

...the rights and interests of the public...

FOREST RESERVATIONS.

They Should Be Vastly Increased to Conserve Resources.

Optimism is a good characteristic, but if carried to an excess it becomes foolishness. We are prone to speak of the resources of this country as inexhaustible.

All these facts are so obvious that it is extraordinary that it should be necessary to repeat them. Every business man in the land, every writer in the newspapers, every man or woman of an ordinary school education, ought to be able to see that immense quantities of timber are used in the country, that the forests which supply this timber are rapidly being exhausted...

I do not blame these men nearly as much as I blame the supine public opinion, the indifferent public opinion, which permits their action to go unchecked.

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REPEAL WOOD PULP DUTY.

Abolition of Tariff on All Forest Products Recommended.

There should be no tariff on any forest product grown in this country, and in especial there should be no tariff on wood pulp, due notice of change being of course given to those engaged in the business so as to enable them to adjust themselves to the new conditions.

The chief engineer and all his professional associates are firmly convinced that the eighty-five feet level lock canal which they are constructing is the best that could be desired.

Work on the Panama canal is proceeding in a highly satisfactory manner. In March last John F. Stevens, chairman of the commission and chief engineer, resigned, and the commission was reorganized and constituted as follows: Lieutenant Colonel George W. Goethals, corps of engineers, United States army, chairman and chief engineer; Major D. D. Gallard, corps of engineers, United States army; Major William L. Sibert, corps of engineers, United States army; Civil Engineer H. H. Rousseau, United States navy; J. C. S. Blackburn, Colonel W. C. Gorgas, United States army, and Jackson Smith, commissioners. This change of authority and direction went into effect on April 1 without causing any perceptible check to the progress of the work.

Work on the locks and dams at Gatun, which began actively in March last, has advanced so far that it is thought that masonry work on the locks can be begun within fifteen months.

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Last winter bids were requested and received for doing the work of canal construction by contract. None of them was found to be satisfactory, and all were rejected. It is the unanimous opinion of the present commission that the work can be done better, more cheaply and more quickly by the government than by private contractors.

The unfortunate failure of the shipping bill at the last session of the last congress was followed by the taking off of certain Pacific steamships, which has greatly hampered the movement of passengers between Hawaii and the mainland.

I comment to the favorable consideration of the congress a postal savings bank system as recommended by the postmaster general. The primary object is to encourage among our people economy and thrift by the use of postal savings banks to give them an opportunity to husband their resources, particularly those who have not the facilities at hand for depositing their money in savings banks.

PARCELS POSTS.

Extension of This Service Advisable, Especially in Rural Delivery.

I further commend to the congress the consideration of the postmaster general's recommendation for an extension of the parcel post, especially on the rural routes. There are now 88,216 rural routes, serving nearly 15,000,000 people who do not have the advantages of the inhabitants of cities in obtaining their supplies.

Oklahoma has become a state, standing on a full equality with her elder sisters, and her future is assured by her great natural resources. The duty of the national government to guard the personal and property rights of the Indians within her borders remains of course unchanged.

...the coal and iron laws should be changed so as to meet the peculiar needs of the territory. This should be attended to at once, for the present laws permit individuals to locate large areas of the public domain for speculative purposes and cause an immense amount of trouble, fraud and litigation.

The courage and enterprise of the citizens of the far northwest in their projected Alaska-Yukon-Pacific expedition to be held in 1900 should receive liberal encouragement. This expedition is not sentimental in its conception, but seeks to exploit the natural resources of Alaska and to promote the commerce, trade and industry of the Pacific states with their neighboring states and with our insular possessions and the neighboring countries of the Pacific.

The secretary of war has gone to the Philippines. On his return I shall submit to you his report on the islands. I again recommend that the rights of citizenship be conferred upon the people of Porto Rico.

A bureau of mines should be created under the control and direction of the secretary of the interior, the bureau to have power to collect statistics and make investigations in all matters pertaining to mining, and particularly to the accidents and dangers of the industry. If this cannot now be done at least additional appropriations should be given the interior department to be used for the study of mining conditions, for the prevention of fraudulent mining schemes, for carrying on the work of mapping the mining districts, for studying methods of minimizing the accidents and dangers in the industry—in short, to aid in all proper ways the development of the mining industry.

I strongly recommend to the congress to provide funds for keeping up The Hermitage, the home of Andrew Jackson, these funds to be used through the existing Hermitage association for the preservation of a historic building which should ever be dear to Americans.

I further recommend that a naval monument be established in the Vicksburg national park. This national park gives a unique opportunity for commemorating the deeds of those gallant men who fought on water no less than of those who fought on land in the great civil war.

There is a constantly growing interest in this country in the question of the public health. At last the public mind is awake to the fact that many diseases, notably tuberculosis, are national scourges. The work of the state and city boards of health should be supplemented by a constantly increasing interest on the part of the national government.

I call attention to two government commissions which I have appointed and which have already done excellent work. The first of these has to do with the organization of the scientific work of the government, which has grown up wholly without plan and in consequence so unwisely distributed among the executive departments that much of its effect is lost for the lack of proper co-ordination.

...the second committee, that on department methods, was instructed to investigate and report upon the changes needed to place the conduct of the executive force of the government on the most economical and effective basis in the light of the best modern business practice.

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CAMPAIGN EXPENSES.

Corporations Should Not Contribute and Gifts Should Be Published.

Under our form of government voting is not merely a right, but a duty, and, moreover, a fundamental and necessary duty if a man is to be a good citizen. It is well to provide that corporations shall not contribute to presidential or national campaigns and furthermore to provide for the publication of both contributions and expenditures.

A National Gallery of Art. There should be a national gallery of art established in the Capital City of this country. This is important not merely to the artistic, but to the material, welfare of the country, and the people are to be congratulated on the fact that the movement to establish such a gallery is taking definite form under the guidance of the Smithsonian Institution.

The Thirteenth Census. Legislation should be enacted at the present session of the congress for the thirteenth census. The establishment of the permanent census bureau affords the opportunity for a better census than we have ever had, but in order to realize the full advantage of the permanent organization ample time must be given for preparation.

BIOLOGICAL SURVEY.

Its Great Work in Behalf of Our Agricultural Interests.

The biological survey is quietly working for the good of our agricultural interests and is an excellent example of a government bureau which conducts original scientific research the findings of which are of much practical utility.

...the biological survey has explored the faunas and floras of America with reference to the distribution of animals and plants. It has defined and mapped the natural life areas—areas in which, by reason of prevailing climatic conditions, certain kinds of animals and plants occur—and has pointed out the adaptability of these areas to the cultivation of particular crops.

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The time has come, in my judgment, to set to work seriously to make our ocean mail service correspond more closely with our recent commercial and political development. A beginning was made by the ocean mail act of March 3, 1891, but even at that time the act was known to be inadequate in various particulars.

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THE ARMY.

No Ground for Demagogic Declamation Against Militarism.

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We now pay, under the act of 1891, \$4 a statute mile outward to 20 knot American mail steamships built according to naval plans, available as cruisers and manned by Americans.

...the profits of this special mail service will be used to meet the requirements of mail service to South America, Asia (including the Philippines) and Australia.

It is interesting to note that the proposition involves no new principle, but permits the efficient discharge of public functions now inadequately performed or not performed at all. Not only there is not now, but there never has been, any other nation in the world so wholly free from the evils of militarism as is ours. There never has been any other large nation, not even China, which for so long a period has had relatively to its numbers so small a regular army as ours.

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