

## REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*November 29, 1856.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit to you my annual report, giving a brief history of the operations of this department whilst under my charge.

The act for its organization was immaturely considered, otherwise so many subjects, in almost every respect dissimilar, would not have been united in the same department. There is no congruity in the principles by which the different bureaus are governed; and the decisions which the head of the department is constantly called upon to make, have little or no relation to each other, as a mere glance at the matters entrusted to his care will readily show. To the department, by the organic act, is confided the supervision of the Patent Office, the General Land Office, the Indian Office, the Pension Office, the Commissioner of Public Buildings, the Board of Inspectors and Warden of the Penitentiary of the District of Columbia, the Census, and the accounts of the marshals, clerks and other officers of all the United States courts, embracing those of the District of Columbia. To these have since been added the Insane Asylum, the Mexican boundary survey, and the construction of several territorial roads.

When the legitimate objects of the different departments are duly considered, it would seem that a reorganization of the whole had become necessary, and that a more suitable arrangement than the present one could be devised, and should be adopted. At all events, no further burdens should be imposed upon this department, as its labors are already sufficiently severe and arduous. When organized in 1849, several of its bureaus were larger than most of the present departments twenty years before, and they have since been constantly increasing, and will continue to do so, keeping pace with the extension and advancement of the country.

Notwithstanding the Indian difficulties and other disturbances in several of the Territories, the surveys of the public lands have progressed rapidly. The quantity of land surveyed, exclusive of school sections, since my last report, and up to the 30th of September last, was 16,873,699 acres, much of which is now ready for market.

The grants made by Congress at its last session, for railroad purposes, have had the effect of withdrawing from market a large body of the public lands, which, notwithstanding every exertion that can be made, cannot be restored in less than nine months, and perhaps not

then, as it depends in a great degree upon the action of the States, to which the grants were made, and, in many cases, the legislation of those States.

In executing the graduation act, many grave questions have arisen, some of which cannot be satisfactorily settled without the interposition of Congress. Every effort has been made to carry it into effect, so as to benefit, as far as practicable, the actual settler; but the looseness with which some of its parts were drafted, and the want of proper guards to protect its principles, has, thus far, rendered most of those efforts ineffectual. Many fraudulent entries under the act having been reported to the General Land Office, suitable rules and regulations have been adopted for their correction, and to prevent the occurrence of others. The principal difficulty arises from the fact that, in many cases, although the land has been entered more than a year, no improvements, indicating a bona fide intention to perform the requirements of the law, have been made; and in others, the purchasers, immediately after the entries, made sale of the lands purchased, without the slightest attempt at "actual settlement or cultivation." Patents upon entries have been applied for, and will be granted wherever the land office is satisfied of the fairness of the transaction; but where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion, proof will be required to be filed, within a given period, to sustain the entry. It is, however, competent for Congress to declare whether the title to these lands shall pass to all, indiscriminately, or whether satisfactory evidence of a compliance with the spirit and intention of the law, shall be first required. The former course would tend most to the relief of the land office, as then the issue of the patents would be the only labor required. For the benefit of purchasers generally, and the States in which the graduated lands lie, it is important that the matter should be promptly disposed of, either by sanctioning and affirming the action of the General Land Office, or directing the patents to be issued without further requirement.

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| The quantity of land sold for cash during the last fiscal year, was.....                         | 9,227,878.98 acres.    |
| Received therefor, \$8,821,414.53.   |                        |
| Located with military scrip and land warrants...   | 8,382,480.00 "         |
| Swamp lands approved to the States.....  | 6,036,874.39 "         |
| Selected under donations for railroads, &c., and granted for railroad purposes, (estimated)..... | 15,680,875.00 "        |
| Making a total of.....   | <u>39,328,108.37</u> " |

The quantity of lands sold for cash, during the second and third quarters of the present calendar year, is 2,000,065.50 acres. Received therefor, \$1,906,883.72.

The difficulties in executing satisfactorily the swamp land grants, still exist. Several of the States have passed laws donating these lands for specific purposes, and they now complain, that, if the selections are set aside for any cause, their faith must be violated. It is contended that most of those who are contesting the rights of the States are mere speculators, and should not be permitted to defeat

their permanent interests; that thereby many of the counties, and of their people, will be injured, and the government not correspondingly benefited. Much of this is true, and although many errors have been committed, yet it is worthy of consideration whether, under all the circumstances, it is not the best policy to approve the selection so far as they do not interfere with actual settlers.

By the act of April 20, 1818, it was supposed that the annual maximum compensation to registers and receivers of land offices, was \$3,000 each; the same being made up by the salary of \$500, and one per centum commission, upon the moneys received from the sales of the public lands. But, under the ruling of the Supreme Court, the commission is computed upon the amount actually received, with regard to time, so that if the commission, together with a pro rata amount of the salary, reaches \$3,000 in one month, and the officer's term then expires, the \$3,000 is retained by him. In many cases it is thus made the interest of the officer to vacate the office, because, for the remainder of the year, he would have to discharge all its duties without further compensation; and where the lands in the district are, as sometimes is the case, in great demand, the government might be compelled to pay the maximum compensation, several times during the same year. It is an evil that needs correction.

The land system, under the legislative enactments of the last four years, and by the active measures taken to meet demands for settlement, has been extended with entire success, and unprecedented rapidity, along the whole Pacific slope, embracing the State of California, the Territories of Oregon and Washington, and into the Territories of Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico and Utah. This immense geographical surface has been organized into six new surveying departments, and the public surveys are in rapid extension over it. Surveying operations in the new and the old districts have, in the same period, been extended over an area of nearly sixty millions of acres, in which the lines have been run and established.

During this period, also, there have been sold for

|                                   |               |   |   |   |   |                   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| cash,                             | -             | - | - | - | - | 30,935,174 acres. |
| For which there has been received | \$27,940,151. |   |   |   |   |                   |
| Located for military bounties,    | -             | - | - | - | - | 15,806,260 "      |
| Approved under swamp land grants, | -             | - | - | - | - | 30,199,056 "      |
| Granted for railroads,            | -             | - | - | - | - | 17,036,282 "      |

Making the aggregate, - - - 93,976,772 acres,

disposed of, in part, for farms by direct grants to industrious citizens, a portion, by titles issued as indemnity to the defenders of the country, in part, to aid the new States in redeeming from overflow and its consequences valuable lands, and bringing them under tillage; and the residue, in facilitating travel and intercourse, by the extension of the railway, canal and other systems of national intercommunication, thereby, also, largely increasing the value of the landed interests of the country.

It is scarcely possible to convey a proper idea of the great labor

incident to the accomplishment of the operations mentioned. It may be stated, however, among numerous heavy items, that the records of correspondence, cover ninety thousand folio pages, embracing decisions upon numerous intricate questions of title, not only as derived from foreign governments, but arising under the land legislation of Congress, during the past half century. Besides this, eight thousand accounts have been adjusted, and four hundred thousand land patents issued by the government.

An examination has been made, with a view to ascertain whether the number of offices of surveyors general could not be diminished, and it has been found, that four may be entirely discontinued within the next two years, and the initiatory steps have been taken to that end.

The number of applications under the recently enacted bounty-land laws, to the twenty-fifth instant, was 265,268; those examined, 239,726; of which 182,070 have been allowed; and warrants issued, covering 22,003,290 acres, and 57,656 have been suspended or rejected; leaving 25,542 original cases not yet examined.

These laws have been executed with all possible dispatch, and there are, comparatively, few claims which have not undergone preliminary examination. The time thus consumed has been less than one-half of what was anticipated when the several acts were respectively passed. Although the labor and attention required were great, the work has been accomplished in a very brief period, and yet with great faithfulness.

The necessity of further power being given to the Commissioner of Pensions, to suspend, diminish and discontinue pensions, when the reason for granting them has partially or totally ceased, is daily becoming more apparent. The Commissioner should be clothed with authority to strike the name of the pensioner from the pension roll, or graduate the pension when he is satisfied of the cessation or diminution of the disability of an invalid pensioner. Cases of this kind are constantly occurring. Upon an investigation of this class of pensioners, in a portion of a single State, during the past year, it was found that, of sixty-seven cases, eleven were baseless, and the amounts allowed to most of the remainder, were much larger than their present disabilities would entitle them to; so that, if those pensions were properly graduated, the annual saving to the treasury, in the cases examined, would be some three thousand dollars. As these are life pensions, the aggregate annual amount paid, is very large in comparison with what it should be, and, as the number of this class of pensioners is rapidly and constantly augmenting, unless some measure is adopted to prevent it, the evil will be largely increased.

Experience and reflection convince me that the only true principle, upon which to base pensions, is that of indigence. The meritorious and needy pensioners are now poorly aided by the general government. The pensions, ranging from three and a half, to eight dollars per month, are, manifestly, insufficient to supply their necessary wants, especially, where they are compelled to furnish subsistence for dependent families. If the principle were adopted, and a reasonable increase made to the present pittance of those, whose services and

wants demand it, the amount annually appropriated would not be increased, but the distribution would be far more just, equitable and beneficial.

There are distinctions and discriminations between army and navy pensions, which are unreasonable, and should not be permitted longer to exist.

Both should be placed on an equality, as to the amount to be received, the circumstances under which they should be granted, and the time they should run; and disabilities in the one case, should be of the same character as in the other.

On the 30th of June last, there were 13,932 pensioners, and the amount disbursed for their benefit, during the fiscal year, was \$1,360,694.61.

Every day's experience proves that the present system of confining the advances to pension agents, to the amount of their semi-annual payments, has had a good effect. I am persuaded, that in most cases, when, under the old system, the pension agents were not directly compensated by the government, for their services, they were indirectly paid; otherwise, we cannot satisfactorily account for the large amounts of pension money they generally had on hand, over and above what was actually necessary to meet the current demands; nor can it be presumed that they would have performed the service without remuneration, or, if they received none, nor derived any benefit from the trust, that they would have rested content so long, without presenting their claims to Congress.

Notwithstanding the vigilance of the Pension Bureau, and the numerous precautions adopted, and the criminal proceedings instituted and successfully prosecuted, frauds are still being perpetrated, many of which cannot be prevented, or punished when discovered, without a revision of the laws relating to such offences.

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| On the 30th of September, 1852, the number of applications for bounty land, pending, and on the suspended files of the Pension Office, liable to be called up for re-examination, was about,..... | 65,256  |
| The number of new applications filed during the year following, was about,.....   | 30,676  |
| During the next year, about,.....   | 13,491  |
| And thence to the 30th September, 1856.....   | 258,100 |

|                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| Making in all,..... | 367,523 |
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| The number of warrants issued during the year ending 30th September, 1853, was about,..... | 41,063  |
| The number issued the succeeding year was.....   | 17,735  |
| During the next year,.....   | 38,429  |
| During the year ending 30th September, 1856,.....  | 139,194 |

|                       |         |
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| Making the total..... | 236,421 |
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The number of pensioners added to the rolls, between the 1st of

April, 1853, and the 30th September, 1856, is 9,585; the aggregate of whose yearly pensions is \$704,290.74, besides the sum of \$1,494,-457.37, paid as arrearages, immediately, on the admission of the claims.

These are, merely, some of the results of the operations of the office. They convey but a faint idea of the various and complicated intermediate labors involved, between the receipt of an application for bounty land, or pension, and the final determination of the claim; for, besides the examination and, frequently, the re-examination of a claim, before it is admitted, many pension claims have been presented (probably three times the number of those admitted) which have been examined and re-examined, and still suspended or rejected; and these, generally, require the most patient investigation and research.

The number of letters received at the office, during the past year, is 107,800, and the number sent thence, 270,387—an extent of correspondence, probably, without a precedent. This vast amount of business, is chiefly consequent upon the execution of laws, passed during and subsequent to the year 1853, viz: the pension act of 3d February, 1853, and the bounty-land law of 3d March, 1855, and the amendatory act of 14th May, 1856.

The field-work of the Mexican boundary commission, was all accomplished, as stated in my last report, within the time contemplated, and largely within the means appropriated.

All the monuments, agreed upon by the joint commission, have been erected, and the line is marked from the Gulf of Mexico, to the Pacific; and the United States is in possession of the territory.

A considerable portion of the boundary, is formed by the Rio Bravo, or Rio Grande; and in the settled portion of the valleys, which are best adapted to agriculture, the bed of the river sometimes changes, and transfers considerable portions of land, from one side to the other.

The commissioners concluded, and it is thought with correctness, that, except in the case of gradual accretions on one or the other bank of the river, the boundary would remain where the river fixed it, at the time of the survey, and as shown in the maps, notwithstanding actual changes in the course of the river. A case of this kind is threatened in the valley of El Paso, and anxious inquiries have been made on the subject. The parties making the inquiries have been referred to the printed maps, and informed that any change in the river, detaching solid masses of land, does not change the jurisdiction.

The Mexican commissioner, according to an agreement with the American commissioner, repaired to this city with a corps of assistants, about the first of July last, for the purpose of constructing the maps, required by the treaty, to show the boundary, and is now here on that duty.

On the part of our commissioner, these maps will be finished by the first of March next. Already the services of many of his assistants have been dispensed with, and it is in contemplation to discharge the whole force of draughtsmen before that time, and none of the employés will be retained, except such as may be required to superintend the printing of the maps and reports, descriptive of the boundary and adjacent country, the publication of which was ordered by Congress at its last session.



The first part of the report is already in the hands of the printer, and nothing retards its publication, but the necessary delays in engraving the maps.

Notwithstanding the Senate, in its order for the publication of the report and accompanying appendix of the boundary commission, directed, that the expenses of publication should be paid out of the boundary appropriations, there will remain of them, untouched in the Treasury, some eighty thousand dollars.

No officer could have discharged his duty with more ability, or greater fidelity, than the commissioner, to whom were confided the interests of this government. And it is proper to state, that the utmost harmony has existed on this commission, between the officers of both the governments, and that all questions likely to produce the least difference, have been amicably settled, and, as is believed, to the entire satisfaction of all parties.

Since the first day of January last, the Patent Office has issued 2,255 patents, and, within the year, the number will probably be increased to some 2,500.

All applications are promptly attended to, and it is hoped the interests of that meritorious class of our people—the inventors—be properly secured and protected. None are more worthy the fostering care of the general government.

From small beginnings the Patent Office has grown into proportions comparatively gigantic. Half a century ago, the whole revenue of the office did not exceed \$1,500 per annum, which was appropriated to the payment of one clerk, who transacted the entire business of the office. The income, for the present year, will be about \$200,000, which will still be scarcely sufficient to defray the current expenses of the office, with its one hundred, examiners, clerks and other, employees.

If we compare the present condition of the office with what it was a few years ago, we shall find, that, during the four years previous to 1853, the average annual number of applications for patents was 2,522; while for the four subsequent years such average will be about 4,000. The number of patents annually issued during the former period averages 990; during the latter, about 1850. For the current year, the whole number of applications made, the whole number of patents granted, and the amount of revenue received, will, respectively, be at least double what they were in any previous year. The number of applications for patents in this office, the last year, was greater than that in any other country, having been 4,435, against 2,958, in Great Britain, and 4,056, in France. For the present year, the number of applications will probably reach 5,000.

The business of the office seems to have outgrown the system upon which it has thus far been conducted, which was adapted to a previous stage of its existence. The wisdom of Congress may be profitably exercised, in making such modifications as present circumstances require.

In addition to the business of the Patent Office proper, there has been devolved upon the Commissioner of Patents, the supervision of the National Gallery, and the direction of the fund, annually appropriated for agricultural purposes. The former of these duties is,

Comparatively, of small moment; the latter, of great and rapidly growing importance.

There seems no very natural or immediate connexion between the legitimate business of the Patent Office, and the subject of agriculture, except in their mutual relation to the industrial pursuits of the people. But the revenues of the office, being somewhat in excess, in 1839, the Commissioner of Patents was authorized to apply \$1,000 for the purpose of procuring agricultural statistics. For many years, subsequent to that time, annual appropriations were made from the same fund, for a similar purpose. These were increased, from time to time, until they reached the sum of \$5,000, where they remained nearly stationary for several years.

In 1854, the appropriation was increased to \$35,000, and made payable out of the treasury; and the appropriation, for the present year, has been increased to \$105,000. The objects embraced in this appropriation are declared to be "the collection of agricultural statistics; investigations for promoting agriculture and rural economy, and the procurement and distribution of cuttings and seeds."

In pursuance of the design of Congress, measures have been taken to procure cuttings and seeds from every quarter of the globe, where any new product can be found, which is likely to prove useful in any portion of the United States. Many new productions of great probable utility have thus been introduced, and others are being sought for, wherever there is any prospect of success. A vessel has just been sent to South America, to procure cuttings of the sugar cane, to furnish our southern planters with a fresh stock, to supply the place of that which, it is supposed, has deteriorated by continued cultivation without renovation from the indigenous plant.

The front basement of the centre building, and the east wing, of the Patent Office have been finished, and, with the exception of the portico, which is in rapid progress, the same may be said of the west wing.

The north front of the building has been commenced, and the foundation will probably be laid during the present season, so as to be ready for the superstructure in the spring. Another appropriation has been asked for, which will nearly complete this part, according to the original plan and estimate; the object being to press it forward as rapidly as practicable, both on account of economy and utility. The entire structure, when finished, will temporarily accommodate all the bureaus of this department, but this should not deter Congress from making the necessary appropriations for a departmental building, which will be much needed before, under ordinary circumstances, it can be constructed and prepared for occupancy. No valid reason can be assigned for further delay.

I must again call your attention to the extraordinary expenses of the judiciary, and the absolute necessity for a radical change or modification of such of the laws as relate thereto. The act passed at the last session of Congress, with a view of curing some of the defects, has, so far as tested, proved very beneficial. The pecuniary saving thereby, has been large; but this is of little moment in comparison with the salutary influence it has had upon the class of officers it was intended to affect. Still new developments are being made, which show that



many serious evils have silently crept into practice, in some of our courts, which should be speedily remedied. Most of the laws for their prevention are seriously defective, and need revision, and without congressional action, the officers of the treasury and this department are powerless. As the laws now are, I can conceive of no better plan than to entrust the department with sufficient means to investigate all charges that may be preferred, whenever, and wherever, this department and the accounting officers of the treasury are satisfied there is fraud, corruption, or malfeasance in office.

On the 30th of June, 1855, there were in the Insane Asylum sixty patients, and during the fiscal year there were received into it forty-seven; eight have died; six were discharged—five of them being restored—and there were left, on the thirtieth of June last, ninety-three patients. It is in a most flourishing condition, and bids fair to be the first in the country. The improvements are steadily progressing, and will be completed as rapidly as is desirable. The appropriations heretofore made, are deemed ample for the next year, except a small amount, for which an estimate has been made, for the improvement of the farm and grounds, and the purchase of horticultural and agricultural implements, and machinery. Congress has already exhibited great liberality towards this institution, and no doubt the results will soon prove, that it has not been improperly bestowed.

The number of convicts in the Penitentiary is seventy-two. Thirty-five were admitted, and twenty-eight discharged, during the past year. The expense of managing it is now nearly equalled by the income, and the excess is being yearly diminished.

The act of the 18th of August last, required the Secretary of the Interior to select a suitable site for a new jail, at or near the Penitentiary, in the city of Washington, and to cause drawings and specifications to be prepared therefor, to be submitted, with an estimate of its cost, to Congress at the next session.

Early measures were taken to enable me to comply with the requisitions of this act. The architect, in charge of the Patent Office building, was instructed to examine, carefully, the most approved designs for buildings of the kind specified, and prepare the required drawings, specifications and estimates, for the one proposed to be built.

He has attended to that duty, and furnished the plans, herewith submitted, which are so arranged, as to admit of an indefinite enlargement of the building, without interfering with its symmetry. The estimated cost is \$150,000.

The act requires the site for the new jail, to be selected at or near the Penitentiary, and the department is, accordingly, confined to that vicinity. The grounds adjoining the Penitentiary, on the east, belong, as I am informed, to the government, and if the jail is to be erected in that neighborhood, I should recommend that it be placed there. Aside, however, from the fact that these grounds are understood to be needed by the War Department, there are serious objections to this locality which should, in my opinion, be brought to the attention of Congress, before further proceedings are had respecting it.

The grounds are low and marshy, and at certain seasons of the year, here is reason to fear, the place would prove unhealthy, when occu-

pied by so large a number (probably 150) as would usually be confined there, subject to the malaria from the creek on the one side, and the river on the other. It would be well, therefore, to seek a more healthful situation, and, it is believed, such may be found, which would likewise be more convenient, in all respects, to the city. Should it be concluded to select another site, I am satisfied, from the examinations already made, that the government would be the gainer in point of cost, as the extra expense of securing a safe foundation, upon the grounds indicated by the act, together with that of filling up the premises to a proper grade, would be more than enough to make the requisite purchase.

In this connexion, it is deemed proper to invite attention to the want of suitable accommodations for the criminal court of the District of Columbia. An appropriation was made at the last session for the alteration and improvement of the court room heretofore used, in common, by the circuit and criminal courts, which has been judiciously expended, and, by means of which, that room has been rendered convenient and comfortable.

These courts are frequently in session at the same time, and, hence, a separate room is indispensable for the proper accommodation of each.

The judges and the members of the bar have recently united in a communication upon this subject, asking me to "urge upon the attention of Congress, the necessity of extending the present court-house, as proposed by the Commissioner of Public Buildings, so as to accomplish" that object. I have regarded this memorial as of so much interest, as to direct its publication with the printed estimates of the department, in the hope that suitable provision may be made by Congress, at its next session, to supply the wants therein so clearly shown to exist.

With a view of effecting the object of Congress, in regard to the construction of a new and substantial bridge over the Potomac river, Alfred L. Rives, a civil engineer, was appointed to make the necessary surveys, examinations, plans, drawings and estimates. Every effort has been made, and is still making, to perform the service, satisfactorily, and it is hoped that a full report of the results will be made before the month of February next, and in time for the consideration of Congress.

The work on the bridge across the Potomac, at the Little Falls, in this district, has been entrusted to a skilful civil engineer. The appropriation was made so late in the season, that the bridge could not be finished, in time for travel, the approaching winter; but it will be pressed to completion as rapidly as practicable.

The appropriation, made in 1855, for grading, &c., preparatory to the extension of the Capitol grounds, was judiciously and economically expended. As Congress appropriated the money, without any estimate or recommendation of the department, and as no general plan had been devised or adopted, it was not deemed proper to submit an item among the estimates presented at the last session of Congress, because the department did not understand its design, and presumed, if its continuation was considered advisable, a suitable appropriation would

be made for that purpose. As none, however, was made, and the wings of the Capitol are advancing rapidly to completion, and the grounds present a rough and inelegant appearance, it appears proper that the attention of Congress should be directed to it.

The improvement of the grounds, south of the executive mansion has been completed according to the plan adopted at its commencement. That part of the grounds immediately adjacent to the executive premises, is not sufficiently elevated, and further appropriation should be made with this view, not only because it would add to the beauty, but be promotive of the healthfulness of the executive mansion and the neighboring residences. With a small expenditure of money this may be done, and the sooner it is accomplished the better, as, now, the change will not seriously interfere with the arrangement of the grounds.

The public grounds in the city of Washington have been extensively improved and beautified; but, still, as much has not been done as is required. Within a few years past Congress has, in this regard, been more than usually liberal, but far from lavish. The comfort, health and convenience not merely of the citizens, but of the members themselves, and all the functionaries of the government, and every visitor to this city, demand that much larger expenditures should be made. When the money is judiciously expended, no one can object to its application. The whole nation is interested in the national metropolis, and the people will sanction anything, relating to its improvement, which is necessary and constitutional. One thing is certain, these improvements will, eventually, be made by the government, and, being merely a question of time, an overflowing treasury suggests this as the proper period.

The Indian lands in the Territory of Kansas, which, by treaty stipulations, were to be sold, and the proceeds applied to the use of the Indians, are in a state of preparation for sale. A portion of the Delaware lands was, pursuant to law, advertised to be sold on the 17th instant. Every precaution has been adopted to secure fairness and impartiality in the sale. It was entrusted, according to the requirements of the law, to the local land officers, under the superintending control of a commissioner of high standing, and the agent of the Delaware Indians was directed to be present, in order to advise with the commissioner, and guard and protect the interests of the tribe. If the instructions given, which were minute and, at the same time, liberal, have been strictly adhered to, (of which we entertain no doubt,) all interested will be protected; but, where there is so much diversity of feeling and interest, it is almost impossible to satisfy every one.

In my last report, I stated that it would be advantageous to the Indians and the government to provide for an officer, to be attached to the bureau, whose duty it should be to visit the superintending agents and tribes, examine into all their affairs, and make such general and detailed reports, and submit such suggestions, as would enable the Indian office to adopt measures, which might correct many of the abuses that prevail, and have a tendency to meliorate the condition of the Indians. Further reflection has strengthened this view.

When it is considered that many of the agents are, to a great extent, beyond the reach of the bureau, and that it is often impossible to communicate with, or receive information from, them, for months; that they are frequently so situated as to defy investigation and to fear no exposure, unless by the adoption of some such measure as is proposed, it seems to me that its policy and expediency cannot be doubted.

During your administration, there have been negotiated fifty-two Indian treaties; of these, thirty-two have been ratified by the Senate, and twenty remain yet to be acted on. By these treaties the Indian title has been extinguished to, and reacquisitions made of, lands amounting, in the aggregate, to 174,184,710 acres; of which, about 52,000,000 are included in the ratified treaties, and about 122,000,000 acres are secured by those now before the Senate, besides 19,343,800 acres, which have been reserved for Indian purposes. The aggregate money consideration involved, is \$11,184,203.80.

These treaties are of three classes: of peace and friendship; of acquisition, with a view to the colonization of the Indians on reservations; for providing for the permanent settlement of individual Indians upon separate tracts of land, as homesteads, and extinguishing at once, or paving the way to the final abandonment of, the tribal character.

The money consideration has varied according to the nature of the title, the resources and value of the country obtained, and the relinquishment of all claims, or supposed claims, against the United States; the last being deemed essential to the quietude of the Indians, to protect the interests of the government, and promote harmony between it and the respective tribes.

Besides the actual money consideration, other important benefits are guaranteed at times, and in the manner indicated in the treaties, which cannot be estimated, accurately, in money.

The object, throughout, has been to do ample justice to the Indians, and leave no room for the complaint, sometimes heretofore made, that they had been overreached by the white man. Whether such complaint was just or not, there is no doubt the Indians believed, or were persuaded by others, that just grounds existed for its indulgence. It must be admitted, that, in some cases, the "talks" with the Indians, upon which treaties were based did not correspond with the treaties themselves, and that the Indians generally relied on these "talks," which they recollected and understood, and not on the treaties, as reduced to writing, which they seldom correctly comprehended.

Great difficulty has heretofore existed, and still exists, in making even an approximate estimate of the population of the various tribes of Indians within our borders; but, from the most reliable information, they are now supposed to number some 300,000 souls. As we become more familiar with remote tribes, we find the representations made, as to their numbers, generally exaggerated. The aggregate number, however, of the whole is very large, and although it will not probably increase, yet it shows the immense responsibility resting upon this government, to which is entrusted their welfare and happiness.

The average amount, annually expended by the general government,

for the past six years, for Indian purposes, has been about \$2,625,932.61, and the aggregate amount, for the entire period, \$15,755,593.87.

A new policy has been adopted of making remittances to the disbursing officers of this bureau, quarterly and semi-annually, instead of the custom of drawing the entire appropriations from the treasury, and placing them in the hands of the disbursing agents, officers and superintendents, in advance of a necessity for the money. Officers are now required to transmit, promptly and regularly, a correct statement, verified by oath, showing the amount of public money on hand at the expiration of each quarter, the object to which it is applied, where kept or deposited, and the description of funds. This serves to prevent difficulty, and to secure greater care and watchfulness.

The amount of stocks held, by this department, in trust for the various Indian tribes, is \$2,028,676. Some of the stocks have matured and been redeemed, and a reinvestment cannot be made, because the law confines the department to stocks of the United States, which cannot be obtained except at a high premium. In consequence of this, estimates have been annually made for appropriations for five per centum on the trust funds, held by and never drawn from the treasury, to which Congress has responded favorably; and, thereby, a policy has been initiated, if not established, which, probably, should not be disturbed.

During the present calendar year, there will have been expended, and remitted, for payment of Indian annuities, the sum of \$907,902.55, in money; \$190,892.83, in goods, and \$30,166.67, in provisions. This shows, that, notwithstanding the unremitting endeavors of the department, a very large portion of the payments is still made upon the cash system; and this, to a certain extent, paralyzes the efforts made for the permanent improvement of the tribes.

The act of 1851 requires that all negotiations with the Indian tribes, shall be conducted by regular officers of the Indian bureau. This has largely increased its burdens, and added to the labors of its officers. These have been greatly augmented by the extended operations in the Territories of Washington, Oregon, Utah, New Mexico, Kansas and Nebraska, and the States of Texas and California; by attention to Indian claims for bounty lands; enrolment of Choctaws in Mississippi; sale of Creek reserves in Alabama; enrolment of Sioux half-breeds on the Lake Pepin reservation; examination of the claims of traders against several of the tribes; setting off and surveying various Indian reservations, and steps preliminary to the division and allotment of lands in severalty to Indians; classifying and appraising Indian trust lands in Kansas, and other duties devolved on the bureau. The actual labor has been doubled, within the last four years, as is exhibited by the leading, and the most accurate, data, of the office transactions, and yet the number of permanent clerks is the same.

Since I entered upon my duties in this department, the jurisdiction of the Indian bureau, and the operation of its agents, have been extended over an additional area of from 400,000 to 600,000 square miles, and thirteen new agencies, and nine sub-agencies, have been established by law.

The policy of the colonization of the Indians, has already been at-

ended with the happiest results, and gives promise of a steady progress in the amelioration of their physical and moral condition.

It is the universal testimony of those who, from long intercourse with them, are the most competent to form an accurate judgment of their characteristics, that, as a race, in mental and moral capacity, they are inferior to no other, destitute, as they are, of the means and opportunities of higher culture. Their passions, unsubdued by the mild influences of christianity, frequently hurry them into the wildest excesses, sometimes accompanied with acts of frightful cruelty. Accounts of these, alone, meet the general eye, and excite in the public mind sentiments of loathing and horror. But of the strength of their domestic and social affections, the depth of their gratitude and attachment to those, from whom they have received benefits, and by whom they have been treated with kindness and humanity, the public hear little or nothing.

Hence it is that they have been heretofore, left comparatively unprotected from violence and wrong, inflicted by unprincipled white men, under the influence of unbridled passion, or in the pursuit of their own venal ends. By such men, unworthy of the name, they are often cruelly beaten when unprotected, and not unfrequently shot down, when defenceless, in mere wantonness. The bloody revenge, which sometimes follows, becomes the general theme, unaccompanied with the circumstances of cruel provocation which gave it birth. A border warfare springs up between the pioneer settlers (who are really trespassers on their lands) and the tribe, and the strong arm of the government being invoked for their protection, wars take place, which are carried on at much expense, and at the cost of many valuable lives, retarding the progress of our people, by rendering the condition of the settler insecure, and closing, perhaps, with the annihilation of almost entire tribes.

This process of the destruction of a people, of whom Providence has given us the guardianship, originating in such causes, is unworthy of the civilization of the age in which we live, and revolting to every sentiment of humanity.

Considerations like these, based upon extensive observation and long experience, cannot fail to impress the absolute necessity of a perseverance in the system of colonization, which, by isolating the respective tribes, within limits, suitable to their numbers and their wants, under the care of agents, and the immediate protection of the government, will alike prevent them from committing and suffering wrong. So situated, it is already shown that the arts of civilization may be acceptably introduced amongst them, and the enlightening and elevating precepts of christianity, by their influence upon their character and habits, transform the savage into the industrious and useful citizen, and ever commend us, as a nation, to the approbation of the just and humane.

To effect so desirable an end, the faith of the nation, for the integrity of these colonial reservations, should be maintained inviolate; manual labor schools should be introduced, in which the mechanic arts may be taught, and agricultural science, with its practical application, everingly inculcated, by precept and example.



The Indian regards the white man as his superior, and the idea of the derogatory character of manual labor, which he entertains, will readily give way to the influence of his example, and a realization of the benefit derived therefrom.

But above all should christian instruction be introduced and sedulously prosecuted, by teachers devoted to the cause in the true spirit of their divine mission. Without this, all subordinate means will be in vain, and the great duty, which humanity imposes upon us, to rescue this unhappy race from entire degeneration and speedy destruction, will be but a delusive dream of impracticable philanthropy.

There are many recommendations and suggestions, contained in my former reports, which, although not specifically repeated, are again renewed. They relate to matters of much public interest, and, as such, commend themselves to your favorable consideration.

I cannot permit this occasion to pass, without bearing testimony to the able manner in which the chiefs of bureaus, and the employes of the department, have discharged their official duties. They have afforded me efficient aid, and have done everything in their power to subserve and advance the public interests.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. McCLELLAND,

*Secretary.*

To the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.