurisdiction of the soil.

At some periods of our national history a considerable income to the treasury was derived from sales, and at others, the cash receipts declined to a sum but little exceeding the cost of administering the land system. During the first sixty years of the present century the average income from sales was two and three quarter millions of dollars per year, and the quantity disposed of by sales, and for military bounties, was about two hundred and five millions of acres.

During the last ten years the income from lands was less than during the preceding decade. This was occasioned by the large quantities of land—granted for internal improvements and for military and other purposes—which have competed, in the market, with the lands of the United States; and, more recently, by the passage of the Homestead law, under which large quantities have been entered at nominal rates. The annual receipts from ordinary sales for four years past have been as follows:

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For the year ending June 30, 1861.....	\$884, 887 03
Do.....do.....do.....1862.....	125, 048 30
Do.....do.....do.....1863.....	136, 077 95
Do.....do.....do.....1864.....	678, 007 21

The depressing influences of civil war have been felt during the last three years, but the results for that just closed demonstrate a revival of the annual demand for the public lands, particularly for settlement and cultivation.

During the year ending June 30, 1864, public lands have been disposed of as follows :

Acres sold for cash.....	432, 773.90
“ located with military warrants.....	515, 900.00
“ located with agricultural scrip.....	214, 418.14
“ certified to States for railroads.....	857, 180.87
“ taken under the Homestead law.....	1, 261, 592.61
“ disposed of during the year.....	3, 281, 865.52
During the quarter ending September 30, 1864, the aggregate quantity taken for the same purpose was.....	939, 476.90
Making a total of.....	4, 221, 342.42

The cash receipts for sales, homestead and location fees for the same five quarters, were \$1,019,446 44.

The aggregate quantity of public lands surveyed, but not disposed of, was, on the 30th September last, 133 517,587 acres. This has been the average quantity for several years past. The amount surveyed annually has been about equal to that disposed of annually.

Nineteen States have accepted the provisions of the acts donating lands “for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts,” and have received land and land-scrip amounting to 4,950,000 acres.

The jurisdiction conferred on this department by the act of Congress of March 3, 1851, for the definite location of confirmed private land claims in California was taken from it by an act approved June 14, 1860, but has been recently restored under the act approved July 1, 1864. The quantity of land embraced in all the confirmations to the present date is 4,366,974 acres; of which 2,430,906.60 acres have been finally surveyed and patented. What remains to be done, in the important work of severing the private from the public lands in that State, will be prosecuted with diligence, and brought to completion as rapidly as possible.

Under the acts of Congress of July 1, 1862, and July 2, 1864, making grants of land to aid the construction of railroad and telegraph lines to the Pacific coast, the initial point of the main line of railroad from the Missouri river westward has been fixed at Omaha, Nebraska, and the definite location of the road for one hundred miles west from that point has been approved by the President. The route of the Pacific railroad of California has been selected, and a

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map of the preliminary location thereof, from Sacramento eastward to the great bend of the Truckee river, in Nevada, has been filed in this department. The lands along these routes, for twenty-five miles, on both sides, have been withdrawn from market, pursuant to the requirements of the act of 1862.

In the administration of the laws regulating the grants of swamp lands to the States, and authorizing the allowance of indemnity in certain cases, where swamp lands have been sold by the United States, a liberal construction has been adopted and a generous policy pursued. No alteration of these laws is demanded by principles of justice. An extension of the indemnity, or of the time now prescribed by law for selecting swamp lands, would, in my opinion, be prejudicial to the interests of the United States.

The claim of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal church to lands at the Dalles of the Columbia river, in Oregon, based upon the first section of the act of Congress, approved August 14, 1848, having been brought before this department upon appeal on the 27th of April last, I requested the advice of the Attorney General of the United States touching the law arising upon the facts disclosed by the papers in the case. On the 27th of May I had the honor to receive his reply, stating that, in his opinion, the question presented was "purely judicial, and not proper to be determined by any executive officer." In deference to this opinion, the department declined making a decision in that and a similar case then before it. Proceedings in all such cases under that act have been suspended in the General Land Office and in the subordinate offices in Oregon.

For further details in reference to the public lands, I respectfully refer to the annual report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office.

During the past year additional discoveries of precious metals, particularly of silver, have been made in the region flanking, on the eastward, the extended mountain ranges of the Sierra Nevada. A vast belt of some one or two hundred miles in width, and eight or nine hundred in length, embracing portions of Idaho, Nevada, and Arizona, is rich in silver ore. Owing to the remote locality of these mines, and the difficulty of transportation thereto, but little machinery well adapted to the rapid and economical reduction of the various ores has been introduced. In that portion of Nevada through which the Pacific railroad will pass many rich veins have been found, and it is estimated by persons familiar with the subject that, if the mines now opened there were supplied with the proper machinery, they would yield ten millions of dollars per month. In the same region vast beds of salt have also been found, which, from its value in the process of separating the silver in the ores, has given a fresh impulse to mining. When we reflect that the region of country in which deposits of the precious metals abound includes large portion of three States and six Territories, and that the richest veins of ore heretofore discovered are as yet but slightly developed, whilst new discoveries are constantly made, it will be perceived that the annual product of the mines in the United States must soon reach a magnitude without precedent in the history of mining operations.

The wealth imbedded in the rocks of that extensive region is actually inexhaustible, and it will furnish in future years, indirectly, a principal part of our means of liquidating the debt contracted by the government for the overthrow of the great rebellion. As a measure tending to accelerate the reduction of these mineral deposits into available wealth, and to strengthen the public credit by an authentic publication of our vast resources, I respectfully recommend that provision be made for the appointment of experienced and skilful mineralogists to make a scientific examination of the principal mining localities, and of the mineral regions generally, and to report the results. Their reports should be printed and widely circulated. An appropriation would be required for these purposes.

Much interest has been manifested in favor of the establishment of a bureau of mines and minerals, to which the administration of all details in respect to this important subject should be committed. I am satisfied that such legislation will, before many years, be found necessary, if it has not already become so.

The attention of Congress has frequently been called to the importance of securing an income to the national treasury from the products of the mines and placers. By the laws of Spain and Mexico, and according to the principles generally accepted in civilized countries, the property in these precious deposits is vested in the government exercising sovereignty and jurisdiction over the soil.

The first annual report from this department contained a number of suggestions relating to the protection of this property, and to securing a revenue from the annual products. Since that time, the same subject has been frequently mentioned in the annual reports of this department, but Congress has never taken legislative action. Sound policy dictates the propriety of levying a revenue tax upon those who are engaged in gathering individual wealth from this national property. The Bureau of Internal Revenue, recently established in the Department of the Treasury, furnishes a ready and suitable instrumentality for collecting it. The requirement of a moderate license fee from each person engaged in placer mining upon the public domain, and a reasonable tax upon the products of all mines, which might be graduated according to the cost of production, would be just to the government and satisfactory to the mining interest.

When it is considered that a nominal tax of one per centum upon the present product of the mines would yield a larger income than is now derived from the sales of the public lands, with an expense of collecting it comparatively small, and that the prospective revenue from this source is so great, the impolicy of granting the mines and mineral lands in fee, without consideration, must be apparent to all. It should, however, be borne in mind that the business of developing the mineral resources of those regions is yet in its infancy, and that all legislation bearing upon it should have for its object the increase of the annual products of the precious metals, and should, in its inception, be directed to the encouragement of the miner, by affording him security in his possessions

and stability to his business, rather than to obtaining an immediate income to the treasury.

With the prospect of returning peace, and the consequent increase of migration to the mining regions likely thereafter to ensue, it seems to be demanded of Congress that the rights of miners should be defined and secured by law, and the prosperity of those regions and the preservation of good order therein thus insured.

The mines of New Mexico and Arizona are probably not inferior in richness to any within the limits of the United States. Owing to their inaccessibility they are indifferently wrought. All efforts to make them available must necessarily be feeble, and attended with but partial success, until roads shall have been constructed through those Territories from the Atlantic States, or from the navigable waters of the Pacific. Since the acquisition of this portion of our domain, now a period of seventeen years, the United States have received no income from the sale of lands within it, and but an inconsiderable sum from the sale of lands in southeastern California. It is believed that the larger portion of the land in that section, adapted to agriculture, is covered by Spanish and Mexican grants or set apart for Indian pueblos. There is, therefore, but a slight prospect that anything will be realized from sales of the lands, or that they will ever be located by homestead settlers. The wants and habits of the population are not such as to give any assurance or afford any expectation that they will undertake, from their own means, to prosecute to a successful completion the roads necessary to the development of the vast mineral riches of the country.

A further discouragement to the settlement of Arizona and southern California has been the continued drought, which has prevailed for the last two years, and from which, most of the herds of cattle and sheep, accustomed to graze there, have perished.

The desert of California, known as the Colorado desert, covering a territory of near one hundred miles in extent, was evidently at one time watered by the Colorado river. Being for the most part depressed below the bed of that river, it is susceptible of reclamation from its present condition, by means of dams and acequias, the construction of which, although not difficult, is, without substantial aid from Congress, beyond the means of the inhabitants. These combined difficulties render it probable, nay, almost certain, that the government will, under existing circumstances, derive no benefit either from the barren lands or from the mineral wealth which abounds in those Territories.

There can be no doubt that the public resources would be much increased by the immediate working of the mines to the extent of their capacity, and by the settlement of those regions by an enterprising and industrious population, though no direct income should be derived from the sale of the lands. It is therefore worthy of consideration, whether it would not be expedient to grant all, or such portions of the lands, as are requisite to insure the construction of the necessary railroads, and the conversion of the sterile lands to a condition of fertility. The benefits resulting from such roads would not be confined to the pro-

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duct of the mines. A new highway, at all times exempt from obstruction by snow, would be open to the Pacific. Passing by the valley of the Rio Grande to El Paso, it would receive a large portion of the rich commerce of Central and Western Mexico. These benefits are so obvious and of such surpassing importance, that I do not hesitate in expressing my earnest conviction that the government should embrace any suitable opportunity which may be offered to secure the completion of a railroad upon the terms suggested.

It appears from a communication of General Dix, the president of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, that it has, since the adjournment of Congress, expended more than half a million of dollars upon the main line of the road leading westward from Omaha, of which one hundred miles have been permanently located, and forty miles are in process of construction.

The company has surveyed lines to Salt Lake City, through the South Pass, Laramie plains, Bridger's Pass, by way of Timpanagos and Weber rivers, to determine the most feasible route. Parties have also been engaged in explorations in Colorado Territory through Berthold's Pass and up the Caché la Poudre river, and also in examining the topography of the country in the vicinity of the 100th meridian of longitude, and in locating the line from Omaha to Fort Kearney. Considering the limited time which has elapsed since the action of Congress enabled this company to prosecute the work with energy, satisfactory progress has been made, and the country has no reason to apprehend any tardiness in the prosecution of this great enterprise.

The progress made in the construction of the branch road in Kansas, known as the Union Pacific railroad, eastern division, has not met the reasonable expectations of the public. There was just reason to believe that the second section of forty miles of that road would have been rapidly approaching completion, if not actually completed by this time; instead of which, forty miles only of the track are laid, and that not yet in a condition to be examined by the commissioners appointed by the President, to inspect and report upon the work.

For this unexpected state of affairs the company is not altogether without excuse. The assassination of its contractor in July last, soon after the adjournment of Congress, the continued insurmountable difficulties of obtaining the necessary materials, either by river or rail, from causes known to all, prevented them for a time from prosecuting the work. Since these difficulties have been partially removed, a commendable energy has marked the conduct of the company. The first section of the road to Lawrence, to which place the track is laid, will undoubtedly be open to the public and in use within a few days. The company in California is also making satisfactory progress with its portion of the road.

The President has appointed George Ashmun of Massachusetts, Springer Harbaugh of Pennsylvania, Charles T. Sherman of Ohio, Jesse L. Williams of Indiana, and Timothy J. Carter of Illinois, to be directors, on the part of the United States in the Union Pacific Railroad Company, and these gentlemen

have accepted the appointment. The wisdom of Congress in providing for the appointment of such officers cannot be doubted.

Being impressed with the conviction of the importance of securing the interest of the government in the roads connecting with the main line, and the faithful compliance, by the companies constructing them, with the terms and conditions upon which they are entitled to the munificent bounties offered by Congress, I should not hesitate to recommend, if it were deemed practicable, that such directors should be *ex officio* members of the board or other governing authority of each of such companies. I submit this subject to the consideration of Congress, with the hope that some means will be devised by which a supervisory control over the action of such companies may, within proper limits, be conferred upon the directors on the part of the United States.

The management of the Indians during the past year has been attended with difficulty. In addition to the war against that portion of the Sioux that committed the massacres in Minnesota in 1862, and who are yet unpunished and unsubdued, military operations have been carried on against the combined bands of the Sioux of the plains and of the Upper Missouri, as well as against a considerable portion of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, particularly those who have been accustomed to inhabit the country of the Upper Platte river, and who were parties to the treaty of Fort Laramie. It is not necessary to inquire whether, by adopting conciliatory measures these military operations might not, to a great extent, have been avoided. Those who desire to investigate the subject may, with advantage, consult the report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The question of interest is, what course shall hereafter be pursued with these Indians, in order to reduce them to subjection, and to afford all needful protection to our citizens. The overland mail to Colorado, and to the States and Territories west thereof, as well as a large proportion of the carriers of goods, and of the emigrants to those regions, passes over the Laramie plains, which are infested during a large portion of the year by these Indians. The route of the Pacific railroad passes through the same country, and the government is, by act of Congress, under obligation to extinguish the Indian title. The government has but one treaty—that of Fort Laramie—with the Sioux (of Dakota) and with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes between the forks of the Platte river, which these latter Indians have ever acknowledged. This treaty was ratified by the Senate with amendments and its benefits to the Indians, by virtue of the limitations imposed by the Senate, are about to terminate. A sufficient reservation for the Cheyennes and Arapahoes has been established on the Upper Arkansas, in the vicinity of Fort Lyon, and efforts have been made which promise success to make it a suitable and permanent home for them. The treaty referred to forbids the occupation of the Platte country by the whites, and only permits their transit through it.

To enable the Union Pacific Railroad Company to establish its line of road through this country, it is necessary that the United States shall have the unmolested possession of the route, and of much of the adjacent country. To secure that object, however, I do not think it important that any further treaties

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should be made with these Indians. Their violation of the existing treaty, in making war upon our people, renders this unnecessary, if the views which are hereinafter expressed shall be approved by Congress. As the most expeditious mode to accomplish the object, it is recommended that the agency at the Upper Platte be abolished, and that the number of military posts along the line of the railroad and overland mail route be increased sufficiently to protect it and exclude the Indians therefrom.

This department will make provision for such Indians, as will submit to its authority and locate upon the reservation. Those who resist should be pursued by the military and punished.

With these Indians—the Sioux—and all others in hostility with the United States, trade and intercourse should be interdicted, until they yield to the will and direction of the government. To this end, I recommend that a law be passed, making it a penal offence for any person to carry goods, or supplies of any kind whatever, into their country, for traffic; and that all persons, of whatever pursuit, shall be prohibited from trading or trafficking with them, while they are in a state of hostility.

Much has been said, and the public mind has lately been agitated, against the policy of the government in making treaties with Indian tribes, and some persons in authority advise an abrogation of all existing treaties; but it is presumed that, while this nation is governed by the rules of civilization, such a proposition will not be entertained to the injury of all the tribes and nations of Indians who are in amity with the United States. Where the Indians have kept faith with the government, no question of expediency or policy will justify a violation of its pledges to them. There are, however, many Indians within the domain of the United States, with whom the government has no treaties acknowledging the primary right of soil in the tribes; with these, possibly, with some exceptions, it would be wise to abstain from making any treaty recognizing such right. Suitable reservations should be selected for them, and means adopted to establish them thereon, and to enable them, by their own industry, to sustain themselves. This policy has already been introduced successfully in the management of the Indians in California, and may properly be applied, to a considerable extent, in the neighboring States and Territories. In negotiating new treaties, where good policy or existing engagements will admit of that course of action, stipulations for the payment of money annuities should be avoided.

The propriety of the removal of the Navajoes of New Mexico and Arizona to the Bósque Redón do reservation has been a subject of much contrariety of opinion. This department, upon the best information at its command, consented to their removal. As the reservation has been set apart, and a large sum of money expended by the military authorities in the endeavor to permanently establish the Indians there, great fickleness of purpose would be manifested in abandoning the enterprise before it shall have been fully and fairly tested. I am strongly inclined to the opinion, notwithstanding all that

has been urged against it, that, if the scheme receives a fair and just support, it will prove a success, and these Indians, so long the foes of the government, will become its faithful supporters.

For further and detailed information on the subject of Indian affairs I respectfully refer to the elaborate report of the Commissioner.

The liberal provisions of law for the payment of pensions to soldiers and seamen who have been disabled in the service of the country, and to the widows, orphans, and dependent mothers and sisters of such as have fallen in battle or died of disease or wounds, have been administered with industry, fidelity, and promptitude.

The very interesting and instructive report of the Commissioner of Pensions affords valuable information, and presents important suggestions, in which I fully concur.

Of those patriots, to whom pensions for services in the Revolutionary war had been awarded, five still survive at very advanced ages. At the beginning of the year, twelve were living, and 1,418 widows of Revolutionary soldiers were receiving pensions, making 1,430 pensioners of this class—the aggregate of whose yearly stipends was \$115,217 43.

The number of army pensioners (other than Revolutionary) who were paid during the fourteen months ending the 30th of June last was 22,767, and of widows, (other than Revolutionary,) orphans, and dependent mothers, 25,433.

The total number of persons who received army pensions during that period was therefore 49,630, and the amount paid during the year ending June 30, was \$4,340,368 60.

The number of navy pensioners who were paid during the fourteen months preceding the date mentioned was 1,505; and the amount of money paid them during the year was \$164,247 92. The whole number of pensioners on the 30th June last was 51,135, requiring for their annual compensation \$4,595,376 33.

During the year ending September 30, 1864, 1,812 bounty land warrants were issued, requiring 286,960 acres of lands to satisfy them.

The act of Congress, approved July 14, 1862, entitled "An act to grant pensions," is believed to be one of the wisest and most munificent enactments of the kind ever adopted by any nation. Its beneficial provisions extend to the disabled survivors, and to the widows, orphans, dependent mothers, and dependent orphan sisters of the deceased soldiers and seamen of every grade and rank.

During the past year more than \$3,500,000 have been paid for pensions granted on account of disability or death ensuing from service in the war of the rebellion. During the continuance of the war, no reliable estimate can be made of the amount of money that will be required eventually to meet the obligations thus assumed by the government to our soldiers and seamen.

The list of pensioners is constantly undergoing both increase and diminution, and at present, and for months to come, it must be rapidly augmented, even should peace be restored without further hostilities. It is estimated that more than 7,000,000 of dollars will be required to satisfy the claims accruing under the pension laws during the current fiscal year.

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In fixing the grade of disability of invalid pensioners, and in discriminating as to the connection of the causes of disability or death with the service, the Pension Office is often involved in doubt and uncertainty.

It is believed that a commission of experienced surgeons might devise and mature such a schedule of usual causes of disability and death, in cases where pensions have been and are claimed, as would greatly aid the Pension Office in reaching correct conclusions—in discriminating between those cases where the cause should be regarded as incident to the service, and those in which the cause has no relation to, or connection with, military or naval duty. Whilst it is conceded that, in cases of great doubt and uncertainty, conclusions should be in favor of claimants, all must agree that a wise precaution should be taken to guard against mistakes, and that every means of enlarging information upon the topic suggested must be promotive of justice both to claimants and to the government.

The report of the Commissioner of Pensions shows the importance of the provisions of law requiring periodical examinations of invalid pensioners, and contains a list of the names of the examining surgeons.

This department has recently been advised that, under the joint resolution of Congress approved July 1, 1864, the sum of \$5,000,000 of the navy pension fund has been invested in registered bonds of the United States.

I commend to the consideration of Congress the suggestion of the Commissioner, that an appropriation for pension purposes should be made of a portion of the proceeds of abandoned and confiscated property on land. It occurs to me as eminently proper that some of the means derived from these sources should be applied to the establishment of homes for those who have been, or may hereafter be, permanently disabled and rendered helpless by reason of their service during the existing war.

It was recommended to Congress at its last session that an act be passed requiring the national banks to discharge the duties of pension agents. It was believed that by that instrumentality the convenience of the pensioners would be greatly promoted, and the expense attending the employment of agents avoided. Since the adjournment of Congress, communications have been received from most of those banks, expressing a willingness to perform the duty without charge to the government. I renew the recommendation that a law be passed charging the banks with the payment of pensions, whenever it shall be the pleasure of the department to require it of them.

Since the last annual report of this department, seven additional agencies for paying pensions have been established, and it is believed that the number now in operation will be sufficient to transact the business, should the present system of payments be continued.

The business operations of the Patent Office for the year ending September 30 have been very satisfactory. During the period above named, 6,740 applications for patents and 989 caveats were filed; 29 applications also were made for the extension of patents previously granted. During the same period

4,843 patents, including reissues and designs, were issued, and 40 extensions granted. The number of applications awaiting the payment of the final fee required by law before patents can be issued has largely increased, numbering now over 1,000. The finances of the office are in a prosperous condition, as appears by the following short statement:

The balance in the treasury to the credit of the patent fund on October 1, 1863, was \$37,732 63. The receipts of the office to September 30, 1864, amounted to \$239,838 60, making a total sum of \$268,571 23. The expenditures during the same period were \$212,453 84, leaving a balance of \$56,117 39 on hand on October 1, 1864, being \$16,384 76 more than the balance as exhibited on October 1, 1863.

The report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings presents many details of interest to the citizens and residents of this District, and contains information in respect to the manner in which various appropriations for local purposes have been applied. The condition of the streets and avenues of Washington city is a matter of frequent and just complaint. The United States has never assumed any general jurisdiction of the subject, although appropriations for improving the avenues have been frequently made.

The city authorities, apparently relying upon the liberality of Congress, have abstained from making expenditures in improving and opening streets commensurate with the constant increase of population and business. This state of affairs is likely to continue until a definite arrangement is established between the government and the city in relation to the matter under consideration. I therefore renew the recommendation made last year, that street commissioners should be appointed to determine the description and extent of the annual repairs and improvements to avenues, streets, and alleys; and that the funds requisite should be provided by the United States and the city in proportions to be fixed by law. The property-holders of Washington, moved by a just pride in the prosperity and beauty of the city, will not hesitate to tax themselves liberally to maintain a constant and efficient system of street improvement. The present rate of municipal taxation, for all purposes, is about one per centum on real and personal property, which is less than is paid in any other city with which I am acquainted. The tax-payers here are not charged with the expense of maintaining a State government, or those institutions of a benevolent character which are usually sustained by other communities, and they will not shrink from taxation for local purposes, when their property is yielding a rate of income equalled in few other cities and towns of the country. The propriety of these remarks is still more apparent, when it is considered that the expenses of the judicial tribunals for both civil and criminal business, and of the police force, are principally paid by the government, and are not charged to the property-holders of the city or District. Recognizing, however, the duty of the government to make provision for the improvement and repair of streets extending through public grounds, and to aid in keeping in a suitable condition such as are in front of the public buildings, I would respectfully recommend that provision be made by

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Congress for paving F street, between 7th and 9th streets. The Nicholson pavement, by reason of its durability, smoothness, and elasticity, has met with marked favor. In view of the probability that measures will be adopted by Congress providing some plan for suitably paving Pennsylvania avenue, and other principal thoroughfares of the city, I have obtained an estimate of the expense of laying the Nicholson pavement in F street, along the southern front of the building occupied by this department.

By joint resolution No. 56, of June, 1864, the Secretary of the Interior was, among other things, directed to "prevent the improper appropriation or occupation of any of the public streets," &c., in the city of Washington. One of the objects of this resolution evidently was to prevent the re-building of the Centre market-house upon its present site. Notice was accordingly given to the authorities of the city to desist from the erection of the building that had just been commenced, and they thereupon suspended the work upon it. The authorities manifest a commendable disposition to make this necessary improvement in such place and manner as will meet the approbation of Congress.

The substantial and rapid progress of the city for the last three years, its increasing and energetic population, and the certainty of its future prosperity, evince the importance of immediate action, having for its object the improvement of its sewerage, the cleansing of the canal—so as to correct, as far as possible, its present unwholesome and offensive condition—and the adornment of the streets and public grounds, thereby making the metropolis of the nation healthy and attractive. To that end, in addition to the suggestions contained in my last annual report, it is recommended that Congress provide by law for the removal of the Centre market-house from its present site, and the extension of the Smithsonian grounds to Pennsylvania avenue. It is also advised that the public reservations bordering on the canal and adjoining the Smithsonian grounds be added thereto. The enlarged area which the proposed change would give to these grounds, their adornment by the planting of trees and shrubbery, and the erection of fountains, would add greatly to the comfort, health, and pleasure of a populous portion of the city, and be most agreeable and attractive to transient visitors. The space occupied by the canal from 7th street to 6th street and the contiguous reservation would afford ample room for the market-house. The expense of making this space available is not worthy of consideration, in view of the substantial benefits to be obtained by extending the Smithsonian grounds to the avenue. It is believed that Congress may, without interfering with any right of the city of Washington, make such disposition of the canal as it shall deem proper; and if it should be determined to extend the sewer, now being constructed through the botanic garden, along and in the canal to the river, and to fill up the residue of the canal, there can be but little doubt that the grounds thus reclaimed for building and other useful purposes will be equal in value to the expense of this improvement.

The approaching completion of the Capitol, under the direction of the architect, Mr. Walter, imparts much interest to his report upon that and kindred

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subjects. Accompanying it are plans and drawings of the surrounding grounds which he proposes to add to those of the Capitol, in order to render them, in his opinion, reasonably spacious and suitable to the building. His views appear to me to be correct and judicious. They do not require the purchase of any private property; and should they be adopted by Congress, it is recommended that measures be taken and the necessary appropriations be made to grade, embellish, and enclose the grounds.

Owing to the increased cost of construction, additional appropriations for the completion of the work are necessary. I refer to the report of the architect for particulars upon this subject.

The east and west wings and the north front of the building occupied by this department have never been thoroughly repainted since their erection. The pavements of the corridors in the south front, now much worn, and partly laid with bricks, should be relaid with marble, so as to conform to those in the newer portions of the building. For these purposes an estimate for an appropriation has been submitted.

The work upon the Potomac dam and Washington aqueduct, authorized at the last session, has been prosecuted with all practicable despatch. The extreme scarcity of skilled labor and well-known local causes have, however, seriously impeded its progress, and its condition is not so far advanced as was confidently anticipated. An appropriation of fifty-one thousand nine hundred and forty-five dollars (\$51,945) is required to pay for the work now under contract, and which should be completed before the close of the present fiscal year. The report of the engineer contains full information in regard to the expenditures hitherto made, as well as those that will be required to finish the aqueduct in a proper manner.

The ninth annual report of the Board of Visitors of the Government Hospital for the Insane shows that the institution has rendered very valuable service to the country during the past year. The whole number of patients under treatment during the year ending June 30, 1864, was 787, of whom 565 were from the army, 35 from the navy, and 6 were rebel prisoners. The number of patients remaining at the end of the year was 351, of whom 191 were from the army, 18 from the navy, 4 from the rebel army, 2 from the Soldiers' Home, and 136 from civil life. The number discharged during the year as "recovered" was 288, "improved" 69, "unimproved" 5, deceased 74; total 436. The financial exhibit made by the board in their report is satisfactory. The extended service performed has necessarily involved an expenditure somewhat beyond the appropriation. The deficiency will, I doubt not, be supplied by Congress. The report of the superintendent, points out the improvements upon the buildings and grounds that are deemed desirable.

The Columbia Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind appears, from the annual report of the board of directors, to be in a prosperous condition. The honorable Amos Kendall, to whose liberality and philan-

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thropy it is indebted for its existence, retired from the presidency thereof some months since, and was succeeded by Mr. E. M. Gallaudet, its former efficient and accomplished superintendent. A collegiate department for the deaf and dumb has been inaugurated under the recent act of Congress authorizing the board to confer degrees. The Potomac water has been conveyed to the premises, but the arrangements for lighting the building with gas have not been completed. The appropriation of \$26,000 made at the last session of Congress for enlarging the grounds has been expended in the purchase of nearly fourteen acres contiguous to the former premises on the north and west. The number of pupils on the first day of July, 1863, was 52, and on the first day of July, 1864, 58. During the year, 81 have received instruction, of whom 72 were mutes, and 9 blind; and at the date of the report there were 73 pupils.

The State of Maryland having established an institution at Baltimore for the blind, the board has expressed the opinion that the blind of this District, on account of their small number, could be better instructed at Baltimore, and has recommended that their transfer to and support in that institution be sanctioned by law. This recommendation is submitted to the consideration of Congress.

The report of the president of the board of police commissioners, prepared in obedience to the requirements of the 4th section of the "act to create a metropolitan police district," &c., gives information in respect to the service performed by the officers and men during the past year. The number of patrolmen is one hundred and fifty, officered by a superintendent and ten sergeants. The police district embraces about seventy square miles, with a population of 150,000 or 160,000 souls. The number of arrests made during the past year was 23,545; of those thus arrested there have been committed to jail 1,010; given bail for appearance at court, 586; turned over to military authorities, 2,271; committed to the workhouse, 1,223; entered into bond to keep the peace, 710; punished by fine, 8,743; other punishment of a light nature, 343; dismissed, 7,757; cases of which final disposition was not reported, 902. The fines imposed amount in the aggregate to \$33,197 50. The police force during the same time has furnished lodgings to 2,483 destitute persons found in the streets and highways, restored 102 lost children, and assisted to carry 170 disabled persons to hospitals, besides taking up estrays, giving fire alarms, and attending to many other similar duties. A detective corps and a sanitary company have been in successful operation. During the year a fire-alarm and police telegraph has been erected. This will prove to be of very great value in rendering the police force more effective, and in insuring the safety of property against the ravages of fire and the dangers of riot. It is believed that after this telegraph has been used for a few months, and the members of the police have become familiar with the very many uses to which it may be applied, the necessity of an increase in the number of policemen will not be felt as heretofore. I respectfully recommend that an appropriation be made by Congress to meet the expense incurred.

The warden of the jail in the District of Columbia, appointed by authority of the act of Congress approved February 20, 1864, entered upon his duties on the 11th of April last. The average number of prisoners since that time has been about one hundred, though occasionally much greater. The jail has become dilapidated and insecure, and a new and more spacious one should be erected. This recommendation has been submitted by my predecessors for several years past, and at one time the Senate called upon this department to furnish a plan and estimate for this object. Congress, however, has never authorized the erection of such a building. The necessity for it increases with the increase of population and of transient sojourners in Washington, and is undeniably much greater to-day than heretofore. I have considered carefully the suggestion of the warden, that ample means for the construction of such a building might be obtained by the sale of the vacant square on which the jail now stands. This square, so near to the Capitol and Smithsonian grounds, will not be necessary for beautifying the city, or for affording it ample ventilation. According to an estimate which has been submitted to me, it contains 435,286 square feet of ground, which, if laid off into lots and sold, would at present prices command a large sum. The new jail might be located upon the square on which the City Hall stands, in the rear of that building. If erected after the most approved modern plan, it would not prove detrimental to private property, whilst the erection of dwellings or buildings for business purposes, upon the square, which it is proposed to sell, would tend greatly to enhance the value of private property in the vicinity. The warden of the jail, and the grand jury that served at the June term of the court, as well as the police commissioners, have called attention to the large number of juvenile offenders in the District, and to the great impropriety of incarcerating them with veterans in crime. Youths so treated are often discharged from jail more depraved than when they entered it. The recommendation made last year in favor of the erection of a house of correction for such offenders is respectfully renewed. It should be so regulated as to combine punishment with means of instruction and reform. The necessity for the erection of a penitentiary in this District was fully set forth in the last annual report of this department. Additional force cannot be given to the recommendation then made by a repetition of the views therein presented.

The clerical force engaged in the compilation of the statistics of the census becomes gradually less with the progress of the work devolving upon it, and its duties should be completed at an early period. The volume on population has been printed and distributed, and meets with favor throughout the country. That on agriculture is nearly ready for distribution, and the subsequent volumes will appear in succession; the whole presenting a complete exhibit of the material interests and progress of the country up to the period of the rebellion.

The numerous demands of States, departments, members of Congress, and individuals for statistical information, illustrate the importance of the organization of a permanent bureau of statistics, heretofore recommended to Congress.

The maintenance of such a bureau, charged, among other duties, with that of compiling the census returns and superintending the publication thereof, will not, it is believed, cause additional expense to the government.

The building occupied by the United States for the use of its courts in the city of New York is held under an expired lease. Notice has been given by the lessors that it is their intention to sell the premises as soon as the fair value can be obtained therefor. The attention of Congress to this subject is earnestly solicited, and an appropriation is recommended adequate to the purchase of a building adapted to the service.

The enforcement of the measures adopted by Congress for the suppression of the African slave trade has been followed by the most auspicious results. It is believed that in no port of the United States has a vessel been fitted out to engage in that nefarious traffic. Several prizes have been taken before the mixed courts of justice sitting at Sierra Leone and the Cape of Good Hope, but the result has not yet been communicated to the department.

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. P. USHER, *Secretary.*

To the PRESIDENT *of the United State*