

LOWER RATE AND INCREASED WEIGHT RECOMMENDED FOR PARCEL POST

Mails Carried Free Under Franks Caused Deficit Last Year in Post Office Department—Freakish Things Sent Through the Mails—a Baby by Parcel Post.

Postmaster-General Hitchcock's annual report made public Monday, tentatively suggested reduction of some parcel post rates and increasing the limit of weight beyond 11 pounds; recommends civil service pensions for postal employees; an increase in rates on second-class mail, which he intends to pave the way for one cent letter postage; the consolidation of the third and fourth classes so books and papers may be forwarded by parcel post; and points out that during his administration, expense of operating the postal service has been cut down \$45,000,000.

In course of a statement on the condition of postal finances, Mr. Hitchcock says in his report: "In 1911 postal receipts exceeded postal expenditures, leaving a surplus instead of a deficit. A heavy loss of revenue in 1912 due to the extraordinary amount of franked matter mailed in the political campaign, created a temporary deficit, but since the close of the fiscal year the income of the Department again has outstripped expenses."

The establishing of postal savings banks at Presidential postoffices was completed early in the fiscal year, ended June 30, 1912,—the year covered by the report. Since then the system has been extended to 4,004 fourth-class postoffices, as well as to 645 branch offices and stations in the larger cities. There are now 12,812 postal savings banks at which patrons may open accounts. The number of depositors is approximately 300,000 and the deposits aggregate about \$28,000,000, not including \$1,314,140 withdrawn and invested in postal savings bonds.

The report contains no references to subjects which have developed since December 1, and, consequently, the Postmaster-General's consideration of the parcel post has to do only with the preliminary work of establishing the new system, which went into effect on January 1. Tentatively, however, he recommends not only that the parcel post rates be reduced, but that the weight of packages be increased to a point above the maximum weight of 11 pounds. On this subject the report says:

Would Lower Rates.

"While the postage rates for the new parcel post system range considerably lower than corresponding express changes, it is believed that experience will show them to be higher in some instances than is necessary in order to maintain the service at cost. Likewise, the restriction that places an 11-pound limit on the weight of parcels mailed should be regarded as merely tentative. After

the system is thoroughly organized on that basis the scope of the service in its usefulness to the public should be still further enlarged by increasing the weight limit. If properly developed under efficient management, the parcel post will prove to be a most important factor in reducing the cost of living."

Perhaps the most important recommendation contained in the report is that the third and fourth classes of mail be consolidated so that books and other printed matter may be forwarded by parcel post. At present the postage charges for these two classes of mail bear no fixed ratio to each other. For certain weights and zones the parcel post rates are lower than the third class rates, while in other cases they are higher.

"This condition," it is pointed out in the report, "is likely to result in much confusion and should not exist. Packages containing books or catalogues do not differ in any essential particular from other parcels and they should be handled by parcel post. Prior to the enactment of the parcel post law the Department urged that these two classes of mail be consolidated, and the recommendation of such action is now renewed."

The Postmaster-General recommends an increase on postage for newspapers, and hopes to give the country one cent letter postage at the expense of the newspapers.

The Free Mail.

During the fiscal year 1912 more than 300,000,000 pieces of mail, having an aggregate weight of about 61,000,000 pounds, were carried free through the mails under the franks of Congressmen and of various Government establishments. Had postage at the ordinary rates been paid on this matter the revenues of the department would have been increased by more than \$20,000,000. Postmaster-General Hitchcock declares that "it is manifestly unfair to give the Postoffice Department no credit in the Government's fiscal accounts for the expense of performing this service. The department, therefore, renews its recommendation that the practice of franking be discontinued and that legislative authority be granted for the use of official mail of special stamps to be furnished by the Postoffice Department on the requisition of those entitled to them."

The report recommends that "civil pensions based on length of service should be granted by the Government to postal employees when they become superannuated. It is likely that the expense of such a system would be more than offset by gains in efficiency."

PARCEL POST SYSTEM.

Rapidly Growing in Favor With the Patrons of the System—Freakish Things Sent Through Mails—a Baby by Parcel Post.

A special from Washington to Monday's Charlotte Observer says:

The parcel post system, which has been in operation since the first of the year, is working like a well-oiled Corliss engine. The experimental days seem to have been passed and the people are trying to reduce the cost of living by the use of the new postal express. Postal employees are doing their utmost to make the law a success.

There are two sides to the enforcement of the parcel post regulations, one in humorous and the other serious.

The strict letter of the parcel post act is not being adhered to all along the line. Many postmasters act without learning the rules and lessons prescribed by Congress and Postmaster-General Hitchcock.

Some of the infringements of the law that caused merriment are reported. In the mountains of Georgia a trapper shipped an odoriferous skunk skin to a friend at Seattle. The postmaster at the receiving point did not know that the package contained such a loud-smelling parcel and passed it along. The skin wended its way across the continent, leaving its unique trail in its wake, before the postal authorities were able to detect it.

Anything with a bad odor is "un-mailable."

"What is a bad odor?" the department has been asked.

S. J. Batts, a seed corn farmer of Raleigh, has entered his protest against a law that permits the posting of skunk skins by parcel post and not seed corn.

"I see," said Mr. Batts in protesting, "where one of our farmers has just sent a skunk hide which had to be kept out of the building until the mail wagon started to the depot."

"Now, as I see it, corn for a horse can be sent by parcel post as favored above his master, but surely a skunk will not be preferred to the farmer's corn."

"I mention these things in argument in behalf of seed corn. The law should be changed."

The Postoffice Department is in

"An eight-pound roast of beef was received and delivered to a woman on the west side. It was properly wrapped in cloth."

Many efforts have been made to send liquors through the mails by parcel post. Somehow an impression that the law permits the shipping of whiskey and other intoxicants got abroad and hundreds of inquiries on that point have come to the department. No sort of intoxicating liquor can be sent by mail.

WITH THE LEGISLATORS.

(Continued from page 4.)

Wednesday's Proceedings.

The House committee on agriculture reported favorably the bill to secure registration of land title, etc.

The committee on constitutional amendments reported favorably joint resolution providing for the submission of constitutional amendments to the people by an adjourned or called session of Legislature which is to consider the report of the commission appointed to study the need of amending the constitution.

The committee on judiciary, number two, reported without prejudice bill relative to the privy examination of married women.

The committee on pensions reported favorably bill to allow widows of Confederate veterans the pensions of their husbands. Favorable report on bill for the relief of the veterans of the Soldiers' Home, of Raleigh. Favorable report on joint resolution to pay expenses of Confederate veterans to the Gettysburg celebration.

Following bills were introduced: Substitute bill to define certain employment as extra hazardous, to abrogate the common law doctrine of contributory negligence, assumed risk, or act of a fellow-servant, etc., and to substitute the doctrine of comparative negligence. This bill would apply to all corporations carrying on extra hazardous work.

Bill to require railroads to accept mileage on trains. The author of the bill, Mr. Stewart, explained its provisions. One of which provides for the extension of the privileges of using the mileage of the purchaser by any member of his family. The substitute, offered by the committee, would do away with the provision requiring the railroads to pull the mileage on the trains if they will carry the family of the purchaser of the mileage. Mr. Stewart said that the railroads have violated the spirit of the compromise, effected in 1908, as they at once stopped the pulling of mileage when the agreement of 1908 was made whereby they agreed to sell mileage at two cents per mile, and tickets at the rate of two and one-half cents per mile.

Mr. Connor, to annex certain part of Nash County to Wilson County.

Mr. Grier, of Iredell, to place electric light, gas, water, telephone, street railway, and other public service corporations under the corporation commission.

Mr. Wall, to amend pension laws relative to widows of Confederate soldiers.

In the Senate.

Several bills were reported by regular committees. Notable among those reported unfavorably were the House divorce bills and those which have been introduced in the Senate. Among those reported favorably was Senator Hobgood's bill to allow an appropriation of \$5,000 per annum for a freight rate expert for the corporation commission.

To increase the superior court judges and judicial districts to twenty.

Senator Ward presented a petition favoring an appropriation of \$20,000 for Oxford Orphan Asylum.

By Senator Barnes, asking an appropriation to pay expenses of military companies to the inauguration.

Bills Introduced.

By Senator Jones, to place utility companies under control of corporation commission.

At this juncture the Senate took up a special order, allowing the Supreme Court reporter \$400 for clerical assistance in getting out the reports, Judge Jones again made objection to the bill on the grounds that all these appropriations should be kept by the committee until it was known how many thousands or millions could be raised to meet pressing demands. He referred to the "tilt" last Saturday between himself and Judge Council. He declared he had no hard feelings and accepted in good faith Judge Council, disclaimed that he intended

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any personal attack. He asked that action on the bill be deferred. If it was passed now he would certainly vote against it. Judge Council insisted that the bill be voted on now. Senator Wakefield called the previous question. The committee amended, substituting \$400 for \$750 was adopted. As amended the bill passed its second reading.

WAKE FARMER ROBBED.

Store of Wake Mercantile Company is Burned.

On Tuesday night, Henry Beasley, a farmer of Panther Branch township, this county, was returning home from Raleigh, when he was assaulted by two white men and robbed of \$40. The two men had asked Mr. Beasley for a ride, and when they thought the opportune time had arrived, they hit Mr. Beasley over the head and robbed him.

The store and stock of goods of Wake Mercantile Company, about eight miles south of Raleigh, was burned on the same night, with a loss of about \$5,000.

Yesterday the chife of police of Raleigh caused the arrest of J. F. Gallagher and Charles Shearin in a house on north Salisbury street, and Shearin confessed to Mr. Stel that both are guilty of the highway robbery, and it is believed that the same men burned the store. Two strange men were in the store "looking around" only a few hours before the fire.

Turks Are Given Twenty-four Hours to Capitulate.

London, Feb. 5.—The bombardment of Adrianople ceased temporarily at 11 o'clock last night with Bulgarian and Servian besiegers offering the Turks twenty-four hours to capitulate, according to advices from Sofia. Operations will be resumed if no advantage is taken of this offer.

Mrs. Jeannette Ennis Belo, founder of the Belo Home for Girls at Winston-Salem, died yesterday at Cambridge, Mass.

BETTER THAN SPANKING.

Spanking does not cure children of bed-wetting. There is a constitutional cause for this trouble. Mrs. M. Summers, Box W, Notre Dame, Ind., will send free to any mother her successful home treatment, with all instructions. Send no money, but write her today if your children trouble you in this way. Don't blame the child, the chances are it can't help it. This treatment also cures adults and aged people troubled with urine difficulties by day or night.



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