

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

A letter from the Secretary of the Interior with draft of a bill to create the office of Medical Inspector for the United States Indian service.

JANUARY 18, 1882.—Read, referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives :

I transmit herewith a letter from the Secretary of the Interior, forwarding copy of a letter addressed to him by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, inclosing draft of a bill to create the office of medical inspector for the United States Indian service.

CHESTER A. ARTHUR.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
Washington, January 18, 1882.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, January 12, 1882.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith, for your consideration, a copy of a letter addressed to me on the 6th instant, by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, inclosing draft of a bill to create the office of medical inspector for the United States Indian service.

I beg leave to suggest that the same be transmitted to Congress.

I have the honor to be, sir, with great respect, your obedient servant,

S. J. KIRKWOOD,
Secretary.

The PRESIDENT.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, January 6, 1882.

SIR: I have the honor to submit herewith the draft of a bill to create the office of "medical inspector for the United States Indian service," the necessity for such officer being set forth in the preamble to the same, and respectfully request that, should the object meet the approval of the department, the same may be forwarded to Congress with favorable recommendation for its enactment into a law.

Very respectfully,

A BILL to create the office of medical inspector for the United States Indian service.

Whereas it is of the highest importance that a uniform system be inaugurated for collating the vital statistics of the Indian tribes, and that the best plan should be adopted to induce the Indians to abandon their "medicine men," and adopt the civilized mode of caring for and treatment of the sick; and whereas it is equally important that the influence of the "medicine men" be rendered nugatory, and the influence exerted by the physicians be so directed as to produce the best results, and to this end it is deemed to be essential that an inspection of all Indian agencies should be had once or twice a year by a competent person, who shall see that proper hospital accommodations are furnished, and that the medical branch of the Indian service is conducted efficiently, honestly, and with proper economy; therefore

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, a medical inspector for the United States Indian service, to perform the duties herein required; the inspector to be a competent physician, who shall hold his office for four years unless sooner removed by the President, and he shall receive an annual salary of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) and his necessary actual traveling expenses.

Each Indian agency may be visited by the medical inspector, and the medical department of the agency examined once a year, or as often as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs may direct; such examination shall extend to a full investigation of all matters pertaining to the office of agency physician. The medical inspector shall view the sanitary situation of the several agencies, inquire the need of the Indians, ascertain to what extent hospital privileges would be desirable, estimate the approximate cost of hospital buildings with the necessary appliances, look into the method of collating the vital statistics, and give such instructions as may be essential to prevent erroneous reports, and inaugurate a system of inquiry that will lead to a concise statement of the actual vital status of the several Indian tribes; examine the supply of medicine on hand as to quality and quantity, and make such recommendation regarding the disposition of the excess of any article or articles, appliances, and instruments as in his judgment may be for the good of the service; also, when the Commissioner of Indian Affairs may direct, investigate the actual or alleged incompetency or irregularity of any agency physician, and report the facts, with such recommendations as in his judgment may be for the good of the service.