

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

TUESDAY, December 8, 1896.

The House met at 12 o'clock m., and was called to order by the Speaker.

Prayer by the Chaplain, Rev. HENRY N. COUDEN.

The Journal of the proceedings of yesterday was read and approved.

REPORT OF MANAGERS NATIONAL SOLDIERS' HOME.

Mr. HULL. Mr. Speaker, I understand that the report of the Board of Managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers is to be laid before the House, and I desire to move that the part of it which relates to the government of the Home be referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

I also ask leave to offer the following resolution in regard to the printing of the report—

The SPEAKER. Is reference required to more than one committee of the subjects contained in the report?

Mr. HULL. I have not examined it. I think it is in relation to the government of the Home entirely. If they make a report as to additional buildings, that would go to the Committee on Military Affairs just the same, I think.

Mr. CURTIS of New York. It always goes there.

Mr. CANNON. Let me look at it before the gentleman makes his motion. I apprehend that I shall not antagonize it.

Mr. HULL. I think it goes to the Committee on Military Affairs in its entirety.

Mr. CURTIS of New York. It always does.

Mr. CANNON. I ask for information. Has the usual motion to refer the President's message been offered?

The SPEAKER. The motion to refer it to the Committee of the Whole was offered and agreed to yesterday. The motion to distribute it to the various committees has not been made.

Mr. CANNON. Is this merely notice of a motion to be made hereafter, or is it a motion that is made now?

The SPEAKER. This is simply in relation to printing and referring the report of the governors of the Soldiers' Home.

Mr. CANNON. That report has not yet come before the House.

Mr. HULL. This is simply a motion to have it referred and printed.

Mr. McMILLIN. I make the point of order that it is impossible to hear what gentlemen are saying.

Mr. CANNON. I apprehend there will be no difficulty and no disagreement about the matter; but after all, I should be very glad to see the report printed, and then it can be referred.

Mr. HULL. My motion simply is that so much of it as should go to the Committee on Military Affairs be referred to that committee, the same as the President's message will be referred to various committees, and to have a few additional copies printed.

Mr. CANNON. After all, it will be printed in the usual course in a day or two, will it not?

Mr. HULL. This resolution with reference to printing should go in now, so that there may be a few extra copies printed for the managers and the different Homes.

Mr. McMILLIN. Mr. Speaker, we have not heard the gentleman's motion, and I do not know whether it is privileged or not. It was made in a low tone of voice. I rise to a parliamentary inquiry, as to whether the motion which the gentleman makes is privileged.

The SPEAKER. A motion to print extra copies for the managers of the Homes would not be a privileged motion.

Mr. HULL. I will change it by adding that so much of the report as goes to other committees be referred to those committees, so that the Committee on Appropriations will be entirely protected if any part of it ought to go to that committee.

The SPEAKER. The Chair will refer it under the rule. So much of it as relates to military affairs will be referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, and so much of it as relates to appropriations to the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. CANNON. That is correct.

Mr. HULL. That is right. I now offer the resolution which I send to the Clerk's desk.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Iowa [Mr. HULL] offers the following resolution, which, not being privileged, will require the unanimous consent of the House. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That there be printed and bound of the Report of the Board of Managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, in addition to the usual number, for the use of the Board of Managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 250 copies of the full report of the Board, 500 copies of the report proper, 500 copies of the report of the assistant inspector-general on the State Homes, and 150 copies of the record of members.

Mr. McMILLIN. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the gentleman if he has any information from the Public Printer or otherwise as to what will be the cost of the extra printing?

Mr. HULL. I have not.

Mr. DOCKERY. Should not the resolution go to the Committee on Printing?

Mr. STEELE. It will cost just that much more. These will be printed at the same time as the usual number, with scarcely any additional expense.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the present consideration of the resolution?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

FREE USE OF ALCOHOL IN MANUFACTURES AND ARTS.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, the Joint Select Committee on the Use of Alcohol in the Manufactures and Arts submitted a report on yesterday, which, by error, was referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union. I think it ought to go to the Committee on Ways and Means. I therefore ask that that reference be made.

Mr. DINGLEY. Mr. Speaker, it should be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the correction will be made. [After a pause.] The Chair hears no objection.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The SPEAKER. There being no unfinished business on the Speaker's table, the next thing in order is a call of the standing committees for the consideration of bills. The call rests with the Committee on Naval Affairs. The Clerk will call the various committees in their order.

USE OF POSTAL CARDS.

Mr. LOUD (when the Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads was called). Mr. Speaker, I am directed by the Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads to call up the bill H. R. 4157. It is on the House Calendar.

The bill was read, as follows:

A bill (H. R. 4157) to amend the postal laws relating to use of postal cards.

Be it enacted, etc., That from and after the 1st day of July, 1896, it shall be lawful to transmit by mail, at the postage rate of a cent apiece, payable by stamps to be affixed by the sender, and under such regulations as the Postmaster-General may prescribe, written messages on private mailing cards, such cards to be sent openly in the mails, to be no larger than the size fixed by the convention of the Universal Postal Union, and to be approximately of the same form, quality, and weight as the stamped postal card now in general use in the United States.

Mr. LOUD. In my own time I ask that the report be read. It is a full explanation of this bill.

The report (by Mr. LOUD) was read, as follows:

The Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4157) to amend the postal laws relating to use of postal cards, submit the following report:

Your committee present this bill upon the recommendation of the Post-Office Department and such careful investigation as we have been able to give the subject with the means at our command. We are satisfied at least that no possible harm can result from its passage, and from the best information in our possession it will tend to increase the use of the card system, and the Government will save the difference in cost between the postage stamp to be used and the postal card.

This system has been very successfully tried in England, and resulted in a very large increase of business.

While, of course, we recognize the fact that conditions may be different here, still, in view of the certainty that no harm can result from its enactment, and that it may tend to popularize the Post-Office Department, which should always be our aim within the lines of safety, we earnestly recommend its passage.

Your committee respectfully submit the views of the Postmaster-General expressed in his annual report, together with his letter recommending the passage of this bill.

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL,
Washington, D. C., January 14, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose bill submitted to me by yourself a few days ago authorizing the use of private postal cards in the mails, and to say that I approve this bill, with the limitations contained in it.

On page 32 of my annual report for the year 1895 I called attention to the great success of the experiment in Great Britain and Ireland of the use of private postal cards, and suggested their adoption in this country as possibly meeting a public need and as relieving the Department itself of some of the expense of printing, storing, and handling of the present official cards. In the last report of the postmaster-general of Great Britain and Ireland it is stated that seven months after the adoption of the private postal card the number mailed increased from 248,000,000 to 312,750,000, being an increase of 26 per cent.

These cards should be issued under regulations prescribed by this Department, and should be of the same size and weight as the card issued by the Government, to facilitate their handling and transmission in the mails.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

WM. L. WILSON,
Postmaster-General.

Hon. E. F. LOUD,

Chairman Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads,
House of Representatives, City.

The great success of the adoption of private post cards recited in the last report of the postmaster-general of Great Britain and Ireland leads me to suggest their adoption in this country as meeting a possible public need, and as relieving the Department itself from some expense in the printing, storing, and handling of the present official cards. According to the report above referred to, in seven months after the adoption of the private post card the number mailed in Great Britain and Ireland increased from 248,500,000 to 312,750,000, being a difference of 26 per cent. The experiment would,

therefore, seem to be well worth trying in our own country, and I recommend that authority for the use of private post cards in our mails be granted by Congress. Of course these cards should be of the same size and weight as the cards issued by the Government, and postage at the rate of 1 cent per card should be prepaid upon them.

Mr. LOUD. Unless some gentleman desires to discuss this matter, I will ask for a vote.

Mr. McMILLIN. I would ask the gentleman in charge of the bill what change it makes from the present system of the use of postal cards.

Mr. LOUD. This will allow private individuals and business firms to use a private card of their own, conforming to the regulations as to size, etc. It will effect a saving to the Government, I will say, in that we will not have to manufacture the cards. The bill is recommended by the Department.

Mr. McMILLIN. Do you think there is any danger of the revenues being impaired by the use of these postal cards?

Mr. LOUD. We have every reason to believe that it will increase the revenues very materially. That has been the experience in England, where the system has been in very successful operation for several years. It will save to the Government the cost of printing and transportation. It is a profitable part of the operations of the post-office business. The parties must affix a 1-cent postage stamp.

Mr. RICHARDSON. What kind of advertisements can they put on them? Did you explain that?

Mr. LOUD. No; the card must conform to present law in that respect. I will offer to amend this bill by inserting the words "ninety-seven," in line 4, instead of the words "ninety-six."

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from California moves to amend by inserting in line 4 the words "ninety-seven," instead of the words "ninety-six."

Mr. LOUD. This bill was to take effect on the 1st of July, 1896, which time has now passed.

The amendment was agreed to.

The bill as amended was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading; and being engrossed, it was accordingly read the third time, and passed.

On motion of Mr. LOUD, a motion to reconsider the vote by which the bill was passed was laid on the table.

INDEMNITY FOR LOSS OF REGISTERED MAIL MATTER.

Mr. LOUD. Mr. Speaker, I call up the bill (H. R. 4156) to amend the postal laws, providing limited indemnity for loss of registered mail matter.

The bill was read, as follows:

Be it enacted, etc., That section 3926 of the Revised Statutes be amended so as to read as follows:

"SEC. 3926. For the greater security of valuable mail matter the Postmaster-General may establish a uniform system of registration, and as a part of such system he may provide rules under which the sender or owners of first-class registered matter shall be indemnified for losses thereof in the mails, the indemnity to be paid out of the postal revenues, but in no case to exceed \$10 for any one registered piece, or the actual value thereof when that is less than \$10, and for which no other compensation or reimbursement to the loser has been made: *Provided*, That the Post-Office Department or its revenues shall not be liable for the loss of any other mail matter on account of its having been registered."

Mr. DINGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I notice that this would require a point to be made that it should receive its first consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. DOCKERY. Better do it.

Mr. DINGLEY. Is this a unanimous report of the committee?

Mr. LOUD. It is. I will state that the bill has been recommended by the Post-Office for years, and it is now on the House Calendar.

Mr. DINGLEY. I know; but it should be on the Union Calendar, as it involves a charge on the Treasury.

Mr. DOCKERY. Possibly a very decided charge.

Mr. LOUD. Do you desire to have it referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union?

Mr. DINGLEY. I make no objection to its consideration now, as it is a unanimous report.

Mr. QUIGG. Mr. Speaker, I desire to make the point of order that I should like to hear this discussion.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New York makes the point of order that the House is not in order. The House will please be in order.

Mr. QUIGG. Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the gentleman from California as to the value of the registered matter that is lost. What is the annual average?

Mr. LOUD. I do not know that I can inform the gentleman now. If he will listen to the reading of the report I think it will give full information as to the facts. It will give all the information in our possession. It gives the report of the Postmaster-General and his recommendation, which I will ask to have read in my time. It covers this case fully.

Mr. DOCKERY. Has consent been given to consider the bill in the House? Consent has not yet been given to its consideration.

The Clerk proceeded to read the report, as follows:

The Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4156) to amend the postal laws relating to loss of registered mail matter, submit the following report:

Limited indemnity in cases of lost registered mail matter, while new to this country, has been successfully demonstrated in most countries of Europe. Registration, we assume, is a most profitable branch of our postal service, and such steps as can be safely taken to bring it into more common use should be adopted, and after careful investigation of this subject we recommend the passage of the bill.

Following are the views of Postmasters-General Bissell and Wilson, together with letter of Postmaster-General Wilson recommending this measure, and statistics of registered mail matter lost during the past year:

OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL,
Washington, D. C., January 14, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to return herewith a bill submitted by you to me personally, proposing a limited indemnity for the loss of registered matter in the mails by an amendment of section 3926 of the Revised Statutes, and to say that the bill meets with the approval of this Department. It is in the line of the recommendations of my predecessor, and on page 32 of my annual report for the year 1895 the reasons for the enactment of such a law are stated.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

WM. L. WILSON,
Postmaster-General.

Hon. E. F. LOUD,
Chairman Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads,
House of Representatives, City.

[Report Postmaster-General Bissell.]

INDEMNITY FOR LOST REGISTERED MATTER.

The Third Assistant Postmaster-General renews his recommendation of last year, for the enactment of a law under which indemnity, not to exceed \$10 in any case, may be made for actual losses in the registered mails when recovery, after investigation, is found to be impossible.

It is his opinion that under such a law a considerable amount of revenue would be obtained from increased registrations and that the losses in the ordinary mails would be greatly reduced.

Such an indemnity is paid by all the principal foreign administrations. I recommend that the matter be laid before Congress.

[Report Postmaster-General Wilson.]

LIMITED INDEMNITY FOR LOST REGISTERED MATTER.

In the report of last year, submitted by my predecessor, attention was called to the expediency of a law authorizing the payment of an indemnity, not exceeding \$10 in any case, for losses of registered matter in the mails.

I beg leave to renew this recommendation. It is part of the system of registration in most of the leading countries of the world, and would add to the popularity of our own system if adopted. It seems, besides, but equitable that after matter has been put into the mails, at an increased cost over ordinary matter, and with a special view to its security, the Government should, to a limited extent at least, guarantee its safety. In addition to this, I am of the opinion that such a modification of the system would prove so popular that in a short time nearly all valuable matter to be sent through the mails would be registered, so that but few losses would be likely to occur, and these could be much more satisfactorily investigated and located than is the case when losses occur in the ordinary mails. The saving to the Government in the investigation of such losses would probably more than repay it for the amount expended for indemnity.

This is a matter that will no doubt be brought before the Postal Union Congress, which is to meet in this city in 1897; but before that time a law should be enacted authorizing the introduction of this reform into our domestic postal system.

REGISTERED-MAIL LOSSES.

Five thousand two hundred and eighty complaints pertaining to the registered mail were received during the year. Of this number 2,513 alleged the rifling or abstraction of the contents of the letters or packages, and 2,302 announced the entire loss of the letter or package and contents. Only 19 complaints of carelessness by postal employees were received.

A comparison of the office records for the last two fiscal years shows that the total number of complaints affecting the registered mail during the fiscal year 1895 was less by 646 than the total number of complaints of the same character received during 1894, a ratio of decrease of nearly 11 per cent. It is worthy of note that the total number of actual losses which occurred in the registered mail during the last fiscal year was 435 less than those determined during the previous year, or a decrease of a little more than 24 per cent. The statistics of the Department show that the employees of the postal service handled, approximately, 14,428,081 pieces of registered mail during the last fiscal year, with the inconsiderable loss of one piece in every 21,305 handled.

REGISTRATION STATISTICS.

The number of pieces of mail matter registered during the year was 14,428,081, of which 11,744,525 were paid registrations and 2,683,556 were official or free. This shows a falling off in paid registrations of 5.7 per cent. The decrease in the aggregate of fees collected is \$57,353.04.

Mr. McMILLIN (during the reading of the report). Mr. Speaker, do I understand that the bill is up for consideration?

The SPEAKER. It is up for consideration.

Mr. McMILLIN. In strictness the consideration of this bill would have to be in Committee of the Whole, because it provides for fixing a liability upon the Government, and I should have made the point earlier but for the fact that owing to the confusion in the Hall I was unable to gather the full scope of the bill as it was read. I submit that the bill is really a very far-reaching one, inasmuch as it makes the Government liable for losses of registered mail matter, or authorizes the Postmaster-General to make regulations under which the Government shall be liable for such losses, and it strikes me that it is a bill of sufficient importance to at least require very careful consideration.

Mr. LOUD. I have no objection, Mr. Speaker, to the bill being considered in Committee of the Whole, as I stated when the gentleman from Maine [Mr. DINGLEY] rose to make the point a while ago. I do not, however, think that the bill is of such great importance as the gentlemen from Tennessee suggests.

Mr. DOCKERY. Bills on the Union Calendar are not in order under this call.

The SPEAKER. They are not. Is this bill on the Union Calendar?

Mr. DOCKERY. No; but the point is made by the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. McMILLIN] that it ought to be there, inasmuch as it involves a liability, and possibly a very large liability, upon the Government. The bill seems to have been erroneously referred to the House Calendar.

The SPEAKER. I suppose the point of order ought to have been made before discussion was entered upon. It would now seem to come too late.

Mr. DOCKERY. I think there was some sort of understanding that the rule would not be insisted on.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from California [Mr. LOUD] states that he would be very willing to have the bill discussed in Committee of the Whole, but at the present stage of the proceeding that would require unanimous consent.

Mr. McMILLIN. The gentleman from California is strictly within the rule. The bill seems to have been erroneously referred to the House Calendar, but, being on that Calendar, it would of course be entitled to consideration in this hour. The trouble is that the bill was erroneously referred, and in that way was made in order at this time. The suggestion of the Chair would probably meet the difficulty.

Mr. LOUD. I am perfectly willing, Mr. Speaker, to accede to any reasonable suggestion that may be made.

Mr. McMILLIN. I will ask consent that the bill be considered in Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER. The Chair would suggest that if it was brought up in that way it ought to be brought up at the end of this hour. The Chair thinks that to bring up bills in this hour and then go into Committee of the Whole would make confusion in the practice of the House.

Mr. McMILLIN. I think the Chair is quite right, and I will therefore defer the request until the expiration of this hour. I realize, Mr. Speaker, that under a strict construction of the rule, the point of order not having been made when the gentleman from California asked for the consideration of the bill, he is entitled to have it considered at this time. Realizing that, I did not make the point of order that the bill could not be considered in this hour, because the House had already entered upon its consideration. I made my suggestion merely to call attention to the provisions of the bill, believing that when attention was called to it the House would be disposed to give the measure the careful consideration that it seems to require.

Mr. DOCKERY. But the gentleman from Tennessee did say that he would have made the point of order in time if he had been able to hear the reading of the bill.

The SPEAKER. As the consideration of the bill has been begun, perhaps it may as well go on. The gentleman from California [Mr. LOUD] desires to have the report read in full.

The Clerk resumed and completed the reading of the bill as above.

Mr. LOUD. Mr. Speaker, an investigation of the registration branch of the Post-Office will show that we are gradually losing our registration business, while we are still maintaining the expensive machinery which that branch of the postal service demands. The express companies throughout the country, which guarantee indemnity in case of loss, are gradually absorbing all this class of business, which was formerly done by the Post-Office Department, and to those who have looked into the matter it seems quite clear that the time has arrived when we ought either to go out of the registration business or else provide some such system as is here proposed, whereby the people may have a guaranty of the safety of such matter as they confide to the charge of the Department, or some measure of indemnity for its loss. The Government charges a very liberal fee for registration for packages and letters, 8 cents, and the registration department is one of the most profitable branches of the service. For several years past Postmasters-General have called the attention of Congress to the necessity of providing for some limited indemnity for losses incurred by persons who send registered matter through the mails. Now, on the basis of the packages lost in the year 1895 (and the amount of loss upon packages is being continually reduced) it would have cost this Government not more than \$25,000 had we paid \$10 for every package that was lost.

The Post-Office Department is becoming more perfect in its operations day by day—more careful in the execution of its business; and, as I have remarked, the number of lost packages is decreasing year by year. We therefore have no right to assume that the ratio will increase. But we do assume that if we can give a guaranty of the safe delivery of matter confided to the care of the Post-Office Department our registration business will increase to the extent not merely of \$25,000 a year, but \$50,000 or \$75,000 a year, and of this amount at least one-half would be clear profit to the Government.

Mr. QUIGG. May I inquire of the gentleman from California whether it is proposed to charge a fee for the insurance which this bill proposes in connection with the registration?

Mr. LOUD. No additional fee—nothing more than is charged at present. We charge now a fee of 8 cents for registration; and we do not guarantee in any manner the delivery of the matter thus confided to the mails.

Mr. QUIGG. And it is proposed to insure the safe delivery of this mail matter for no additional fee?

Mr. LOUD. That is what is proposed.

Mr. QUIGG. Now, I call the attention of the gentleman to the fact that on the registration of last year, had this bill been in force as a law, the United States would have been liable (if I understand aright the figures before me) to the extent of \$117,000,000.

Mr. LOUD. Will the gentleman repeat that statement?

Mr. QUIGG. The Postmaster-General in this report says that the number of pieces of mail matter registered by paid registration was 11,744,525. Now, if the Government had been liable—

Mr. LOUD. That is, if all those pieces of registered matter had been lost.

Mr. QUIGG. Yes; if they had all been lost—

Mr. LOUD. I should prefer, Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman is going to make a speech—

Mr. QUIGG. I am not going to make a speech. I merely wish, with the permission of the gentleman from California, to call the attention of the House to the rather serious character of the insurance which this bill proposes. I have no doubt that a bill could be drawn which would amply justify any responsibility which the Government may assume.

Mr. LOUD. If the gentleman wishes to discuss the bill I will yield to him. How much time does he wish?

Mr. QUIGG. I do not know that I want more than two or three minutes.

Mr. LOUD. I will yield the gentleman five minutes, if he wishes to occupy that much time.

Mr. QUIGG. Mr. Speaker, it appears from this statement of the Postmaster-General that had this bill been in operation during the last year as a law the United States would have been liable on the registered business of that year to the extent of \$117,000,000. Of course, it is not supposable that any considerable proportion of this registered mail matter would have been lost; but it does appear that 5,280 complaints were made in reference to registered packages that went astray. This means that under a bill of this kind we should have been liable on these complaints to the extent of \$52,800.

Now, if it were proposed to charge an additional fee which would reimburse the Government to the extent of the loss which may be expected to occur, such legislation would seem to be entirely justifiable. But if it is proposed to make the Government liable without enabling it to recoup its necessary loss—because there must inevitably be a certain amount of loss—I shall have to vote against the bill.

It seems to me there ought to be in the bill a provision authorizing the Postmaster-General, in establishing this uniform system of registration, to require an additional fee whenever the sender of registered matter may wish the Government to insure him. I hope the gentleman from California will embody in his bill such a provision. I should think that anybody who may wish to send through the mails a package, valuable even to the extent of \$5, would willingly pay an additional fee of five or ten cents. Under such a system the Government would have some chance of getting back the money which it must pay upon these losses.

The gentleman from California is continually reminding Congress of the fact that there exists in the postal business of the Government a large deficit—that our expenditures for that service are, I believe, nine or ten million dollars ahead of our receipts, yet is in danger by this bill of increasing the deficit in the sum of \$50,000, more or less.

Mr. BINGHAM rose.

Mr. LOUD. I will yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania. How much time does he desire?

Mr. BINGHAM. About five minutes.

Mr. LOUD. I will yield that time to the gentleman.

Mr. BINGHAM. The remarks of the gentleman from New York, predicated upon a statement of the obligations of the Government, presuppose the absolute loss of every package carried in the registered mail, making such obligation amount to 15,000,000. Should the gentleman's argument be seriously considered by the House, it would be in conflict with the statistical basis upon which all our life-insurance companies and great express companies proceed in carrying on their business. Both these classes of corporations assume in the transaction of their business obligations and liabilities in excess of any supposable loss by the death of the insured parties or by the loss of packages carried by express.

Mr. QUIGG. But of course those companies charge a fee for the obligation which they assume.

Mr. BINGHAM. They charge their regular commission, as we charge in registration of mail matter the regular fee of 8 cents on each parcel, which presupposes that, by reason of the care in the transmission of the vast amount of mail carried, the loss bears a very small relation to that amount. I will give the gentleman the figures from the report. The International Postal Union, five years ago, asked that the Government of the United States might, in accord with the governments of the rest of the world, give an indemnity for such losses as those covered by this bill. We did not do it, and, although that has been the recommendation of the various officials of the Department during the last five years, this is the first legislative expression which has been presented to carry out that purpose.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a word as to the figures involved in this legislation. The registration fees received by the Department during the last fiscal year amounted to \$975,388.88. Of this vast amount, the work accomplished covered the handling of fifteen millions and upward of pieces of mail matter, of which the Government transported free through the mails 2,913,000 pieces of registered matter.

Let us come to the practical phase of this question. The pending bill proposes that indemnity shall be allowed to the loser of registered mail matter not to exceed \$10 on any one piece. What, then, are the losses which have heretofore occurred in this branch of the service? The complaints from all sources during the last fiscal year amounted to 5,817. Of this number, 4,501 complaints were fully investigated, and 1,316 were in process of investigation, but not yet completed at the close of the year.

How did these losses occur? Losses chargeable to the burning and wrecking of post-offices and postal cars and steamboats and minor unavoidable accidents, 1,155; losses chargeable to depredations by postal officials, 190; losses through postal employees, from other causes than theft, 122; losses resulting from depredations by outside parties, 231, and losses the responsibility for which could not be fixed, 152.

The Third Assistant Postmaster-General, in his report with reference to this subject, says:

Of the foregoing cases—

Those I have just cited—

recoveries were made and the value of the lost articles restored to the owners as follows:

Through the office of the chief post-office inspector.....	244
Through the Dead-Letter Office.....	24
Through outside parties and direct to losers.....	730
	— 998

Number of cases in which recovery was impossible.....	852
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Assuming that this proportion will be the same in the cases yet to be investigated, the number of actual losses will reach 1,101, or 1 in every 13,721 pieces registered.

Of the 852 cases of irrecoverable loss, 232 involved official matter, such as postage stamps and stamped paper dispatched to postmasters, leaving 620 private losses only, or 1 in every 24,365 pieces registered. As compared with the previous year, there was an increase in the number of losses, due mainly to a greater number of accidents, such as the burning of post-offices, postal cars, etc., the total for 1896 being 1,155, as against 625 for 1895.

There was a very great reduction in the number of losses through the carelessness or ignorance of postal employees—that is to say, through other causes than criminal misconduct—the total being only 122, as against 258 for the previous year. This indicates an improvement in the general efficiency of the service.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, should this law be placed upon the statute books and the Government be made responsible for the maximum amount, \$10, in each case of these losses (and there are many cases where the maximum loss would be very much less), there will be but little over 600 cases of loss for which the Government would be responsible, although this legislation would apply to and cover the transmission of upward of 15,000,000 pieces of mail matter.

Mr. QUIGG. Let me ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania if that would not be a question for judicial interpretation? There is a liability in every one of such cases. Now, if the liability shall be fixed by statute, it is a matter for the courts to determine whether the Government shall pay \$10 or any other sum.

Mr. BINGHAM. I will state to the gentleman from New York that the same rules of investigation would apply in this case as apply in all losses relating to the postmaster by robbery and depredation up to a fixed limit. The Department adjudicates the loss; and the Postmaster-General, having the administration of this law, and being authorized to fix rules and regulations, would provide some similar rules for the adjudication of such losses as this. That is the case when there has been a loss by depredation or otherwise of postal funds; and the regulations, coming from the same source, will be equally critical to protect the Government under the operation of this bill.

Mr. HOPKINS. Let me ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania if it is not true that the bill is protected—or the Government protected—from the fact that the granting of an indemnity to the extent suggested in case of loss to the persons sending registered mail matter would increase largely the registration fees, and

would be an absolute source of revenue to the Government, even if the adoption of this measure had the effect suggested by the gentlemen from New York?

Mr. BINGHAM. That is the experience of every government which has tried this system.

Mr. DOCKERY. Will the gentleman from California yield to me for a moment?

Mr. LOUD. I will yield to the gentleman such time as he desires.

Mr. DOCKERY. I shall not occupy but two or three minutes, as I only wish to ask the gentleman a question. This seems to be a measure to put the business of registration by the Post-Office Department in competition with the business of the express companies; and so far as that can be safely accomplished, within the limits of our revenues, I favor it. But in order to intelligently accomplish our purpose we should know exactly what the express companies charge for a similar service.

Mr. Speaker, I can readily understand how this bill may increase the business of registration for all packages under \$10; but I am utterly unable to see how it will enlarge the scope of our business for packages exceeding \$10 in value. If I am correctly advised, the express companies have a schedule of fees. That is to say, they charge a much less fee for the transmission of \$10 than for the transmission of \$100. This bill puts all the registered mail of the Government on the same basis, so far as liability is concerned; and while it may materially increase the transmission of small sums of money, it seems that it will simply advertise the fact to the country that we do not guarantee any amount in excess of \$10, and the result will be that the Government will do the small business while the express companies will do the larger business.

Mr. BINGHAM. That is all the Post-Office Department wants to do.

Mr. DOCKERY. If that is true, then this bill will exactly accomplish the object sought by the Department.

Mr. BINGHAM. Undoubtedly. I will state to the gentleman that the whole purpose is outside of the line of what we call the carrying of the mail. This is an addendum of a line of work in the Post-Office Department independent of the transmission of mails, just like your money-order system. It will be a great convenience to the people in localities where they can not have express conveniences.

Mr. DOCKERY. When the gentleman refers to the money-order system he should remember that our liability is limited, under any single money order, to \$100; but there is no limitation as to the amount which may be transmitted in a registered package. Such is the law, as I understand it.

Mr. BINGHAM. None that I know of, only that practically the registered mail is not a very valuable mail. People do not send things of great value by registered mail.

Mr. DOCKERY. Practically that may be true, but still there is no law limiting a registered package to any maximum amount.

Mr. BINGHAM. None whatever.

Mr. DOCKERY. Therefore, as a matter of fact, as I understand the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. BINGHAM], we do compete for the transportation of money packages without regard to amount.

Mr. BINGHAM. Small sums.

Mr. DOCKERY. Practically it may be limited to small amounts, but as a matter of fact we have no limit.

Mr. BINGHAM. No limit other than a man's common sense. If he is going to send a thousand dollars to some part of the country, he will not send it through the mail.

Mr. DOCKERY. Certainly; and the express companies transmit larger amounts. Why? Because, although the sender pays an increased fee for the transmission of larger amounts of money, he is secured for the entire amount. Now, then, comes the Government and advertises to the country that for 8 cents we will guarantee the safe transmission of all amounts not exceeding \$10, but that the Government will not be liable for an amount in excess of \$10.

Mr. HALL. I will say to my colleague, if he will allow me to interrupt him, that the insurance under this bill does not apply exclusively to the amounts under \$10. It applies to all amounts. This is a ten-dollar insurance.

Mr. DOCKERY. But the actual amount is paid if it is less than \$10, as I understood the reading of the bill. I am not prepared to say that this is not a wise bill, but it does seem to me that the House ought to be in possession of information which up to this moment has not been given us.

Mr. QUIGG. Does the gentleman from Missouri happen to know what the charge of other governments is?

Mr. DOCKERY. I was just coming to that point, and I am obliged to the gentleman from New York for the suggestion. The report states that other governments have this system of registration, that is, a limited guaranty system.

Mr. QUIGG. Yes.

Mr. DOCKERY. Now, in order to determine whether or not we should follow the system the House should know what the system is, whether they have a fixed fee, as we have—that is, 8 cents—without regard to the amount transmitted, or whether they have a schedule of fees. If I understand the reading of the report of the Postmaster-General, the income of the Government from registered mail amounted last year to \$975,000. This bill carries a liability, or at least a probable liability, on the basis of the business of last year of \$50,000, as I understood the gentleman from New York.

Mr. QUIGG. Fifty thousand dollars; that is true.

Mr. DOCKERY. Mr. Speaker, I am so accustomed to following the able and economical lead of my friend from California [Mr. LOUD] that I will not depart from that custom in this case; and yet I venture to suggest simply that this bill involves a great many doubts as to its propriety.

Mr. BINGHAM. Where does the gentleman get his estimate of 50,000? The private losses last year were 620.

Mr. QUIGG. It appeared from the report that I read that there were complaints of losses of paid registration—I so understand it—in 5,200 cases.

Mr. BINGHAM. That is, complaints?

Mr. QUIGG. Yes.

Mr. BINGHAM. But now give me the result of the investigation.

Mr. QUIGG. The result of the investigation will be whatever the courts fix.

Mr. BINGHAM. Now, after investigation of the cases on the part of the Department, he can see that last year there were 5,817 cases—the gentleman understands?

Mr. QUIGG. Yes.

Mr. BINGHAM. Fifty-eight hundred and seventeen complaints?

Mr. QUIGG. Yes.

Mr. BINGHAM. After investigation of the 852 cases of irrevocable loss. All other cases had been covered, 232 involving official matter, such as postage stamps and stamped paper dispatched to postmasters, leaving 620 cases of private loss. The gentleman understands?

Mr. QUIGG. I do not think there is any difference between the gentleman from Pennsylvania and myself. I only seek to point out to the House that complaints were made that involved liability on last year's business of 50,000.

Mr. BINGHAM. Complaints?

Mr. QUIGG. Now, as to how they will be adjudicated under this bill, that is another question; but it does seem to me we certainly ought to know something of the experience of other countries as to this form of insurance, as to whether our fee is adequate. That it is going to involve a cost there can be no question.

Mr. BINGHAM. Very small.

Mr. QUIGG. The gentleman from Pennsylvania says "very small." It is probable, but not inevitable, that it may be very large. We are going to have a certain amount of loss.

Mr. BINGHAM. Let me ask the gentleman from New York, What do you do for this \$957,000 of additional revenue to your Department or Government?

Mr. QUIGG. We take, as I understand, special care of these letters.

Mr. BINGHAM. Under a system of receipts.

Mr. QUIGG. And that especial care is what is paid for. Now, it is proposed, in addition to taking especial care, that we shall offer to reimburse the sender or owner of the package that may be claimed to have been lost to the extent of \$10 per package. Now, are we going to charge a sufficient fee for the risk that is incurred?

Mr. BINGHAM. Of which the gentleman states the maximum is 50,000.

Mr. QUIGG. Now, I consider that bad business, especially—

Mr. HOPKINS. If the gentleman will allow me right there, the report of the Postmaster-General shows that there is a revenue of \$970,000 a year from this registration service. Now, where the Government receives such a benefit as that, does not the gentleman think, in fair dealings, that this loss of individuals should be paid, especially where it is such a minimum figure as he himself has expressed; and will not the increase of business that the Government will get from this be an absolute source of revenue, even in view of all the bad results he is picturing here?

Mr. QUIGG. It may be so, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HOPKINS. In other words, this bill will divert these small packages from the express companies to the Government, and the Government will get 8 cents for their delivery.

Mr. QUIGG. I do not know that that is a very suitable business for the Government to engage in.

Mr. HOPKINS. Why not?

Mr. QUIGG. I am not one of those who are in favor of diverting business from private institutions to the Government.

Mr. HOPKINS. Right there let me ask the gentleman—

Mr. QUIGG. I do not want to get off on that subject; but, in answer to the gentleman's proposition, I want to say that I think the Government does a little too much of that sort of thing anyhow.

Mr. HOPKINS. If the gentleman will allow me right there, this legislation is in the interest of the people. There are hundreds and thousands of people that avail themselves of the laws that exist to-day. Experience has taught us that it is in the interest of the people, and in the interest of cheap transportation as to a certain line of packages.

Now, speaking for myself, I believe that this kind of legislation is beneficial that results in the greatest good to the greatest number, even if it does trespass a little on the rights of a company like an express company.

Mr. QUIGG. But here is the point: We are already nine millions short in our receipts from postal business. We have got that deficit to make up anyhow. The gentleman from California [Mr. LOUD] and other gentlemen propose to make it up, as the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HOPKINS] well knows, by limiting the operation of the present laws, by to an extent repealing them and forbidding the use of the mails to some of those who now enjoy that use. I am not altogether clear as to whether something of that kind ought not to be done; but here is a proposition to increase our inevitable loss. I do not say that it will increase it very much. I say that it may increase it very much, while we shall obtain no additional revenue whatever except a speculative one, which may possibly result from drawing business from the express companies. I think the gentleman from California ought at least to tell us whether we are running in this matter any greater risk than other governments run who do the same kind of business. For instance, what are the governments that do this business and what do they charge for it? Will the gentleman from California give us that information?

Mr. LOUD. The gentleman from New York seems to be very solicitous about this little deficiency of nine millions, yet there is no man in this House who has been a stronger advocate of the very system which causes a deficiency in our postal receipts, and I believe he is an advocate of it to-day. I believe, and the officials of the Post-Office Department have believed for years, that a measure like the one now pending will increase the receipts of the Government. I have never stood on this floor advocating any measure that would tend to enlarge the deficiency in the postal service, and I hope that I shall never occupy any such position. I wish the gentleman from New York could assert the same for himself. Now, let us get back to the measure under consideration.

Mr. GROSVENOR. While the gentleman is on the floor I want to ask him a question, if he has no objection, in order to get at what is in this bill.

Mr. LOUD. That is just what I am trying to do.

Mr. GROSVENOR. I want to ask the gentleman this question: Would the effect of this bill, if it should become a law, be to permit the sender of registered mail matter to register it without communicating any information to the Postmaster-General, or to anybody else, as to its contents?

Mr. LOUD. I am surprised at the gentleman from Ohio, ripe as he is in age and rich in experience, asking a question of that character.

Mr. GROSVENOR. I asked it for information.

Mr. LOUD. The Post-Office Department has been managed in the past, and I believe it will be managed under the incoming Administration, by men entirely competent to manage its affairs judiciously, and I believe that under the next Administration sufficient judgment and discretion will be applied to the conduct of the Post-Office Department to protect the interests of the Government. It is within the power of the Postmaster-General under this bill, and under all our laws relating to the Post-Office Department, to prescribe such rules and regulations as may seem to him proper and necessary to protect the Government.

I assume, Mr. Chairman, that the registration fee which we now charge will produce a sufficient fund to guarantee the limited indemnity that is proposed. If gentlemen will look at the report accompanying this bill they will see that last year the falling off in registration fees alone was \$57,000. I have already stated that our registration system is the most profitable portion of the business of the Department, and the more successfully we can regulate it so that the masses of the people will patronize it the more we shall increase the receipts of the Government in that branch of the public service. The falling off in registration fees last year was \$57,000, and the profit on that business if it had been done by the Department would more than meet all the losses that occurred during the year. It appears that there was a loss of over 5,000 packages, and the gentleman from New York bases his calculation on the assumption that every one of those packages was worth \$10. I think it would be safe to assume, judging from the experience of the Department, that these packages did not average \$1

in value, and I do not believe that the losses, as the Department is run to-day and as it must continue to be run, will amount to over \$10,000 a year; while, on the other hand, the change here proposed will bring a large increase of profitable business.

The Post-Office Committee have given this matter serious consideration, not alone during this Congress, but in previous Congresses, and gentlemen who have investigated the subject are unanimous in support of this bill. I repeat, that the Postmaster-General for the last sixteen years have advocated the passage of a measure of this character. There is no possible danger in it, and, as I said when I began, we should either go out of the registration business entirely or regulate it in such a manner that it will commend itself to the people generally. Registration, as gentlemen understand, is to a great extent intended for the accommodation of the people in places where there are no express offices, no money-order offices, and no other means of sending packages with safety except by registered mail.

Mr. BINGHAM. Will the gentleman allow me to supplement his statement with some official figures?

Mr. LOUD. I will yield to the gentleman a moment for that purpose.

Mr. BINGHAM. The gentleman from New York [Mr. QUIGG] states that there were upward of 5,000 complaints last year. Conceded. They were complaints as to the loss of registered matter, just such complaints as the gentleman makes when his letters are not delivered at the proper time or at the proper place. But the gentleman from New York predicates his argument as to the amount of the losses, which he puts at \$50,000, on the assumption that in every case the lost package contained something of large value, and that none of the missing packages were recovered. Now, let me give him the official figures—

Mr. LOUD. We might concede that every package contained something of value and that 10,000 were lost, and still we should have a strong case.

Mr. BINGHAM. Now, let me give the official figures.

Mr. LOUD. I am willing to admit that all the registered parcels contain articles of value.

Mr. BINGHAM. Upon 15,000,000 of transmissions there were something over 5,000 complaints, of which 1,850 were found to involve actual losses. Of the 1,850 cases of loss, 852 were found to be impossible to adjudicate; 232 involved official matter; there were only 620 cases of private loss, so that \$6,200 would have been the absolute loss of the Department last year on this class of business (if a law of this kind had been in operation) as against a revenue of \$975,000.

Mr. FOOTE. If this bill should pass, would not the liability of the Government in case of loss be less than that of a common carrier in similar cases?

Mr. LOUD. I do not know about that; probably it would.

Mr. FOOTE. In the case of a common carrier—an express company, for instance—the party suffering loss has a right of action against the company. Why should there not be a similar liability on the part of the Government?

Mr. HEPBURN rose.

Mr. LOUD. Mr. Speaker, how much is there remaining of the hour?

The SPEAKER. Thirteen minutes.

Mr. LOUD. I yield five minutes to the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. HEPBURN].

Mr. HEPBURN. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the relief proposed to be given by this bill is exceedingly inconsiderable. The gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. BINGHAM] tells us that, measured by the experience of the Government during the last year, the cases in which indemnity would have to be paid by the Government under a law of this kind would probably number a little more than 600, so that the actual amount paid as indemnity would be at most only about \$6,000. If reimbursement should be made by the Government in all the cases in which complaints were made, the amount would be less than \$50,000. Such reimbursement, however, would be paid by the General Government out of a general fund made by the fees of 8 cents each on packages of registered matter. Now, I should like to know why a man who sends a package valued at \$10.10 should be obliged to contribute to this fund with no possibility of reimbursement to him, while a man who sends a registered package valued at \$10 would receive reimbursement. If we are going to do anything of this kind at all, is it not wise to do it in such a way that each of the 11,000,000 of the contributors to this fund should in case of loss be a beneficiary? It might be done if the gentleman would consent to this amendment which I desire to propose:

Amend by striking out all of lines 11, 12, and 13 down to and including the word "dollars," in line 14, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"And the Post-Office Department may charge a fee for such service equal to 1 per cent of the value of the package registered; but the liability of the Government shall not exceed the value of the package; and in no case more than \$100 on one package."

Under such a provision all senders of registered matter would be alike beneficiaries. I think such a provision would be much

more just than the present provision. It would relieve the bill from a just criticism, to which I think it is now subject—that in the first place the measure in its present form amounts really to nothing; and in the second place that it gives to a man sending a package worth \$10 a benefit which it withholds from a man sending a package worth \$11, notwithstanding the fact that all those who send registered matter must, by paying a fee of 8 cents on each package, contribute to the fund out of which reimbursement is to be made to this small number.

Mr. LOUD. They all now have to contribute their 8 cents per package without the possibility of getting back anything in case of loss.

Mr. HEPBURN. It is true that they do not now get anything; but under my amendment all will enjoy a like benefit; the law will give no special privilege to anyone.

Mr. LOUD. Will not every person in fact pay 10 cents for the guaranty?

Mr. HEPBURN. If 1 per cent is too much, make it less; but let the benefits of this measure apply to all.

Mr. DOCKERY. If the gentleman from California [Mr. LOUP] will allow me a moment, I wish to say that I approve in the main the suggestions of the gentleman from Iowa. This bill is a radical departure from the business principles which the Government applies to the money-order system. In that branch of the postal service the Government transmits money by draft, and the compensation paid in each case is based on the amount of the draft. For a draft of less than \$2.50 the fee is 3 cents; for a draft of \$10 the charge is greater; and for a draft of \$100 still greater. In the business of registering mail we do not furnish drafts, but actually transmit money; and in all cases exactly the same fee is charged without any regard to the valuation of the package.

Now, then, if the system is to be extended by a limited-liability clause, it seems to me there ought to be some schedule of fees based on the value of mail matter transported. I think the bill looks in the right direction, but it needs some amendments covering the point suggested by the gentleman from Iowa.

Mr. LOUD. I will state to the gentleman from Missouri that money, as a rule, is not transmitted in registered letters.

Mr. HEPBURN. That is a mere matter of detail. I only wanted to invite the attention of the House to what I think is a defect in the proposed bill.

Mr. QUIGG. May I call the attention of the gentleman from California to the eighth line of the bill, which provides that the Postmaster-General may provide rules under which the senders or owners of registered mail matter which has been lost shall be indemnified? That opens, I would suggest to him, a very wide field of legislation in the hands of the Postmaster-General.

Mr. LOUD. No wider than is open already by law, permit me to say.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should be glad to finish this bill, if possible, within the hour.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman has five minutes and a half of his time remaining.

Mr. LOUD. I will say, then, Mr. Speaker, that there is hardly time to yield to anybody in that brief period. I would like to come to a vote if possible, although the question looks a little doubtful since this discussion has sprung up.

I will say to the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. HEPBURN] that he is entering into a scientific field which probably, if he were revising the postal laws, he would advocate, and he would find me one of his strongest supporters in favor of such a modification. But we are taking a position with reference to matters as we find them, and are endeavoring to make this legislation fit existing conditions.

This system of registration has been in vogue for very many years. Formerly we charged a fee of 10 cents for registration. In late years it has been reduced to 8 cents. I think the objection of the gentleman from Iowa, if he will allow me, is rather technical than otherwise. Every person who sends a package by registered mail receives just the same benefit as any other person. That is the standpoint from which to view such registration. If you insure a house, and it does not burn down, you have been guaranteed during the time of the insurance that if it did burn down you would be compensated to the extent of the insurance. Now, perhaps you would be as fortunate if the house did not burn down as if it did burn down. Perhaps the person who did not lose his package after it was registered is as fortunate and receives just as much benefit as he who does lose a package. It is simply an insurance, or rather a guaranty, that the package shall be delivered, and therefore the gentleman's objections, it seems to me, are rather technical than otherwise.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like, if possible, to bring this matter to a vote before the expiration of the hour.

The SPEAKER. The Chair would suggest to the gentleman that there is no limitation to the morning hour except that which the House may see fit to put upon it.

Mr. LOUD. I understand that, Mr. Speaker; but I understand that I lose control of the bill after the first hour.

Mr. BLUE. If the gentleman from California has more time, or can secure more time, I would like a few moments myself.

Mr. LOUD. If the House desires to further discuss the matter, I have no desire to cut it off.

Mr. DOCKERY. I ask unanimous consent that the time of the gentleman from California be extended for one hour, or so much as he may desire to use, and then he can yield to other gentlemen who wish to be heard.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. LOUD. Now I will yield to the gentleman from Kansas for ten minutes, or so much time as he may desire.

Mr. BLUE. Mr. Speaker, this measure is of such consequence to the public that it is entitled to the fairest and fullest possible consideration by the House.

It is a popular belief with a great many people of the United States that a registered package is safe, and that the Government guarantees indemnity. That is an erroneous conviction. The gentleman from California speaks of this 8-cent fee paid for the registration of each package as being an indemnity and a protection, but it reaches no further than simply the support of the Department, and has no reference, as the law now stands, to any indemnity that the Government gives to the parties who send registered packages. It is a well-known fact that in very many localities throughout the nation neither a post-office order can be cashed nor an express package conveniently delivered.

If this bill becomes a law it will carry benefits wherever the Post-Office Department can reach. It is in the right direction. The statistics furnished here show conclusively that the loss even under the present system is comparatively small. The indemnities which the Government will be called upon to furnish will, it seems to me, be insignificant. The revenue in excess of that received under the present system will be great. The benefits that the public will receive will also be large. It will enable very many people of the nation to transact their business at a much less expense than they would otherwise be subjected to under the money-order system or through the express companies.

The Post-Office Department is peculiarly in the interest of all the people of the nation, and this measure, if amended as suggested by the gentleman from Iowa, will bring to the Government, by reason of this additional fee, ample revenue to protect this service, and will save to the people very many dollars in the transaction of their business. It ought to be amended in some such way as that suggested by the gentleman from Iowa, and, so amended, ought to pass.

Mr. LOUD. Mr. Speaker, if no other gentleman desires to be heard, I do not wish any further time.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time.

The question being on the passage of the bill,

Mr. QUIGG demanded a division.

The House divided; and there were—ayes 76, noes 13.

Accordingly the bill was passed.

On motion of Mr. LOUD, a motion to reconsider the last vote was laid on the table.

DELIVERY OF LETTERS IN CERTAIN CASES.

The SPEAKER. Does the gentleman from California [Mr. LOUD] desire to call up any further matter from the Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads?

Mr. LOUD. I supposed that the hour had expired. I was given an additional hour. I have another bill here which the committee have directed me to call up.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman is at liberty to call up bills from his committee until the morning hour expires.

Mr. LOUD. Very well, then. I will follow the direction of the committee and call up the bill (H. R. 5473) concerning the delivery of letters in towns, villages, and other places where no free delivery exists.

The SPEAKER. The Clerk will read the bill.

The Clerk read the first section, as follows:

Be it enacted, etc., That whenever not less than twenty persons who receive their mail matter through the same post-office shall petition the postmaster at such office to appoint one or more letter carriers, who shall be at least 16 years of age, for the delivery of letters and other mail matter therefrom to the persons addressed, at their respective residences or places of business, and for the collection of letters and the conveyance and delivery of them to the post-office, said postmaster shall appoint a suitable number of letter carriers for that purpose, and it shall be their duty to report at least once a week to the postmaster appointing them the number of pieces delivered and collected by them and amount paid therefor.

The SPEAKER. Is this bill on the House Calendar?

Mr. DOCKERY. It seems that it should be on the Union Calendar.

Mr. LOUD. I believe it is properly on the House Calendar. I do not think it entails any charge on the Government.

Mr. DOCKERY. It seems to involve a liability on the Government; and if so, should be considered in the usual way.

The SPEAKER. It can not be considered in the morning hour if it should go to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. LOUD. There is no liability against the Government under this bill. I do not approve of the bill myself.

Mr. DOCKERY. Does it not involve the right to increase the letter-carrier force without limit?

Mr. DINGLEY. But it is to be at the expense of the persons served.

Mr. DOCKERY. Then the bill is properly on the House Calendar.

Mr. LOUD. There is no charge on the Government, as I understand it.

Mr. DINGLEY. Is that particularly expressed in the bill?

Mr. LOUD. I think it is sufficiently expressed. I think it is emphatically stated that there shall be no liability against the Government.

Mr. DALZELL. Who pays for the delivery?

Mr. LOUD. The individuals served.

The SPEAKER. The payment is to be made by the recipients of the mail. That seems to be the case.

Mr. LOUD. Has the reading of the bill been completed?

The SPEAKER. No; the Clerk will proceed.

The Clerk proceeded to read the remainder of the bill, as follows:

SEC. 2. That at all places where the foregoing delivery and collections may be authorized under this act the letter carriers thus appointed may receive of the person to whom he delivers letters or papers, or from whom he receives them for conveyance to the post-office, such weekly, monthly, or quarterly compensation as may be mutually agreed upon; and when no such agreement is made, they may demand and receive not exceeding 1 cent for each letter or other package which they deliver from or convey to the post-office: *Provided*, That the sum which each carrier thus collects shall be in full for his services; and none of such carriers shall have any claim upon the Post-Office Department for compensation for services rendered as a letter carrier: *Provided further*, That no letter or other mail matter shall be given to such letter carrier for delivery unless addressed to a person who has lodged at the post-office a written request that his mail matter be delivered to such letter carrier: *And provided further*, That if any person who shall have filed such written request shall refuse or neglect to pay the amount agreed upon or fixed by this act for the delivery or collection of any mail matter the same may be returned by the carrier to the post-office and thereafter the carrier shall not be required to deliver or collect any mail to or from such person. Each person so appointed shall give bond to the postmaster for the faithful performance of his duties in the penal sum of \$100.

SEC. 3. That the letter carriers appointed by authority of this act shall be subject to all the provisions of existing laws not inconsistent with this act.

Mr. LOUD. Mr. Speaker, I will yield the time of the committee to the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SPERRY].

Mr. SPERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the report be read.

The SPEAKER. The Clerk will read the report.

The report (by Mr. SPERRY) was read, as follows:

The Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 5473) for the purpose of authorizing delivery and collection of mail in towns, villages, and other places where mail matter is not delivered to residences or places of business, submit the following report:

Your committee have given this matter due and careful consideration, and have unanimously come to the conclusion that the bill presented is just and proper and ought to pass.

The bill provides that whenever not less than twenty persons who receive their mail through the same office shall petition to have their mail delivered and collected, it shall then be the duty of the postmaster to appoint such persons as are willing to undertake the delivery and collection of mail in towns or places where no free delivery exists. The committee are of the opinion that when such a request is made from the people of any village or town their request should be granted.

The bill further provides that the letter carriers so appointed shall be over 16 years of age, and that said letter carriers may make an agreement with the persons to whom such mail matter is delivered or collected for such compensation as may be agreed upon, and when no compensation is agreed upon such letter carriers may receive 1 cent for the delivery of each piece of mail matter, and they may demand and receive at least 1 cent for each package and letter they may collect and convey to the post-office. Such compensation shall be in full for all services, and none of such carriers shall have any claim upon the Post-Office Department for compensation for services thus rendered. No letter or other mail matter shall be delivered by the postmaster to such carrier without a written request has been lodged at the post-office for the delivery of mail to such letter carrier. The letter carrier so appointed shall give bonds for the faithful performance of his duty.

The bill appears to the committee a reasonable and proper one. It is substantially like the old penny-post system, which grew year by year into extended practice, until the system of free delivery has become operative in all places or towns of over 10,000 inhabitants. There has of late been a great demand that some such system as this should be extended as far as possible, and it has been called for not only by villages, but by farming communities. Petitions and resolutions have been passed calling for suitable action that accommodations of this kind may be extended in the manner proposed by this bill. The demand appears to be a growing one, and the committee see no reason why such a request should be withheld from the people thus demanding them.

In cities where free delivery exists all local letters or drop letters require 2 cents postage. This bill will only require 1 cent local postage with the addition of 1 cent when delivered, unless by special agreement, which sum shall be paid to said letter carrier, and he shall keep an account of such mail delivered and collected, together with the amount which he receives therefor. So that a person who receives such local letters will pay no more, unless by special agreement, than is paid for local letters where free delivery exists.

While the demand for rural delivery comes from the people in the main, it has also been made the subject-matter of discussion by the Post-Office Department from time to time, and it is agreed by those who have investigated the

subject that there is no good reason why such accommodations should be withheld. It will take some time before the full result of this system can be reached, but when the time comes it will be of incalculable value to all who avail themselves of the benefits of this act.

It is easy to see how this will elevate the standard of intelligence and promote the welfare of the people. The question of delivery of mail in rural districts is being discussed throughout the country, and the demand is daily growing. Each house where mail is being delivered and collected can have a little box put up as a receptacle of mail delivered or to be collected, and the committee see no objection to the establishment of such postal facilities by neighborhood agreement, but much good resulting therefrom.

Mr. SPERRY. Mr. Speaker, this bill was introduced by myself during the first session of this Congress, at the request of a large number of people of my own State and at the solicitation of farming communities in other States.

The idea is a very simple one. The bill itself fully explains the subject, and if there is anything which is not made clear by the language of the bill itself it is set forth in the report of the committee. The idea is simply this: There are large farming communities, villages, and towns with inhabitants not exceeding 10,000. When the number of inhabitants does not reach 10,000, then the free-delivery system is inoperative in such communities. It seems to me that we should give all the people possible the advantage of the system and not stop at a certain mark, to wit, 10,000 inhabitants, with a certain income at the local post-office, and say we will not go over that line. There are large numbers of farming communities, and there are a large number of villages whose inhabitants would like to make a request to the postmaster that he appoint a letter carrier to distribute their mail, the letter carrier having the right to enter upon the floor of the post-office and there separate mail and take it to the residences of those who make the request. Under the present law the postmaster himself can deliver it to some person who calls for the mail, but that does not fill the bill.

This service could be performed by a maimed soldier, on horseback, or by a boy over 16 years of age, with a bicycle. This man or boy could enter the post-office, under such regulations as the postmaster may make, and then and there separate the mail, and deliver it in the village or town which he serves.

You know in many of our large agricultural communities it takes a man sometimes two hours to go to the post-office. You take it in cold weather, when there is a heavy snow on the ground, or in harvest time, and the farmer can ill afford to spare those two hours, or one hour, as the case may be, to go to the post-office for his letters, possibly nine times out of ten returning without anything; and yet his valuable time is lost. Under this system the carrier himself, who shall be appointed by the postmaster to serve the villages and towns in which the post-office is located, can go and take from the office these letters or newspapers and deliver them to the various parties to whom they are addressed, and receive therefor the rate of compensation agreed upon between the carrier and the people served. Should they like to have a letter mailed, the letter carrier would charge the same price or whatever may be agreed upon. In my judgment, should this system go into operation, our income from the various country post-offices and villages would be increased very largely. I remember the first street lamp boxes that were put up in 1860. It was said when these boxes were put up that it involved a cost that the people would not submit to; that it was a great charge upon the Government. But I know from my own experience in the New Haven post-office, that in less than six months after these letter boxes had been placed upon the street corners, giving the people an opportunity to mail their letters at any hour or at any moment, instead of going 1 mile or 2 miles to the post-office to mail the same, it was plainly shown that the receipts doubled, or nearly so, and the letter carriers' department soon commenced paying for itself.

Now, you not only give these people the accommodation they want, whether in villages or rural communities it matters not, but you will increase the receipts of the Post-Office Department by giving people facilities, if you please, to mail and receive their letters. It is like running a horse car. If you run once an hour you will not get nearly the number of passengers that you would get if you run it once in half an hour. If you run it once in half an hour, and you change to once in ten minutes, you would get more than you would in the half hour. People will not wait. Give the people a chance, give the people facilities to receive their letters and to mail their letters, and according to the facilities given the increase will come. It is sure to come. There is no loss incurred at all by the Government. So long as the people want their letters carried in this way, let the farming communities—the villages and the towns of less than 10,000 inhabitants—have that privilege, they paying for it as agreed upon. It is the old penny-post system over again. There is nothing new about it. That penny-post system grew up into free delivery by and by, as you gave the people an opportunity to receive and mail their letters in the way convenient to themselves and without loss of time. Why withhold this privilege from the people so long as they are willing to pay for it, where it does not cost the Government one cent?

I think, Mr. Speaker, I have said all that is necessary in explanation of this bill, although I was notified only about ten minutes ago that it was to come up at this time, and I find myself not as fully prepared as I otherwise would have been.

Mr. BRUMM. I should like, Mr. Speaker, to ask the gentleman one question. Does your bill provide that he shall keep a record of the number of letters for the purpose of paying this penny?

Mr. SPERRY. Yes, sir.

Mr. BRUMM. He shall do it under your bill?

Mr. SPERRY. The bill requires the letter carrier himself to keep a correct record of all letters received for distribution and all collected for the mail and he is to make a report to the postmaster each week of the number received.

Mr. BRUMM. What is to prevent him from adding any number beyond the number that he really carries?

Mr. WILLIAMS. That is no advantage to him. He does not collect from the Government, but from the fellow whose mail he receives and distributes. The fellow would dispute it.

Mr. SPERRY. A record of these letters shall be kept.

Mr. BRUMM. But one moment. He is not presumed to collect a penny every time he delivers or receives a letter?

Mr. SPERRY. Not at all.

Mr. BRUMM. I judge that he would be paid at so much a week or month.

Mr. SPERRY. He can do either way.

Mr. BRUMM. I beg pardon.

Mr. SPERRY. He can do either way. It is left with him and those he serves to make the arrangement.

Mr. WILLIAMS. They may just pay him \$10 a week.

Mr. SIMPKINS. I like the intention of the bill, but under this bill do the people who pay for the carriers have any voice in their selection? Is it not left wholly to the postmaster?

Mr. SPERRY. The bill provides that the postmaster himself shall make appointments of the letter carriers, the same as he used to do under the old penny-post system. When that system was in operation and I was postmaster at New Haven I made my own appointments, but those appointments had of course to be approved by the general Post-Office Department. This is a matter between the carriers when appointed and the people they serve, together with the local postmaster in the village or town.

Mr. SIMPKINS. But under this bill the postmaster might appoint as carrier a person who was not suitable or satisfactory, and the people who pay for his services have no remedy.

Mr. SPERRY. Yes, but if he should make such an appointment the carrier would be obliged to give bond for the faithful performance of his duties, so that there is not a particle of possibility of loss to the Government.

Mr. BINGHAM. Will the gentleman permit a question?

Mr. SPERRY. Yes, sir.

Mr. BINGHAM. Where, in the report of the Postmaster-General, has this measure been recommended, or has it been recommended at all?

Mr. SPERRY. Some years ago, I do not remember exactly how long, it was referred to by the Postmasters-General under several administrations.

Mr. BINGHAM. The measure to which the gentleman refers was what was called "rural free delivery," was it not?

Mr. SPERRY. "Rural free delivery."

Mr. BINGHAM. That was an entirely different proposition, was it not?

Mr. SPERRY. It was substantially this: This proposition has been called to the attention of the people in the farming communities in the granges and other places, and has been generally approved.

Mr. BINGHAM. Then, as I understand the gentleman, this line of legislation has only been recommended by the Department in so far as it is similar to what has been known as "rural free delivery," which was simply an experimental service.

Mr. SPERRY. No, sir. I will say to the gentleman that the system which is proposed by this bill is as old as the old letter-carrier system.

Mr. BINGHAM. Another question. Is there any regulation of the Department existing to-day which prohibits the postmaster of any office other than a free-delivery office from delivering my mail matter to anyone whom I may depute to receive it?

Mr. SPERRY. There is a rule or regulation which provides that such a postmaster may deliver any person's mail upon the written request of the person to whom the mail matter is addressed, but there is no system about that. It is simply the case of an individual sending a messenger to the post-office for his mail. This bill contemplates a methodical regulation of the business—a system by which the people in villages of less than 10,000 population and in farming communities can have an opportunity of having their mail delivered regularly if they so desire.

Mr. BINGHAM. Then, as I understand the gentleman's statement, there is nothing in the post-office regulations prohibiting the person to whom the letter is addressed from having it sent to

him from the post-office by any messenger whom he may depute to receive it. Further, I say to the gentleman that in the reports of the Postmaster-General there is no other recommendation on this subject beyond the recommendation of an experimental free-delivery service in the rural districts. And now I want to go a step further. The gentleman has stated that this bill in its provisions will apply to every section of the country where free delivery is not authorized by law; that is, in all towns or villages with a population of less than 10,000 or where the receipts are less than \$10,000. Therefore he proposes by this legislation to open up to the operation of this bill every post-office that has not to-day what is called the free-delivery service. Has not the gentleman so stated?

Mr. SPERRY. I stated—and I thought I made it plain—that this bill proposes a system of delivery in such places. The rule or regulation the gentleman speaks of merely provides that any individual can send a messenger to the post-office to get his mail, but that messenger is not allowed to enter the office for the purpose of collecting or distributing the mails.

Mr. BINGHAM. Does the gentleman mean to say that under this bill every one of this body of men, unlimited in number, covering almost 70,000 post-offices, provided he can get an order from 20 people upon any given route, is to be permitted to go inside the post-office and handle the general mail?

Mr. SPERRY. Yes, sir; precisely as was done under the old free-delivery system.

Mr. BINGHAM. Never mind the old. Tell us about the new system, under the civil service.

Mr. SPERRY. This does not come under the civil-service system. This bill simply provides that the postmaster shall give these facilities to the people whom he serves if they desire it.

Mr. BINGHAM. And that will apply to every place where the population is less than 10,000 or where the revenues of the office are under \$10,000, provided 20 people sign a communication asking for this service?

Mr. SPERRY. Yes, sir.

Mr. BINGHAM. Very well. Under the existing law, in every office where the village or town has a population of over 10,000, or the postal revenue exceeds \$10,000, every letter carrier is in the classified civil service, undergoing examination, wearing his uniform, governed by specific rules, his appointment having been approved by the Post-Office Department. Now, wherein does this bill provide that the Postmaster-General shall have any supervision whatever of this proposed great body of carriers, connected with almost 70,000 post-offices?

Mr. SPERRY. Nowhere; for the very reason that we do not wish to mix up the Government in this matter at all. When the Postmaster-General appoints a postmaster it is expected that he will appoint one who will choose suitable persons for the performance of this carrier service.

Mr. BINGHAM. But he has no discretion with respect to the persons. You have eliminated the supervision of the Postmaster-General in every post-office where the population is less than 10,000 or the receipts of the office less than \$10,000. In such places you give this patronage and this power to the postmaster himself. But the moment you go to an office where the population is 10,000 or the income \$10,000 or more, that moment the carrier must go through a rigid civil-service examination, must wear a uniform, and must in all respects be governed by the rules of the service.

Mr. SPERRY. Why, then, do you draw this line? If you are so particular on the one side, why not be just as particular on the other?

Mr. BINGHAM. In justice to myself and my record here, allow me to say that I brought in the bill which extended this service to communities of 5,000 population. I reported to this House the bill which provided for the experimental rural service, and carried it through the House. Hence I submit to the gentleman that I am not subject to his criticism.

Mr. SPERRY. Then the gentleman is "almost" but not entirely "such as I am" upon this matter. Is the gentleman willing to extend this service to communities of 5,000 people; and if so, why should we withhold from farming communities that which they themselves are willing and ready to pay for?

Mr. BINGHAM. The gentleman makes that assumption; but I do not know it to be the fact. I do, however, know this—that any farming community to-day can designate any person that they desire to receive their mail matter at the respective post-office. If any farming community chooses to take that responsibility it can do so. I say to the gentleman that if we pass this legislation the appointments under it will be unlimited.

Mr. SPERRY. No, sir.

Mr. BINGHAM. One main purpose of the system as existing in our great cities to-day is to throw proper safeguards around the carrier force, so as to prevent mail depredations. If the gentleman is going to add to the force of the Government employees in these subordinate lines, so as to have a body of carriers, each

of them representing twenty people or more, he is going to more than double the carrier force and open the way to depredations, the prevention or detection of which will require a special-agent force three times as large as that which the Government now has.

Mr. SPERRY. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." This same principle precisely might be invoked to-day in reference to your telegraph service, where you have your little boys carrying most important messages.

Mr. BINGHAM. They do not contain money or other valuables.

Mr. SPERRY. There is no difference in principle. Why not apply the same principle to those little fellows who are delivering your telegrams? I can not see the difference.

Mr. BINGHAM. Will the gentleman allow me to answer? Of course, with respect to your telegraphic communications, the company is liable. This bill in section 3 says:

That the letter carriers appointed by authority of this act shall be subject to all the provisions of existing law not inconsistent with this act.

The existing law establishes a bureau for the examination, through its detective or special-agent force, of all violations of law. In this respect the bureau will exercise a supervision, but that is the only feature of the bill which provides for any supervision whatever outside of the local postmaster himself. That special-agent force would have supervision of the vast body of men that this bill proposes to provide for. But does the gentleman suppose that the present special-agency force could do this work?

Mr. SPERRY. The gentleman as an old postmaster knows that when he gave a clerk a position in his office he trusted him, and the people trusted him. Under this bill there is provided a penal sum of \$100 for every violation of official duty. There is no more danger under this bill than there was when you, as postmaster at Philadelphia, appointed a clerk without requiring him to give bonds.

Mr. BINGHAM. I have only this criticism to make upon the gentleman's bill, that it opens up an unlimited increase of force in the postal service—unlimited.

Mr. SPERRY. Not at all.

Mr. BINGHAM. Every post-office that fails to turn in a revenue of \$10,000 will come under the provisions of this bill. My objection is that the bill practically authorizes an unlimited force. The existing law permits an individual to send whomsoever he chooses to the post-office for his letters, the individual taking upon himself the responsibility. That provision applies everywhere. An important objection to this measure is that there is not a word in it giving to the Postmaster-General or the Post-Office Department any supervision of this business.

Mr. SPERRY. The law of supply and demand operates in this matter. I assume that the gentleman as postmaster would not have increased the number of clerks in his office beyond the demands of the office. Neither would any local postmaster who takes a pride in serving the people add needlessly to the number of carriers connected with his office. The number could not exceed those who could make a living out of such service. The local postmaster would be just as particular as the gentleman from Pennsylvania would be in making his appointments.

Mr. BINGHAM. Will the gentleman read the provision of his own bill?

That whenever not less than twenty persons who receive their mail matter through the same post-office shall petition the postmaster at such office to appoint one or more letter carriers, who shall be at least 16 years of age, for the delivery of letters and other mail matter therefrom to the persons addressed, at their respective residences or places of business, and for the collection of letters and the conveyance and delivery of them to the post-office, said postmaster shall appoint a suitable number of letter carriers for that purpose.

Mr. SPERRY. Precisely. I am glad the gentleman called attention to the language of the bill itself. It provides for the appointment of a suitable number of such carriers.

Mr. BINGHAM. Of course; without limit.

Mr. SPERRY. My dear friend, it is precisely the same thing under the regulations by which you conducted your business at Philadelphia. It was unlimited there to the same extent that it is unlimited here.

Mr. BINGHAM. It was limited to the extent of the appropriation bill.

Mr. SPERRY. And there is no trouble whatever in reference to this matter. You need not be afraid that the postmaster will appoint so many as to burden or interfere with those whom he has already appointed. It is to be supposed, at least, that a man who is suitable for a postmaster has some practical common sense and judgment to guide him in such matters.

Mr. BINGHAM. I have said what I desired to say, Mr. Speaker. I have stated my objections, so far as I am concerned, to this bill.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, as I understand the pending bill and its purposes, the men who are to be employed under its operation are not employees of the Government of the United

States. They would practically be selected by the people whose mail matter they are going to distribute.

Mr. BINGHAM. To whom would they give bond in case of their appointment?

Mr. WILLIAMS. To the Government of the United States, of course.

Mr. BINGHAM. Then what would determine their character as employees?

Mr. WILLIAMS. I was going to say that, being paid by the people whose mail they deliver, as a matter of practical operation it would result in these men being chosen by these people themselves.

Mr. BINGHAM. But are they not subject to all of the laws and regulations governing the Post-Office Department—every law?

Mr. WILLIAMS. Certainly.

Mr. BINGHAM. Then they give bond to the Government of the United States and are subject to all the laws and regulations of the Postal Department. I ask the gentleman, what are they? They are designated in this bill as "carriers."

Mr. WILLIAMS. I understand the point the gentleman is making. To the extent that these people give bond to the Government of the United States, and are subject to the criminal laws which govern the operations of carriers generally throughout the United States, they are employees of the Government, of course. But as to the question of their selection, practically they will be selected by the people whose mail they deliver, because these people—that is, twenty or more of them uniting together in such request—would agree to the selection of a carrier, and would give their written consent to the postmaster for the appointment, stating that such person so selected is a suitable person to receive and deliver their mail matter. It is always well to go into the practical operation of matters back of the law.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the proposed bill—the legislation it seeks to enact—is nothing but the development into law of a system which already exists in a part of this country. For example, down in my own country, in the State of Mississippi, there is a community of people—there are several of them, but I have in mind one community—who annually direct the postmaster to deliver their mail to a certain person selected by them to receive and deliver it. The carrier gets the mail from the post-office and deposits it in boxes in front of the various plantations on his route, and takes from the boxes such mail matter as has been deposited by the planters, or the renters of the land, and carries it to the post-office. So the common sense of a community in this country has already developed a scheme exactly that which the gentleman from Connecticut desires to put into the shape of law upon our statute books. And in order to avoid the objection of undue expense his bill provides that these carriers shall be paid by the people whose mail they deliver.

Now, it is wrong, inherently wrong, that the great cities of this country should have their free delivery of mail matter, while the people living in more sparsely settled communities can not have such an advantage. But I recognize at the same time the fact that the free delivery of letters in sparsely settled localities would bring about an expenditure to the Government far beyond a due proportion of the number of letters or mail matter delivered, and all that; and each of us has practically surrendered to the idea that all of the great cities of the United States should have this free delivery, and that the citizen of the United States living in Philadelphia, for instance, should have favors shown him by the Government which a citizen living in the rural districts of Kansas does not have, and which can not be shown to him. I understand that the argument is always made, in answer to that, that the mail of Philadelphia, for example, pays its own way; but that is not true, because for every letter they send out from Philadelphia a letter is received there from some more sparsely settled section of the country.

Mr. BINGHAM. Will the gentleman allow me to make a statement?

Mr. WILLIAMS. Yes.

Mr. BINGHAM. It is not put on that ground. That is one of the grounds of the benefit of free delivery, but in a city where perhaps 200,000 letters are received daily it would take an office five times as large as this Capitol if it depended upon the people calling for their letters. That vast amount of mail matter must be gotten out of that office in some way, just the same as the mail matter which you drop into the office must be removed from the office into the country. Therefore you have the free-delivery service.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Whatever may be the reason given for the existence of the fact, the fact does exist that a gentleman living in Philadelphia receives his mail free, at the expense of the Government, and a gentleman living at Medicine Lodge, Kans., or some other small place, does not. The fact remains; but men of common sense recognize that that is a necessary discrimination against the man who lives in the sparsely settled country.

If this man who lives in the sparsely settled country is willing to

remove the only objection to his being put upon the ground of equality—that objection consisting in the fact that his being put upon the ground of equality would cost the Government a great amount of money—if he proposes to remove that obstacle by paying the money himself, I can not see how anybody under the sun can object. I can see how my scheme of rural free delivery by the Government may be objected to by gentlemen who would have to pay a tax to carry on the scheme, but I can not see how anybody can object to a scheme which involves delivery at the expense of the deliverer. Now, as I said a moment ago, this system exists practically in parts of this country. It exists practically in a part of my own county, where, all along the line of a road 40 miles in length, all subject to one post-office, the planters have their boxes out for themselves and their tenants, and they give instructions to the postmaster to deliver their mail to the man who brings it out to them.

Gentlemen may say, "If they can do that already, then why the necessity for this law?" The necessity, or rather the advisability, of the law is this, that the people selected by them are not in any manner subject to the supervision of the Government; they give no bond to perform their duties properly, and if anything does happen in the shape of a loss of mail matter, there is nobody who can look into it. The moment a man has given his order to the postmaster to deliver his mail to John Smith, that moment the Post-Office Department has nothing further to do with the letter, after it is delivered to John Smith, and can not even examine into the question as to whether John Smith ever received the letter which he failed to deliver or not. This bill will necessitate the giving of a bond, and will give governmental supervision, without any expense to the Government. It will satisfy a demand existing in the rural districts, which demand is very reasonable in its character, in my opinion.

Mr. BINGHAM. Will the gentleman allow me to make a statement?

Mr. WILLIAMS. In one moment.

Mr. BINGHAM. All right.

Mr. WILLIAMS. One other thing. The gentleman seems to be laboring under the impression that there is something in this bill—and the answer made by the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SPERRY] still further misled him—that there is something enabling these carriers to go behind the railing of the post-office and themselves sort the mail.

Mr. BINGHAM. There is nothing in the bill which allows that.

Mr. WILLIAMS. There is nothing in the bill which allows that. On the contrary, the bill says the postmaster shall deliver to the men thus selected the letters ordered to be delivered, by the written requests on file in the office. So that that objection does not lie to the bill. I thought I would notice that because I was afraid that the answer given by the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SPERRY] to the inquiry might have misled others, if it did not mislead the gentleman, into the belief that there was something of that sort.

Mr. LOUD. What objection could there be to that, if they are sworn officers of the Government?

Mr. WILLIAMS. There would be very great objection to that, and that objection would be that there would be a divided responsibility. There would be several people with the privilege of sorting the mail, and there would be several people with the privilege of laying upon somebody else the blame for anything wrong that took place during its assortment.

Mr. BINGHAM. Will the gentleman allow me to make a statement to him with reference to the free-delivery offices, especially with reference to Philadelphia? The gentleman referred to that office, and I should like to answer his objections.

Mr. WILLIAMS. I did not intend to refer to Philadelphia especially. I made my statement general. The gentleman knows that in all free-delivery offices the rate of postage is 2 cents an ounce. The gentleman also knows that in all other offices, not free-delivery offices, the rate of local postage is 1 cent an ounce. Therefore, where free delivery exists for the delivery of a local letter from one section of a city to another, the same postage is paid as transmits a letter collected in Oregon and delivered in Maine to the party's residence, and as a result of that service in the great cities large revenues of surplus are turned over in the Post-Office Department. I wanted to emphasize the fact that at these offices with which this bill deals the local postage is 1 cent, while where there are letter carriers the rate of local postage is 2 cents. I am sorry I brought the city of Philadelphia in, as the entire argument is irrelevant to what we are discussing. The rural districts of this country would be very glad to pay that additional postage to have the same privilege.

Mr. SPERRY. I just want to say one word in reply to my friend from Philadelphia. He spoke of the innumerable number of letter carriers which might come from the offices of the class which the bill proposes to serve. I want to say to the gentleman that I cited there as an example the telegraph boys; but on sitting down I remembered that we have a better example right in

the city of Philadelphia and in all other large cities where these little special-delivery boys deliver their mail out of the post-offices, and are appointed by the postmaster himself, and no other person, delivering the most valuable letters, delivering letters which are of the utmost importance to the persons to whom they are addressed, and receiving pay therefor. This is precisely the same; no difference whatever. It gives no more power whatever to the postmaster in one of these communities than is given to the postmasters in the large cities where they have the right to appoint these little special-delivery boys, 16 years of age and upward.

Mr. LOUD. But those letters are prepaid, and do not depend upon the generosity of the person to whom they are delivered.

Mr. SPERRY. These letters are also prepaid, or they would not go to the office.

Mr. MOODY. You say that the appointees would not be under the provisions of the civil service. Is there anything in the bill that excludes them?

Mr. SPERRY. There is not. The bill does not exclude them.

Mr. MOODY. Why would they not be included by virtue of their being letter carriers?

Mr. SMITH of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I simply desire to say a few words in reference to the bill under consideration. It is a bill that has been very carefully considered by the Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads. The bill as originally presented did contain some objectionable features, as the committee deemed, and hence considerable time was given to its consideration. As framed and now before us for action it simply seeks to systematize the delivery of mails from a particular post-office to any number of individuals in rural districts, not less than twenty in number, who shall petition the postmaster where they receive their mail for that purpose. There are a number of places in the United States where persons living some distance from the post-office desire to have some particular individual carry their mail from the post-office to their residences, receive their mail, and deliver it at the post-office where they would have to take it or send it by some irresponsible person or by some person to whom they might deliver it.

This bill simply seeks, as I said, to accommodate those people and give them some assurance that the mail delivered to the carrier should be promptly delivered and that which they give to him promptly surrendered to the post-office where it should be mailed, and in case of failure to properly deliver that which the individual gives to the carrier or the postmaster gives to the carrier the bill gives to such individual recourse upon the carrier and the securities on his bond. It does not in any manner take from the postmaster in a small country place any emolument which he would otherwise receive, nor does it create any liability whatever upon the Government in any instance which can be imagined.

Mr. BINGHAM. What about violations of the law?

Mr. SMITH of Illinois. In what respect?

Mr. BINGHAM. Any violation of the law.

Mr. SMITH of Illinois. Any violation of the law?

Mr. BINGHAM. It is under the supervision of the post-office inspectors. Do not they make the preliminary investigation if there is any violation of law?

Mr. SMITH of Illinois. With reference to the letter carrier?

Mr. BINGHAM. Why, certainly.

Mr. SMITH of Illinois. It creates no responsibility on the part of the Government.

Mr. BINGHAM. It does under section 3 of your bill, which, I suppose, covers the administration of the Department.

Mr. SMITH of Illinois. Certainly, wherever there is a criminal prosecution. But suppose a man is appointed as carrier by the postmaster. The bond under this bill which that carrier gives is given to the postmaster, and he must have securities on the bond. If anyone is aggrieved, they have their recourse on the bond. The bill simply provides that the Government shall not be responsible in any sense whatever. We carefully considered that from every standpoint, and there is no way imaginable where the Government can be responsible in case the carrier failed to do his duty as such carrier. It is divorced entirely from governmental supervision and is only intended to meet the requirements of the rural districts and to accommodate them in these matters. My friend from Pennsylvania smiles. I do not know why.

Mr. BINGHAM. I am smiling only because the gentleman ignores section 3 of his own bill—

Sec. 3. That the letter carriers appointed by authority of this act shall be subject to all the provisions of existing laws not inconsistent with this act.

Therefore these men will come under every law that the letter carriers and the postal clerks and all the postal employees come under. Now, the detection of violations of law in the Department rests largely with the special agents, and therefore when you add these tens of thousands of letter carriers in these nearly seventy thousand post-offices, you must necessarily increase the force of special agents. I say that in answer to the gentleman's statement that this legislation will not impose any expense upon the Government.

Mr. SMITH of Illinois. But my friend ignores the last words of the section he has just read—"not inconsistent with this act." This bill proposes to divorce this character of service from governmental supervision and to throw the responsibility upon the carrier and his bondsmen, and to give the opportunity of enforcing that responsibility to the person delivering his mail to the carrier or receiving it from him. In the large cities where we have free delivery, and every man can get up in the morning and receive his mail by a carrier selected and employed under the civil service and paid by the Government, the system is found very convenient, and we merely appeal to this House to say by this bill that the people who live in the rural districts, when not less than twenty of them so desire, may arrange to have their mail matter collected and delivered by a carrier, provided that they pay that carrier themselves, and provided further that the Government shall under no circumstances be responsible in any manner whatever for the faithful performance of the carrier's duties. I certainly hope, Mr. Speaker, that when we come to vote upon this bill members will consider the interests of the rural districts, especially when the interests of the Government are not at stake, and will give the people of the sparsely populated portions of the country the benefit of this carefully guarded law.

Mr. BINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, in response to the pertinent illustration given by the gentleman from Connecticut just now of "youngsters" being employed to deliver letters under the special-delivery system, I say to him that if he will read the law he will observe that the Postmaster-General must approve the selection of such employees by the postmaster.

To provide for the immediate delivery of letters bearing the special stamp, the postmaster at any office which may come within the provision of this act may, with the approval of the Postmaster-General, employ such person or persons as may be actually required for such service.

The gentleman sees that under the law the approval of the Postmaster-General is required before anybody can be employed for the special-delivery service; but the gentleman's bill gives the power absolutely to the local postmasters, and so the illustration fails.

Mr. SPERRY. I am well aware of the existence of that law, and the matter is put on precisely the same footing in this bill. There is no change. The letter carriers are put upon the same plane, the same level, and they emanate from the same source that the special-delivery boys do.

What time have I left, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There are about twenty minutes remaining.

Mr. JOHNSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I have listened attentively to this debate in order to understand, if I could, the objections to this bill. Owing, of course, to my ignorance, I am unable to discover any objection to it except that it is for the benefit of the farmers. I see that some gentlemen who live in cities are opposed to it. I presume that they have found the free-delivery system a failure in the cities, and that they do not wish to extend the failure to the country. If that be the reason of their objection it is a good one; but if the free-delivery system has been found valuable in the cities, why not let the people in the country have it if they want it? I do not happen to live in the country myself, but I know a good many people who do live there, and if they want this system and are willing to pay for it, why not let them have it?

Mr. BINGHAM. They can have it now.

Mr. JOHNSON of California. The gentleman says they can have it now; but if this proposed law will give it to them any quicker, why not let them have it that way? [Laughter.] The gentleman seems to think it is a bad thing, but if a man is going to die by poison, why not let him take a large dose and die quickly? [Laughter.] The only objection that I have heard to the bill is the one stated by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, that the people can have this service now under existing laws and regulations. If that is so, why have you not given it to them? The gentleman has been on the Post-Office Committee for a number of years; why has he not given it to them? I have received communications from constituents of mine stating that they did want such legislation as this, and I repeat, why not give it to them? For one I hope that the bill will pass. Whenever a man wants a thing and is perfectly willing to pay for it himself, I do not see why he should not have it. [Laughter.]

Mr. PICKLER. Mr. Speaker, I do not care to detain the House debating this bill. It seems to me that at nearly every session of Congress we have discussion here in regard to alleged discrimination in the postal service against the rural districts. We had it last session with regard to the pay of fourth-class postmasters. Now, here is an opportunity to do something for the rural districts without its costing the Government anything, and it does seem to me that there ought not to be any objection to this bill. I repeat, the Government is put to no expense under this bill. I understand that some gentlemen are not willing to support the bill because they say it is only an entering wedge, and that by and by the rural

districts will come in and claim that these carriers ought to be paid by the Government. Well, if the system develops into such a success that Congress can be convinced that it is reasonable and wise for the Government to extend the regular free-delivery service to the population of the rural districts, it will be all right to make the extension, and, on the other hand, if Congress can not be convinced of the wisdom of doing it, the extension will not be made.

The objection raised by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. BINGHAM] with reference to prosecutions for violations of the law might be made to every bill that has ever been passed by Congress. It seems to me that there is nothing substantial in that objection. It is charged that there is discrimination made by our postal laws in favor of the people who live in cities.

Here is an opportunity to accommodate the people of the country, and to accommodate them at no expense to the Government. The proposition is simply that we throw the protecting care of the Government around this character of service. I really do not understand how any gentleman can in good faith oppose giving this advantage to the people in the country districts, who very often have to go for days without their mail and who, when they want to take a letter to the post-office, are sometimes obliged to do it at an expense of two or three dollars, depending upon their distance from the office and the extent to which they may be pressed for time during the busy seasons of the year.

It seems to me that we ought to pass this bill. It seems to me that we ought to pass it unanimously. It seems to me that gentlemen from the cities ought to stand by such a bill as this, especially when it does not cost the Government anything. We from the rural districts are called upon from year to year to vote large appropriations for this special-delivery service. We always do vote for such appropriations to extend this delivery system in the cities. I hope that not only gentlemen representing city districts, but those especially who represent rural communities will vote for this bill. It is one which ought to pass without dissent.

Mr. SPERRY. Mr. Speaker, the time is short; otherwise I would permit this debate to proceed. But, under the circumstances, I ask that the bill be put on its passage.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

Mr. LOUD. I was about to ask for a few moments. There is some time left, I believe.

Mr. SPERRY. If there is time, all right.

Mr. LOUD. I will say to the gentleman that the time is unlimited. We can consider this bill for the coming week without its losing any right unless some matter of higher privilege should supersede it.

Mr. SPERRY. Then I hope the gentleman will proceed.

Mr. LOUD. Mr. Speaker, I had seriously hoped the time might come when, even on the floor of this House, we could approach the discussion of a question of this sort without at least seeming demagoguery. I had hoped that we could approach the discussion of a question of this character without appealing to the passions or prejudices of the rural element in this country. We have before us a plain business proposition; but after listening to the last two gentlemen who have appealed to us so pitifully in behalf of the rural districts I have said to myself in sorrow, "What is to become of our farming population in the next Congress if we can not have those gentlemen here to represent them?" [Laughter.]

Now, Mr. Speaker, this bill either amounts to something or it amounts to nothing. If it amounts to anything, it is one of the most dangerous propositions ever presented to Congress. If it amounts to nothing, why should this House spend its time in its discussion or give it any consideration whatever?

Permit me to say, with all due respect to gentlemen with whom I dislike to differ, that this bill confers no privilege or power which does not exist to-day. There is no rural community in this country to-day that can not avail itself of every privilege contemplated by this bill without the passage of any such measure. If that is a fact (and if not I call upon any gentleman here to successfully contradict it), then why the necessity for the passage of this bill?

Mr. PICKLER. Will the gentleman allow me a question?

Mr. LOUD. I had hoped the time had come when even the gentleman from South Dakota would allow me to proceed for a few minutes uninterrupted.

Mr. PICKLER. The gentleman need not yield if he does not wish to do so.

Mr. LOUD. If the gentleman will let me finish the "peroration" I now have in view, I will yield to him with the greatest pleasure.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE (to Mr. LOUD). Oh, yield to him.

Mr. LOUD. All right. I can not resist the appeal of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, even if I could that of the gentleman from South Dakota.

Mr. PICKLER. I will not trespass upon the gentleman's time.

Mr. LOUD. As I was saying, this bill confers on no community any privilege that it has not to-day. Under existing law

any man or set of men can to-day delegate any person they may select to go to the post-office for them and receive their mail.

Mr. BINGHAM. And pay him what they like.

Mr. LOUD. And pay him or not, as they choose.

Now, what would be the practical operation of this measure if it should become a law? It could not be successfully operated to the advantage of your farmers up in South Dakota.

Mr. PICKLER. Now will the gentleman allow me to ask him a question?

Mr. LOUD. I was willing to yield to the gentleman when he stopped me before. I hope he will now allow me to proceed.

Mr. PICKLER. But now the gentleman has alluded to me personally.

Mr. LOUD. But the gentleman insists on interrupting me when I am getting up high. [Laughter.] Why not wait until I stop?

Mr. PICKLER. But you are always "getting up high." [Laughter.] I want to ask the gentleman by what process we can put these carriers under bonds without some statute authorizing it?

Mr. LOUD. Oh, well, it is not necessary to put them under bonds at all. I believe there are hundreds of good, respectable, honest citizens in every community who can be trusted to deliver the mail to persons in their vicinity. There has never yet been any serious complaint in that direction.

Now, let us be practical. This measure could not be successfully operated except in thickly settled communities. Go into a farming district where families are located from 1 to 5 miles apart. No man in the world could successfully deliver letters in such a community at 1 cent a letter. Now, let us be practical. This bill could possibly be successful only in the thickly settled portions of the country, even if enacted into law. But let us put it in successful operation for a moment and see what the results would be. Let twenty people in one locality petition for the appointment of a carrier by the postmaster to deliver their mail. Is their mail of sufficient magnitude in such localities to support the expenses of this carrier? No. He can not expect to receive very much compensation for the service. He can perhaps get 1,000 persons on his list who will agree to pay 1 cent on every letter delivered. How many—and I will ask each gentleman present to consult his own conscience and his knowledge of the conduct of men—how many men will pay a debt varying from 1 to 3 cents? I claim that the collection of this amount of money is impracticable. One-half or two-thirds of it, no doubt, could be collected. But the collection of the whole of it would be almost impossible. What is the inevitable result? No man has ever yet performed a service for the Government of the United States as an officer or employee and failed to receive pay but has come to Congress at some future time and has demanded the compensation to which he claimed to be entitled. If this bill were put into operation and these men did not receive pay for the carrying of the mail you would find them knocking at the doors of Congress to be compensated as sworn officers of the Government, and in time they would be powerful enough, just as the letter carriers of the country have been powerful enough in the past to force the payment to them for overtime, which in that case amounted to about \$4,000,000.

Mr. PICKLER. Oh, you will be here to prevent that. [Laughter.]

Mr. LOUD. Oh, I shall not be here, I am sorry to say, forever.

A MEMBER. Well, you will be here the next time, and Friend PICKLER will not. [Laughter.]

Mr. LOUD. I am sorry even to lose the gentleman from South Dakota, who gives me so much trouble.

Mr. Speaker, this bill comes before Congress without the recommendation of the Post-Office Department. It comes without, so far as I have been able to ascertain as the chairman of the Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads, the demand or the request of any body of citizens in the land. I would like to have had incorporated in the report accompanying the bill the letter of the Postmaster-General sent to the committee in regard to it. It has not been embodied in the report.

Mr. SPERRY. Because it was received after the report was prepared.

Mr. LOUD. But I will say that it does not commend this measure to the careful consideration of this body.

I regard it as a measure probably of great danger to the country on the one hand, and on the other as straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. I hope—I sincerely hope, sir—that this House will consider on the one side the gravity of the situation that may confront it, and the absurdity of the situation, on the other hand, of assuming to throw something to the rural districts of the country that will amount to nothing.

Mr. PICKLER. Is not that the unanimous report of the committee?

Mr. SPERRY. It was the unanimous report of the committee; and nothing surprises me more than to hear the gentleman from California taking the position that he does.

Mr. LOUD. Permit me to say that I opposed this bill in the committee.

Mr. SPERRY. If you did I did not know it.
Mr. LOUD. Very well; there are other members of the committee who do know it.

Mr. SPERRY. I want the House to understand the logic, if it possibly can, of the gentleman from California. He is making a speech against the bill. He charges that there is nothing in the bill; then that it is the most dangerous bill that was ever passed; and yet he says in the same breath and at the same time that the very same thing is already embodied in the law.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Is that conceded?

Mr. SPERRY. I do not know whether it is or not. I simply say that it is putting it into the form of law, and describing the way and manner in which people who wish to receive their mail shall proceed in order to secure its delivery in such manner as shall be most convenient to them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish this bill to be put upon its passage. The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time; and it was accordingly read the third time.

The question being taken upon the passage of the bill, on demand of Mr. LOUD the House divided; and there were—ayes 101, noes 13.

So the bill was passed.

On motion of Mr. SPERRY, a motion to reconsider the last vote was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER. If the Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads have no further business, the Clerk will proceed with the call of committees.

The Committee on the Public Lands was called.

Mr. LACEY. Mr. Speaker—

PENSION APPROPRIATION BILL.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union for the purpose of considering appropriation bills.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly the House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, with Mr. DINGLEY in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The House is in Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering appropriation bills. The Clerk will report the first bill.

The Clerk read the bill (H. R. 9473) making appropriations for the payment of invalid and other pensions of the United States for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1898, and for other purposes.

Mr. GROW. Mr. Speaker—

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I will yield to my colleague [Mr. GROW] after a minute. I wish briefly to explain the purpose of the bill. It is the usual pension appropriation bill, and reduces the expenditures below what they were in the last bill some \$75,000.

The committee examined the Commissioner of Pensions at length, and under his testimony they were unable to make any reduction in the first paragraph of the bill, which appropriates \$140,000,000 for the payment of pensions during the coming fiscal year.

The Commissioner of Pensions stated that there were a large number of pending applications made under the general law which would have to be adjudicated during this time. Many of them, he stated, would be allowed, and large amounts paid, and while it was true that the death rate in the pension roll was increasing, yet that it would be more than offset by the increase in payments in adjudicated cases, under what is known as the general law, that is, under the acts of Congress passed prior to the act of 1890. The amount paid during the last fiscal year was between \$138,000,000 and \$139,000,000. The amount that will be paid during the next fiscal year will probably exceed \$139,000,000. So that, taking into consideration the total increase in the bill by the allowance of cases under the general law, the committee did not feel at liberty to reduce this item, and they allowed the total estimate of the Commissioner of Pensions.

In the item of fees of examining surgeons the committee, after due consideration, reduced the amount estimated \$50,000, making a recommendation of \$700,000 instead of \$750,000, the amount estimated by the Commissioner.

The salaries of agents are fixed by law, and they amount to \$72,000. No reduction could be made in this item.

The next item is clerk hire at agencies. The law passed in the last session, which directed pension agents to pay by checks instead of currency at the agencies, has enabled the Commissioner of Pensions to make some reductions in the clerical force at the different agencies. He has done that, and contemplates further reductions. He, however, said that he could not safely manage the Department with less than \$430,000, and as the making of reductions is partly experimental at present, the committee did not feel justified in making any further reduction below the amount which the Commissioner said he would try to get along with. We therefore reduced that item \$20,000, and have recommended \$430,000.

The other two items, fuel and light, are not changed from the estimate, but the estimate for stationery and necessary expenses,

meaning contingent expenses, is increased from \$30,000 to \$35,000. The committee took considerable testimony upon that subject, and finally consented to an increase of \$5,000. The Commissioner stated that under the present law, as applied and applicable to the civil-service law, it was impossible to readily get help in case of a busy day or two at a pension agency when there was a great desire to make prompt payments to pensioners. He stated that he had no power whatever to employ any extra help, even for a day; that he could not do it; that if he made a requisition upon the civil-service branch of the Government, before he would get the clerks to the place where they were needed the occasion for their employment would expire. We therefore gave him an additional \$5,000 to use in his discretion for the employment of help for a day or two or three days. It seems that in the last fiscal year there was a detailed force. The Commissioner was empowered to employ laborers for a day or two or three days at a time. But Commissioner Lochren revoked this order; and then, the order of the President with reference to the classified civil service having gone into effect, including all laborers in this Department under the civil-service law, it became an absolute impossibility for the Commissioner to employ men even for two or three hours. Therefore, after considering the matter fully, the committee thought that the request was a reasonable one, and we allowed the additional \$5,000, to be used at the discretion of the Commissioner of Pensions. If not used it will be turned into the Treasury again. The committee increased the amount for rent \$300. The testimony of the Commissioner was that at one agency, at Topeka, it was necessary to have that increase in order to accommodate the office there.

The total reduction amounts, in round numbers, to about \$75,000 from the amount appropriated for the last fiscal year. I may say that the report of the subcommittee was unanimous and the report of the general committee was unanimous.

With this brief explanation, I will now yield the floor to others who may have anything to say on the subject.

Mr. PICKLER. Will the gentleman allow me a question? There is no—

The CHAIRMAN. Does the gentleman from Pennsylvania yield?

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Yes, sir.

Mr. PICKLER. There is no new provision in the bill?

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. It is the same as before. There is no new legislation in the bill, and no attempt at legislation in the bill—no attempt at any alteration. It is simply the appropriation as before.

Mr. MOODY. Will the gentleman explain to my ignorance what the navy pension fund is? What is the income of that fund?

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. As I understand, it is about \$400,000 a year. The law passed during the war in reference to prizes appropriated a certain percentage of captures to the navy pension fund. Nearly all of this fund is used to pay pensions accruing to persons disabled in the Navy, and the Government appropriates the balance to make up the roll. That is all there is of that. There is, I think, a small part of it that is used for a purpose entirely consistent, but so minute that it does not amount to anything. Nearly all the navy pension fund is applied to navy pensions, and then we appropriate the balance.

Mr. GROW. Mr. Chairman—

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania. How much time does the gentleman need?

Mr. GROW. Not a great deal. I do not intend to be long.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I yield the gentleman whatever time he wants.

Mr. GROW. Mr. Chairman, on yesterday, at the conclusion of the reading of the President's message, I was anxious then to call the attention of the House for a few minutes to one or two statements made in the message.

I will now ask the Clerk to read the extracts from the message of the President which I send to the desk.

The Clerk read as follows:

The only entire fiscal year during which this law has been in force ended on the 30th day of June, 1896. In that year our imports increased over those of the previous year more than \$3,500,000, while the value of the domestic products we exported, and which found markets abroad, was nearly \$70,000,000 more than during the preceding year.

Whatever may be its shortcomings as a complete measure of tariff reform, it must be conceded that it has opened the way to a freer and greater exchange of commodities between us and other countries, and thus furnished a wider market for our products and manufactures.

The Secretary of the Treasury reports that during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1896, the receipts of the Government from all sources amounted to \$409,475,408.78. During the same period its expenditures were \$434,678,654.48, the excess of expenditures over receipts thus amounting to \$25,203,245.70.

Thus, it seems, Mr. Chairman, that the expenditures of the Government for the last fiscal year, closing June 30, 1896, were in round numbers \$25,000,000 more than the receipts. The year preceding the deficit was \$45,000,000 in round numbers. By the monthly statement sent us by the Secretary of the Treasury the expenditures of the Government since the 1st day of July, 1896, to the 1st day of December, the present month, have been

\$40,976,453 more than its receipts. These three items of deficiency in revenue run through two years and five months, yet the President makes no recommendation as to any mode of increasing the revenues of the Government, but simply assures us that no deficit that has occurred or may occur need excite or disturb us. A very placid mood for the Executive of the Republic while its annual expenses have exceeded its receipts about an average of \$50,000,000 a year during his present term of office.

The President seems to rest secure that the creditors of the nation will be paid unless the engravers and the money-printing presses of the Government shall break down. He compares the existing tariff with itself one year with another, and declares it has done better this year than it did the year before, and if it is let alone long enough it will undoubtedly some time meet all the expenses of the Government. In addition, he declares that it has opened the way to a freer and greater exchange of commodities between us and other countries.

I do not propose to discuss the tariff to-day in any partisan spirit, or to excite any questions relating to free trade or protection, but simply to call attention to the business character of the existing tariff. It is not a question of whether this tariff is better for one year than another, but whether it is a good tariff for any year. If it is, we need no change. If it is not good for any year, then our first duty, as part of the legislative department of the Government, is to so change it as to provide revenue enough to meet the expenses of the Government economically administered. In a number of the schedules in the existing tariff less duty is collected on a larger valuation of imports than in the McKinley tariff for a corresponding year, and articles of pure luxury of a larger amount are imported under the present tariff and less duty collected.

To compare some of the schedules in the two tariffs as to amount of importation and duties collected, take earthen, stone, and china ware. Without taking the time to state the amount of importation in each year, I will give the difference in the valuation each year and the difference in the duties collected. The valuation on china ware, earthen ware, etc., imported in 1896 was \$1,162,193 greater than in 1893, and the duty collected on these very same kinds of articles \$1,841,499 less than was collected under the tariff in 1893. In fruits and nuts the importation in 1896 was \$5,721,055 more than in 1893, and the duty collected was \$1,211,173 less than was collected in 1893.

Take iron and steel. This is the only item that I shall read the importation of which in 1896 was less in valuation than that of 1893, but while the importation of 1896 was \$8,264,000 less than that of 1893, the duty collected was, in round numbers, \$12,000,000 less in 1896 than in 1893. All the other cases to which I call attention are cases where the importation of foreign products in 1896 exceeded in amounts and valuation the importation in 1893, and in every instance less duty was collected in 1896 from the same kinds of articles on a larger importation. That is, under the existing tariff a larger amount of importation is made than was made under the McKinley tariff and less duty on that larger amount was collected; that, too, at a time when the Government needs the revenue.

The friends of the existing tariff are claiming that it is better than the tariff that it superseded. It is time for some gentleman on the Democratic side of the House to rise and in eloquent terms denounce "McKinleyism" as we have heard it so often for the last three years. While the revenues on these articles fell off, the importations increased. Take wool and manufactures of wool. I grant that there was a theory underlying the change made in the tariff on the woolen schedule. In the other cases there was no theory, nothing but a want of business capacity. [Laughter and applause.] But in the case of wool there was both a false theory and a want of business capacity.

The imports of wool and woolen manufactures in 1896 show a valuation of \$27,000,000, in round numbers, more than the imports of the same articles in 1893, while the duty collected upon this great increase of imports is \$21,477,354 less than in 1893. That is, we have brought foreigners in competition with our own great wool industry, woolgrowing and the manufacture of wool, thus giving employment to the labor of other countries, while our own labor goes begging in the streets, and in doing it have thrown away \$22,000,000 of revenue. Take carpets and carpeting. I read this to further illustrate the want of business capacity shown in the existing tariff in levying duties on what are called luxuries. It is evident that a large amount of revenue from foreign importations can not be collected without making it somewhat burdensome, unless duties are made very large on what are called the luxuries of life. Here are carpets and carpeting, including the highest priced carpets, Axminsters, Moquettes, and carpets woven on special orders to fit a particular room. In 1895 the importations of these goods were \$7,146 more in valuation than the importations in 1892, while the duty collected on them was \$217,646 less than the duty collected on the importations of 1892.

Now, take the tin-plate industry. Before 1890 there was not a pound of tin plate made for market in this country. The manufacture for consumption commenced at that time. The importation in 1895, under the present tariff, the first year of this tariff, was 534,000,000 pounds, as against 403,000,000 pounds in 1892. That is, there was 131,784,122 pounds of tin plate imported in 1895 more than was imported in 1892; yet the duty collected upon that importation of 130,000,000 pounds more in 1895 was \$1,464,610 less than the duty collected in 1892. This loss of revenue is a clear discrimination against our own industry. We can produce all the tin plate this country needs. The existing manufactories have sufficient capacity, but they have been partially shut down for two years. We close the door to the product of our own country and open the door to the product of foreign factories and call it "increasing our trade with foreign nations."

Take brandy—if it had been whisky there might have been some reason in that. [Laughter.] We imported 8,349 gallons more last year than we imported in 1892, and collected \$232,992 less revenue. Take distilled spirits. Our imports last year were \$191,951 greater in valuation than our imports in 1893, yet we collected \$553,848 less revenue.

These, Mr. Chairman, are some of the illustrations of the kind of tariff that we are asked to continue until it shall meet the deficiencies in the revenue. I grant that it gained about \$12,000,000 upon itself in its second year, but at that rate how long would it take to make up the deficit in revenue already incurred?

The duty collected on the nine articles that I have enumerated—the same class of articles in each tariff, remember—the duty collected upon those articles during the fiscal year which closed on the 30th of June last, was \$39,114,676 less than the duty collected under the McKinley tariff on a much less amount of importations.

The following table shows the valuation and duties collected on certain articles in corresponding years.

Valuation of imports and duties collected.

Articles.	Year.	Valuation.	Duties collected.
Carpet and carpeting	1892	\$1,377,060	\$851,541
	1895	1,384,196	633,895
Difference		7,146	217,646
Tin plate	1892	Pounds. 403,000,785	8,801,353
	1895	534,814,907	7,336,743
Difference		131,784,122	1,464,610
Brandy	1892	294,415	\$791,488
	1895	302,764	558,496
Difference		8,349	232,992
Distilled spirits	1893	\$1,906,891	3,183,633
	1896	2,098,841	2,624,785
Difference		191,950	558,848
Earthen, stone, and china ware	1893	9,377,284	5,404,985
	1896	10,539,477	3,563,486
Difference		1,162,193	1,841,499
Fruits and nuts	1893	13,398,411	3,818,801
	1896	19,119,496	2,607,628
Difference		5,721,055	1,211,173
Iron and steel	1893	34,890,898	21,916,447
	1896	26,596,815	10,084,349
Difference		8,264,053	11,882,068
Provisions	1893	2,081,234	761,199
	1896	2,060,718	532,778
Difference		20,516	228,421
Wool, and manufactures of	1893	55,391,593	44,598,772
	1896	82,796,757	23,121,383
Difference		27,405,164	21,477,389

On these nine articles the customs duties collected was \$39,114,676 less than was collected in corresponding years on a much less amount of importations of the same kind of articles under the McKinley tariff.

Sugar was on the free list under the McKinley law, and 1890 was the last year that it was dutiable until this tariff.

Let me compare the operations of the existing tariff with the tariff preceding the McKinley tariff.

In 1890 the Treasury of the United States collected on the importation of sugar into this country \$53,985,873, that being the last year in which sugar was on the dutiable list.

In the year of this tariff which the President refers to in his message with commendation—the year closing on the 30th of last June—there was collected on sugar \$29,808,140, being \$24,000,000 less than was collected in 1890.

For years we have had a wide difference of views between political parties in this country, and probably we shall continue to have such differences for years to come as to protection and free trade.

Protection means employment for American labor in producing in this country such articles as climate, soil, and natural facilities would allow of being produced here to advantage, at a rate of wages—the highest possible—and permit the articles produced to be sold in market. Free trade means the payment to labor everywhere of the lowest wages paid to labor anywhere. Everybody can choose between these theories. I do not propose to enter into any discussion of them at this time. But as a business proposition we are to consider the results of these two tariffs as they affect the Treasury of the United States. The question of how to collect revenue for the expenses of this Government is a business proposition.

These two tariffs have been tested in practical operation. Such practical tests are better than any theory, better than all logic, better than all disputations where imagination furnishes the "facts" instead of taking into consideration the results of practical operations in business.

I have here a table showing the total exports and imports of this country during four years, also the dutiable and free, and showing the amount of duties collected. This table shows the results in the years 1892, 1893, 1895, and 1896, two years under the McKinley tariff and two years under the existing tariff. The year 1894 is a year which in fairness can not be used by way of comparison with anything before or after. That was a year in which the country was engaged in remodeling the tariff. A great part of that fiscal year Congress was engaged in both Houses on that measure.

The party that framed the present tariff came into power on the 4th of March, 1893, having been elected in 1892. As soon as that election was over, the influence of the anticipated change in the tariff policy of this Government swept over not only our own country, but the nations of the world with whom we dealt. Hence 1894 is a year which no one who wishes to deal fairly can use by way of comparison with anything before or since. But we may fairly refer to 1892 and 1893 (the two years immediately preceding 1894), and 1895 and 1896 (the two years immediately succeeding), for any purpose of comparison.

In the years 1892 and 1893 the total exports of this country amounted to \$1,877,943,341. In the years 1895 and 1896 the total exports amounted to \$1,690,145,103, being \$187,798,238 less than for the two years 1892 and 1893.

Yet the President assures us that this tariff has opened the way to a freer and more expanded commerce with foreign nations. This is his claim, in spite of the fact that under this new policy the exports for 1895 and 1896 are nearly \$200,000,000 less than they were in 1892 and 1893, really the last two years, for comparison, of the McKinley tariff.

The total dutiable imports for 1895 and 1896 are substantially the same in amount as the dutiable imports were for 1892 and 1893. There is a nominal difference of \$10,740,709. But the ad valorem duties in force the two years of this tariff—greater in number than heretofore—would more than make up the difference in valuation. So that the total dutiable imports of 1895 and 1896 are substantially the same as were the dutiable imports of 1892 and 1893. Yet the duties collected in 1895 and 1896 under this tariff that we are asked to allow to remain until it shall make up all deficiencies amounted to \$68,358,224 less than the collections on the same amount of dutiable imports in 1892 and 1893. It is seriously proposed as a matter of business that we allow these importations of foreign merchandise to come in competition with American labor, and in addition fail to collect as much revenue upon them as was collected in the two corresponding years prior to the enactment of this tariff.

The following table shows the total exports and imports, and the duties collected for the years 1895 and 1896 compared with the years 1892 and 1893:

Year.	Total exports.	Total imports.	Free.	Dutiable.	Duties collected.
1892.....	\$1,030,278,148	\$813,601,945	\$458,074,604	\$355,526,741	\$174,124,270
1893.....	847,665,193	844,454,583	444,172,064	400,282,519	190,143,678
1895.....	807,538,165	731,162,090	376,880,100	354,271,990	147,901,218
1896.....	882,606,938	759,694,084	308,897,523	390,796,561	157,013,506
1892.....	{1,877,943,341	1,658,055,928	902,246,608	755,809,290	373,267,948
1893.....					
1895.....	{1,690,145,103	1,490,856,174	745,787,623	745,068,551	304,914,724
1896.....					
1895-1896 less than 1892-1893.....	187,798,238	167,199,754	156,450,045	10,740,709	68,358,224

It is for the Congress of the United States to restore the revenues of the Government so as to equal its expenditures or to reduce those expenditures to correspond with the revenue. Who on this side of the House or who on the other side believes that we can reduce materially the expenditures of this Government? They are now no greater than they were when the gentlemen on the other side were in power. We do not charge that they were extravagant in expenditures. This mighty country, with its great rivers, its mighty arteries of trade and commerce, requires a great expenditure, and it can hardly be expected to be less from year to year. Wise statesmanship, then, requires that we provide in legislation that the revenues shall equal the necessary expenses of the Government, and its people are ready at all times to meet any such demand upon their resources instead of borrowing money for current expenses in time of peace for future generations to pay. But, Mr. Chairman, it is the old system. It is familiar to us all. History repeats itself. Every year of Buchanan's Administration the expenditures of the Government exceeded its revenues. Each year for the past three years we have had the same idea illustrated in the present Administration. The Bourbon of any times learns nothing and forgets nothing. [Laughter.]

In the old days, it is true, free trade harmonized with the labor system which existed in nearly one-half of the country. At that time and under those conditions there was some little reason in their free-trade theory. Capital owned its labor, and it must furnish clothing, provisions, houses, and everything for its subsistence, and it had no interest in the elevation or the advancement of labor. At that time and under those conditions free trade had something upon which to rest. The owner of labor would buy the cheapest products of the Old World—products of the poverty-stricken labor of the old nations of the world, because capital thought it could get it at less price than it could purchase the same articles at home. They must furnish their labor, and they would do it at the lowest possible cost. But what was a seeming reason for that system at that time has passed forever away. From the Gulf to the Lakes and from ocean to ocean, with a people homogeneous in ideas and institutions, and everywhere with the same great stake and interest in the advancement and well-being of labor, which does so much to add to the greatness and glory of a republic, the reason which existed for the old idea exists no more, yet the gentlemen who still cling to it, the same old idea, now call it "statesmanship." [Laughter.]

There is no longer any reason for the retention of the system which once existed, with the state of society, industries, and population that now exists, so different from the condition which formerly prevailed. Yet we still find supporters of the old theory and advocates of the same old principles.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, permit me to say that I know of no higher duty to-day for the lawmakers of this country than to provide a system for revenue that will meet all the expenses of the Government and provide for finally extinguishing the national debt. The McKinley bill was framed to reduce revenue. That was its title. There was no sham about it. It was made to reduce revenue. We had been paying throughout the entire term of Mr. Harrison's Administration \$64,000,000 a year in extinguishment of the national debt. That was done under a revenue protective tariff policy begun under the leadership of the venerable Senator from Vermont, Mr. MORRILL, to whom belongs the credit of combining ad valorem and specific duties together in custom-house duties on the same article.

Under the system of revenue protection formulated at that time, and established and maintained by the Republican party for thirty years, two-thirds of the national debt of almost three thousand million dollars was paid before this Administration came into power. They have added \$262,000,000 to the interest-paying debt of the nation, with a deficiency in revenues of \$140,000,000 during the time they have been in power. How long can this system of revenue continue before this tariff—as the President assures us—will meet all the deficiencies in revenue? While the McKinley bill accomplished what it was intended to accomplish—a reduction of revenue—the prostrating of the business of the country by the change in Administration in 1892 caused too great a reduction. But had the times continued under the same political power, with the same policy prevailing in the Government, the McKinley tariff would have continued to raise enough revenue to pay the expenses of the Government and continue to discharge portions of the national debt annually, as required by the pledge of the Government in 1862, when the first issue of paper money was made.

Mr. Chairman, the gentlemen who compose the legislative department of the Government now and those who will come immediately after them will have no higher duty to perform than that of providing by law for raising sufficient revenue for all the expenditures of the Government by a system of revenue protection.

While we were all content and satisfied with what is known as the McKinley tariff, yet I think like good sportsmen we will all be ready and willing to bet our money on the tariff that will be framed and known hereafter as the "Dingley tariff bill." [Applause.]

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will now proceed with the reading of the bill by paragraphs for amendment and debate under the rule.

The Clerk, proceeding with the reading of the bill, read as follows:

For fees and expenses of examining surgeons for services rendered within the fiscal year 1898, \$700,000. And each member of each examining board shall, as now authorized by law, receive the sum of \$2 for the examination of each applicant whenever five or a less number shall be examined on any one day, and \$1 for the examination of each additional applicant on such day: *Provided*, That if twenty or more applicants appear on one day, no fewer than twenty shall, if practicable, be examined on said day, and that if fewer examinations be then made, twenty or more having appeared, then there shall be paid for the first examinations made on the next examination day the fee of \$1 only until twenty examinations shall have been made: *Provided further*, That no fee shall be paid to any member of an examining board unless personally present and assisting in the examination of applicant: *Provided*, That the report of such examining surgeons shall specifically state the rating which in their judgment the applicant is entitled to.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I desire to offer an amendment at the end of line 28.

The amendment was read, as follows:

Amend by adding after the words "entitled to," in line 23, the following: "Which rating shall be conclusive as to the amount of pension, if any, to be allowed in each case."

Mr. ERDMAN. Mr. Chairman—

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, the bill requires that these examining surgeons shall not only write out their diagnosis of the case, but that they shall also specifically stipulate the amount which in their judgment the applicant is entitled to. Now, that has been the practice for a long time, and yet the supervising board in the Pension Office has never paid any attention, so far as anybody could discover, to the rating made by the local examining board. By putting in that amendment, the supervisory board in the Pension Office will be left to determine, from the diagnosis as written out and reported by the local board, the question whether any pension shall be allowed—whether the diagnosis shows that the applicant is entitled to a pension. If they determine that he is entitled to a pension, then the rating fixed by the local board is the rating that will govern. Some gentlemen might think that this would leave to the local examining board the entire question as to whether or not a pension should be granted.

Mr. LACEY. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Certainly.

Mr. LACEY. Suppose a pensioner, in the judgment of the Department, was entitled to \$18 a month, and suppose the local board should give him only \$6. This amendment which you offer would prevent the pensioner from receiving the \$12 a month which he would otherwise be entitled to, making a total of \$18.

Mr. CONNOLLY. No, that would not be true, because the matter is still left entirely in the hands of the supervisory board in the Pension Office. They are not compelled, as they are not now compelled, to take the report of any local board of examining surgeons; and it is within the knowledge, probably, of every gentleman in this House who has had occasion to investigate these pension cases that the examining board in the Pension Office repeatedly send the applicant to different boards, for different examinations, in cases where the local boards have already reported such a diagnosis as entitles the applicant to a pension. The supervisory board in the Pension Office, not content with that, send him to another board. That board reports a diagnosis entitling him to a pension. They are not content with that. They send him to still another and another board, to find some board that will finally make a diagnosis showing him not entitled to a pension. They will reserve the same power with this amendment put in that they do now. This does not interfere in any way with the administration of the Pension Office other than that while the supervisory board of the Pension Office finally determine that a man is entitled to a pension, then, when they come to that conclusion, they will be compelled to accept the rating which the law requires the local board to make.

Now, why should the local board be required by the law as it stands to make any rating at all if that rating is to be of no force or effect? The supervisory board in the Pension Office assumes to make the rating from the diagnosis written out by the local board; so that, after all, if the supervisory board in the Pension Office does what it ought to do, and if the local boards of examiners do what they ought to do, then the rate of pension will be fixed by the report made by the local board. But gentlemen all know that the English language is not capable of such refinement as will enable the local board to write out a diagnosis as perfect and complete as the diagnosis made by the men who see and hear and feel and touch the applicant for the pension. The local board are then prepared, when through with the examination of the applicant, from their sense of sight, their sense of touch, their sense of hearing, as well as the manipulation of the applicant himself—they are best prepared to say to what extent that man is disabled. They can write out in medical or surgical phrase how they find him disabled, as to his nervous system, his

eyesight, his hearing, his heart, liver, lungs, and all that, but they can not put down on paper so that anybody else can see it the general appearance of debility and decrepitude of that applicant who was before them. They can see and feel and hear that, but they can not write it down. Who, then, is best able to determine the extent of his disability? They are. But it still leaves the question to the examining board in the Pension Office to say whether a pension shall be allowed or not. That I do not think it would be wise to interfere with; but when all the members of the supervising board agree that the applicant is entitled to a pension, then let the men who manipulate the applicant, who see him and hear him and touch him, say on their judgment and their official oaths what the pension ought to be, and if the supervisory board is not content with their rating send him to another board and still another board and get the judgment of all those boards.

Mr. ERDMAN. I raise the point of order against that amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Did the gentleman reserve the point of order?

Mr. ERDMAN. I raise the point of order that it changes existing law.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the gentleman from Illinois desire to say anything on the point of order? The gentleman from Pennsylvania made the point of order that it changes existing law.

Mr. CONNOLLY. It is suggested to me that the point of order was not made in time.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Pennsylvania states that he made it at the time the amendment was presented.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I certainly did not hear the gentleman from Pennsylvania [referring to Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE].

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. It was another gentleman from Pennsylvania. There are more than one gentleman from Pennsylvania. There are just thirty gentlemen from Pennsylvania on this floor.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I beg the gentleman's pardon.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the gentleman desire to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, yes; I have this to say on the point of order: The amendment does not change existing law. There is no law now authorizing any supervising board that I know of, or giving that board sole power to fix the rate of pension where a pension is allowed. Their duties are prescribed, and among their prescribed duties no such duty can be found as that authorizing them to fix the rate of pension. The law does require the local board to fix the rate of pension, and this is simply saying by law what we mean as to what the specific rate of pension shall be. I say that it does not make any change of fixed law as existing to-day. It is simply a change in the practice of the Pension Office—that and nothing more.

Mr. HARDY. If the gentleman will allow me, is it not a fact that until recently the pension examining surgeons were only permitted to make a diagnosis of the case and make no rating whatever; and that recently they have reestablished the rating by the board of surgeons, and that the advisory surgeons in the Pension Office merely act under a rule of the Commissioner and not by law at all?

Mr. CONNOLLY. I understand that formerly these appropriation bills passed—I do not know how many years ago—without any provision of this kind at all—that is, a proviso that the report of such examining surgeons shall specifically state the rating which in their judgment the applicant is entitled to. I understand these pension appropriation bills were formerly passed without any provision of that kind in at all, regulating the duties of the local examining surgeons in this respect. For some years past, I am informed, it has been the custom to put a provision in the bill requiring them to make that kind of a rating in their report. I understand that under the rule invoked by the gentleman no change of law can be made in an appropriation bill.

Now, I make answer to the gentleman, there is no law giving authority to the supervisory board of medical examiners to fix or make the rating. The law has existed for some years requiring the local board of examining surgeons to fix the rating. This amendment does not change that. The bill as reported from the committee requires the same thing—that the local board shall fix the rating. Now, I believe that has been required for years. What was the original purpose, manifestly, of requiring the local board to fix the rating if it was not that they should have some governing and controlling power? And this simply says what that governing and controlling power shall be, from the reports made by them, the local board, namely, that if the Pension Office finds the applicant entitled to a pension, then that the rating found by the local board shall be the rating accepted by the Pension Office.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I do not desire to say anything on the point of order, but do desire to make some remarks upon the amendment if the point of order is not sustained.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair sustains the point of order.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. If the bill has been read I desire to offer the following amendment. I understand only the first section has been read.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the gentleman's amendment apply to the first section?

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. It applies to the second section.

The CHAIRMAN. Which paragraph?

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. It applies to the second paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

In line 5, page 3, strike out the words "as nearly as practicable."

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I reserve the point of order on that amendment.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. I offer that amendment for the following reasons: As the law reads now, and as it has read for years with these words in it, the Commissioner of Pensions has been enabled to pay in the city of New York, where they have only 52,000 pensioners on the roll, \$36,000 for clerk hire, while in the State of Iowa and at the city of Des Moines, where they have 56,000 pensioners on the roll, they only expend \$24,000 in the payment of clerk hire. In the city of Topeka, where they have 105,000 on the rolls, we only expend \$1,000 more in clerk hire than they do in New York, where they have only one-half that number of pensioners on the roll.

Now, I submit that it does not and that it should not take a dollar more to pay the pensioners in New York in proportion to their number than it takes to pay the pensioners in Iowa or in Kansas; and certainly there can be no reason why it should cost as much money to pay 52,000 pensioners in New York as it costs to pay 105,000 at the agency in Topeka, Kans. If the words that I have moved to strike out are left in this bill, the Commissioner can continue to pay out as much money at the agency in New York as he pays out in Iowa or in Kansas, although the number of pensioners there is so much less. More than that, the way this bill is worded they can employ and they do employ in the city of New York to pay their pensioners ten more clerks than are employed at the agency in Iowa, yet they have not so many pensioners on the rolls. They have seven more clerks at the New York agency than we have at the Kansas agency, although we have double the number of pensioners.

Mr. NORTHWAY. Those extra clerks have been discharged.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. I beg the gentleman's pardon, they have not been discharged. They do claim that in New York they will discharge eight men, but the men have not yet been discharged. Besides, instead of discharging only eight they ought to do the work with about half the number they now employ. Another thing. At the present time there ought not to be any more money required to pay pensioners in proportion to their numbers at one agency than at another. Why? Because they are all paid by mail. Now, I submit that by striking out the words to which I have called attention, the House can require the Commissioner of Pensions to use just the amount of money that is necessary at each agency, instead of allowing him to expend twice as much in New York in proportion to the amount of work to be done. I trust, therefore, that the amendment will be sustained. So far as the point of order is concerned, I say that no point can be raised against this amendment, because it does not change existing law, nor does it increase appropriations. On the contrary, it decreases appropriations.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman is perhaps laboring under some want of information as to the exact facts in regard to these pension agencies. It is true that the agency in New York pays more for clerk hire than is paid at the Topeka agency. It is true, also, that the pensions paid at the Topeka agency are double in number those that are paid in New York. The cause of the disparity in the number of clerks is found in the system of paying pensions which existed before the last amendment of the law. Prior to that amendment the pensioners were paid in money. They went to the agencies and got their pay in cash, but at the last session we passed an amendment requiring the pension agents to pay the pensioners in checks. While the old system prevailed and the pensions were paid in cash nearly all the pensioners appeared in person at the New York agency and got their money, while a large proportion of those who were paid at the Topeka agency, and who lived in Missouri and Colorado and other adjacent States, were even then paid by check. It is obvious that under the amended law a much less force will be required than was necessary when payment was made in currency.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. Does not the gentleman know it to be a fact that where pensioners are paid in money the extra force is used only two or three days before and after pay day?

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Not necessarily so short a time.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. Say weeks, then.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. The force has to be there. If the time intervening between payments was all taken up in paying the

pensioners there would be a tremendous objection to the system, but that is not the case. Under the old way of making payment the force had to be sufficient to pay the pensioners on pay day or within a day or two of that, but when the new law went into effect requiring payment to be made by check it became possible to discharge a good many men from the New York agency, and the Commissioner states that he intends to discharge an additional number there, as well as at other agencies.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. I hope the gentleman does not mean to imply that I have been trying to mislead the House.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Not at all.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. Because I have in my hand a letter dated December 5, 1896, in which the number of clerks at the New York agency is given as I have stated it here, and it was stated on behalf of the Pension Office that they contemplated discharging only eight men from the New York agency.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Well, I do not suppose that the men have yet ceased their connection with the office, but the Commissioner stated before the committee, I think, that he had ordered the discharge of ten men at the New York agency. We have reduced the appropriation for clerk hire at the pension agencies \$20,000 to meet the very point made by the gentleman from Kansas. We hope that in the next bill we can reduce it still more, and if the policy which the Commissioner of Pensions says he intends to pursue, and has begun to carry out, is to be continued the gentleman's objection will be entirely removed. It is absolutely impossible to carry out literally such a provision of law as the gentleman proposes. As I understand it, his amendment proposes to strike out the words "as nearly as practicable," and to make it compulsory that the amount of clerk hire for each agency shall be in exact proportion to the number of pensioners paid at the agency.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. If, under the law, all pensions are now paid in like manner, namely, by mail, why should any more clerks be needed in proportion to the number of pensioners at the New York agency than at the Iowa or the Kansas agency? And does not the fact that all pensioners are now paid by mail make my amendment good?

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. But you would make an arbitrary rule. The language is "as nearly as practicable," and nobody would want to do it any more nearly than was practicable, but there may be reasons why there should not be exactly the same number of clerks at each agency in proportion to the number of pensioners paid. I do not see why any gentleman should insist on having it any more direct than it is.

Mr. CANNON. Will the gentleman allow me—

The CHAIRMAN. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE] give his attention a moment? The Chair understands that the provision in the bill as reported is an exact repetition of a provision of existing law—the proviso in the last appropriation bill.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I so understand.

The CHAIRMAN. Then the amendment could not be entertained.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I made the point of order against it in ample time.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. The amendment simply conforms to the ruling of the Chair on a former occasion that a provision of this kind is simply a direction as to how the money appropriated should be paid. I believe this same question was raised when the Post-Office bill was pending here a few years ago; and the point of order was overruled at that time on the ground that the amendment was not a change of existing law in the sense contemplated by the rule, but was simply a direction as to how the money appropriated should be paid.

The CHAIRMAN. The present occupant of the chair never made any ruling of that kind.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. No, the present occupant of the chair was not in the chair at that time. I find that the rulings of different Chairmen vary from time to time.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair finds on examination that the language contained in this bill is an exact repetition of that of the last appropriation bill, which is the law to-day. Therefore this amendment proposes to change existing law; and the Chair sustains the point of order.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I do not want any gentleman to labor under the impression that there is a purpose on the part of the Commissioner of Pensions to employ clerks unnecessarily in the city of New York. I have now found the testimony bearing upon the point. This question was put to the Commissioner: "Then, under your statement, it will be possible for you to reduce the clerical force at New York about one-half?" He answers: "I propose to reduce it still further—yes." He will do that undoubtedly.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. But it will be observed the Commissioner does not say that he will reduce the force one-half. He should say so, but he does not; and I venture to say that when the next bill of this kind comes in we shall find that the Department

has expended in New York nearly twice as much as—at least one-third more than—at any other agency in this country.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. It will be time enough then to correct the matter.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. I think it would be best to correct it now.

The Clerk resumed and concluded the reading of the bill.

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I understand that one of my colleagues on the committee, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. BLUE], desires to be heard for a few moments.

Mr. BLUE. Mr. Chairman, when the subcommittee submitted this bill to the general committee it was the understanding that the Commissioner of Pensions should further consider the question of rents and furnish information whether or not that item could be reduced. I will ask the chairman of the subcommittee whether that information has been furnished?

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. I have the information here. I apologize to the gentleman for neglecting to hand him the paper before. I should have done so.

Mr. BLUE. Upon a hasty examination of this paper, I find nothing to indicate that a reduction in the rents can be made. I wish to say, however, that the change of law providing for payment of pensioners by mail instead of payment in person must in some instances have rendered it unnecessary to continue to use all the office room heretofore provided. It is also a fact that some of the public buildings which have been in course of construction—including, I assume, the one at Detroit—must soon be in a condition to supply offices for the Government, and among others, offices for the pension agents. This statement just handed to me by the gentleman from Pennsylvania does not say when that will be accomplished. But at this time, not wishing to retard the passage of this bill, I will not offer any amendment. I suggest, however, that hereafter, if it be ascertained that it can be done, a provision reducing the appropriation for rent be incorporated in the bill.

In reply to some remarks of my colleague from Kansas [Mr. CURTIS], who doubtless made his criticism in good faith, I wish to say that in considering the appropriation embraced in this bill "for stationery and other necessary expenses, \$35,000," we added \$5,000 at the suggestion of the Commissioner for the purpose, in the main, of giving him a force to be used at his discretion—for the employment of extra clerks when needed for the expeditious distribution of the vouchers.

The Commissioner gave us clearly to understand that the force at New York, Boston, and other places in the East should be cut down so as to correspond as nearly as possible with the number of pensioners paid. I apprehend an investigation would show that the Commissioner would be justified in making slight discriminations or differences in the expenses of different offices. The salaries at New York would perhaps be in excess of what they necessarily should be at Topeka.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. As all the clerks are under the civil service, why should they receive any more in New York than in Kansas? Those in Kansas are just as efficient as those in New York.

Mr. BLUE. It would seem to be obvious that, in view of the difference in expenses of living, wages in New York might properly be higher than in Kansas or some other Western localities. By reason of surrounding circumstances it might be necessary that a clerk employed in an office in New York City should be paid a larger salary than a clerk of like efficiency in the city of Topeka.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. Does not the gentleman know that under the civil-service law the salaries of all clerks are graded?

Mr. BLUE. The gentleman will find, upon an investigation of this matter, that discretion is given to the Commissioner here; and, under his manipulation, he can protect the clerks, as his evidence shows.

Mr. CURTIS of Kansas. It is his "manipulation" that we are finding fault with.

Mr. BLUE. Oh, well, it may be necessary manipulation.

Further than that, Mr. Chairman, it is necessary that he should have discretion, in emergencies, to provide assistants not covered by the civil-service rules.

I think this bill has been carefully examined in every detail. We have not cut down the amount that has been required for the payment of pensions at all. The reductions which have been made in the branches of the expenditures of the Department relate to clerk hire, to lights, examining surgeons, and so on, and we have given all of these items very careful consideration. I apprehend that it will be found, when the bill is carefully examined by the gentleman, as good as it could possibly be made under the circumstances.

Mr. NORTHWAY. Will the gentleman allow me to ask him this question: It is true, is it not, that we called the Commissioner of Pensions before us twice, with reference to this very matter, and went carefully over the entire ground with him?

Mr. BLUE. It is true, as the gentleman from Ohio has stated, that we called the Commissioner of Pensions before us twice, and

we reduced the last item, as the gentleman will remember, \$20,000 on his testimony. The Commissioner desired the appropriation to remain the same as before, in order that he, in the exercise of sound discretion, might advance some of the salaries. But on an examination of the matter we thought it important that the change suggested here should be made, and believed it to be imprudent and unwise not to cut out the amount we thought it safe and prudent to cut out. This was done in the interest of economy.

Mr. BINGHAM. Will my colleague from Pennsylvania allow me to occupy five minutes?

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Certainly; I yield five minutes.

Mr. BINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I have no desire to delay the passage of this appropriation bill. I feel it incumbent upon me, however, to submit to the House a single statement. There is no official or public document issued or uttered by our Government that has either the signification or general circulation, careful reading, as well as retention in public libraries and the general depositories of public records, as the message of the President of the United States. It is read and discussed by the civilized world. At the commencement of this Administration, at the second session of the Fifty-third Congress, which was the first annual message of the President, covering the general subjects submitted for the consideration of Congress, the President in his message used this language:

I am unable to understand why frauds in the pension rolls should not be exposed and corrected with thoroughness and vigor. * * * Thousands of neighborhoods have their well-known fraudulent pensioners, and recent developments by the Bureau establish appalling conspiracies to accomplish pension frauds. By no means the least wrong done is to brave and deserving pensioners, who certainly ought not to be condemned to such association.

In the appropriation bills for the three full years wherein this Administration has been disbursing the public funds through its appointed subordinates, the Committee on Appropriations having charge of the executive, judicial, and legislative bill, fully recognizing the serious character of these utterances of the President of the United States, increased the appropriations for making special investigations pertaining to the Pension Bureau from \$225,000, which includes the deficiency, to \$400,000 for the fiscal year of 1894, to \$500,000 for the fiscal year of 1895, the same sum of \$500,000 for the fiscal year of 1896, and also provided for the appointment of 150 special examiners at an expenditure of \$195,000. In other words, the Congress of the United States gave, in its appropriations for examination by special detailed examiners of the Pension Bureau, which had immediately and specifically in charge the investigation of pension frauds, more than was asked for by the Pension Bureau of the Department of the Interior.

I take the reports for the three full years of the administration of the Pension Bureau under the present Administration of President Cleveland, desiring the House to bear in mind the serious charge contained in this message to which I have referred, as it came to the second session of the Fifty-third Congress, and will quote briefly from them. In 1894, the first full year, I find this: Convictions had, 194; sentences imposed, 120. In 1895, convictions had, 294; sentences imposed, 214. In 1896, convictions had, 167; sentences imposed, 160. That is the record of the investigations of the Pension Bureau pertaining to these "conspiracies" alleged, and the result being the statement that I have submitted. The President in his message to Congress yesterday—and I desire only that these groupings of facts, figures, and utterances may be of record for future reference—the President submits:

The Commissioner of Pensions reports that during the last fiscal year 329 indictments were found against violators of the pension laws. Under these indictments 167 convictions resulted.

Gentlemen, in view of that exhibit under this Administration, can anyone in this House credit the statement contained in the message to the second session of the Fifty-third Congress:

Thousands of neighborhoods have their well-known fraudulent pensioners, and recent developments by the Bureau establish appalling conspiracies to accomplish pension frauds.

I have given you the statement of the President as exhibited in his former message. I give it to you as exhibited in his last annual message, showing 167 convictions, and I submit also to you the fact that every dollar asked for by this Administration for the detection of pension frauds has been appropriated by the Democratic House of the Fifty-third Congress and by the Republican House of the Fifty-fourth Congress, and we find, after three years of consistent effort, 167 convictions out of a roll, "on June 30, 1896," as the President states it, of "970,678 pensioners." This is the largest number ever reported. I leave the question for your reflection. [Applause.]

And then, on motion of Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE, the committee rose; and the Speaker having resumed the chair, Mr. DINGLEY, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that the committee had had under consideration the bill (H. R. 9473) making appropriations for the payment of invalid and other pensions of the United States for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1898, and for other purposes, and had directed him to report the same to the House without amendment and with the recommendation that the same do pass.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time; and it was accordingly read the third time, and passed.

On motion of Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE, a motion to reconsider the last vote was laid on the table.

CONTESTED ELECTION CASE—WATSON VS. BLACK.

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication, which was read:

CLERK'S OFFICE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D. C., December 8, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to lay before the House of Representatives the contested election case of Thomas E. Watson vs. James C. C. Black, from the Tenth Congressional district of the State of Georgia, for a seat in the House of Representatives for the Fifty-fourth Congress of the United States, notice of which has been filed in the office of the Clerk of the House, and also to transmit therewith all original testimony, papers, and documents relating thereto.

In compliance with the act approved March 2, 1887, entitled "An act relating to contested elections," such portions of the testimony in the said case as the parties in interest agreed upon or as seemed proper to the Clerk, after giving the requisite notices, have been printed and indexed, together with the notices of the contest and the answers thereto, and such portions of the testimony as were not printed, with all the original papers, have been sealed up and are ready to be laid before the Committee on Elections.

Two copies of the printed testimony in the case have been mailed to the contestant and the same number to the contestee. The law in reference to the briefs of both the contestee and the contestant has been complied with upon the receipt by the Clerk of said briefs.

Very respectfully,

A. McDOWELL,
Clerk House of Representatives.

Hon. THOMAS B. REED,
Speaker House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the matter will be referred to the Committee on Elections No. 1.

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted as follows: To Mr. HAINER of Nebraska, for one week, on account of important business.

To Mr. WILBER, for ten days, on account of important business.

To Mr. ROYSE, for ten days, on account of important business.

And then, on motion of Mr. DINGLEY (at 4 o'clock and 20 minutes p. m.), the House adjourned.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS.

Under clause 2 of Rule XXIV, the following executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred, as follows:

A letter from W. B. Franklin, president of the Board of Managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, transmitting the report of the Board for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1896—to the Committees on Military Affairs and Appropriations, and ordered to be printed.

A letter from the Attorney-General of the United States, transmitting a list of judgments rendered in favor of claimants and against the United States and defendant Indian tribes, and not heretofore appropriated for—to the Committee on Indian Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

A letter from the Commissioner of Labor, making a report on a plan for a permanent census service, in response to the joint resolution approved March 19, 1896—to the Committee on Appropriations, and ordered to be printed.

A letter from the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting a copy of a communication from the Secretary of Agriculture, submitting certain changes in estimates affecting the salaries of certain officials in the Bureau of Animal Industry—to the Committee on Agriculture, and ordered to be printed.

A letter from the assistant clerk of the Court of Claims, transmitting a copy of the findings filed by the court in the case of Mary A. Hart against The United States—to the Committee on War Claims, and ordered to be printed.

A letter from the assistant clerk of the Court of Claims, transmitting a copy of the findings filed by the court in the case of Edward E. Eslick, administrator, against The United States—to the Committee on War Claims, and ordered to be printed.

A letter from the Commissioner of Labor, submitting a statement of all money expended under his direction during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1896—to the Committee on Labor, and ordered to be printed.

A letter from the Secretary of War, transmitting a report of receipts and expenditures of the construction and maintenance of the sewerage system and other improvements at Fort Monroe, Va.—to the Committee on Appropriations, and ordered to be printed.

CHANGE OF REFERENCE.

Under clause 2 of Rule XXII, committees were discharged from the consideration of the following bills; which were referred as follows:

The bill (H. R. 3486) granting a pension to Benjamin Cental, of

Blair, Nebr.—the Committee on Invalid Pensions discharged, and referred to the Committee on Pensions.

The bill (H. R. 133) granting a pension to Benjamin Cental, of Blair, Nebr.—the Committee on Invalid Pensions discharged, and referred to the Committee on Pensions.

PUBLIC BILLS, MEMORIALS, AND RESOLUTIONS.

Under clause 3 of Rule XXII, bills, resolutions, and memorials of the following titles were introduced and severally referred as follows:

By Mr. BARRETT: A bill (H. R. 9488) for the construction of a wooden dry dock at the United States navy-yard, Boston, Mass.—to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

Also, a bill (H. R. 9489) for the improvement of the grounds of the United States Naval Hospital at Chelsea, Mass.—to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

By Mr. LORIMER: A bill (H. R. 9490) to prevent conspiracies to blacklist—to the Committee on Labor.

By Mr. CHARLES W. STONE: A bill (H. R. 9491) to create a commission to select a suitable reservation or plot of public ground in the city of Washington, in the District of Columbia, for memorial purposes, under the auspices of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution—to the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds.

By Mr. MEYER: A bill (H. R. 9492) to provide for the closing of the Pass a Loure Crevasse and for the improvement of the Southwest Pass at and near the mouth of the Mississippi River—to the Committee on Rivers and Harbors.

By Mr. ELLIS: A bill (H. R. 9493) to amend an act entitled "An act to forfeit certain lands heretofore granted for the purpose of aiding in the construction of railroads, and for other purposes," approved September 29, 1890, and the several acts amendatory thereof—to the Committee on the Public Lands.

By Mr. COOPER of Florida: A bill (H. R. 9494) concerning certain homestead lands in Florida—to the Committee on the Public Lands.

By Mr. FAIRCHILD: A bill (H. R. 9511) to establish a military and national park upon the Palisades of the Hudson—to the Committee on Military Affairs.

By Mr. EVANS: Joint resolution (H. Res. 204) continuing in force section 2 of the act of June 3, 1896, entitled "An act to repeal section 61 of an act to reduce taxation, to provide revenue for the Government, and for other purposes," which became a law August 28, 1894—to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GROSVENOR: Joint resolution (H. Res. 205) authorizing the building of a telephone line in the District of Columbia—to the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds.

By Mr. MEYER: Joint resolution (H. Res. 206) to authorize and direct the Secretary of War to have made a survey of the pass at Point a Loure, near the Southwest Pass of the Mississippi River—to the Committee on Rivers and Harbors.

By Mr. PICKLER: Resolution (House Res. No. 429) requesting the Committee on Rules to grant one day each week during this session for consideration of such bills as are in order at Friday evening sessions—to the Committee on Rules.

PRIVATE BILLS, ETC.

Under clause 1 of Rule XXII, private bills of the following titles were presented and referred as follows:

By Mr. ALDRICH of Illinois: A bill (H. R. 9495) granting a pension to James R. Zearing—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. BARRETT: A bill (H. R. 9496) granting a pension to Eleanor Shea—to the Committee on Pensions.

By Mr. COX: A bill (H. R. 9497) granting a pension to Frederick W. Palmore—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. CUMMINGS: A bill (H. R. 9498) for the relief of the Erie Railroad Company—to the Committee on Claims.

By Mr. CURTIS of Kansas: A bill (H. R. 9499) authorizing and directing the Secretary of the Interior to sell certain lands to A. L. Williams, and for other purposes—to the Committee on the Public Lands.

Also, a bill (H. R. 9500) granting a pension to Mrs. Georgianna Eubanks—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. FENTON: A bill (H. R. 9501) granting a pension to Nancy Whirley, of Ironton, Ohio—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. JOHNSON of California: A bill (H. R. 9502) for the relief of Caroline Felsenthal, executrix, etc., of Phillip Felsenthal, of California—to the Committee on Claims.

By Mr. MCCALL of Massachusetts: A bill (H. R. 9503) for the relief of David D. Smith—to the Committee on War Claims.

By Mr. POOLE: A bill (H. R. 9504) to pension Sarah Gridley, the daughter of a soldier of the Revolutionary war—to the Committee on Pensions.

By Mr. TERRY: A bill (H. R. 9505) granting a pension to Jesse McMillan—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. TRELOAR: A bill (H. R. 9506) granting a pension to George Warfield—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

Also, a bill (H. R. 9507) granting a pension to Mrs. Ann King, widow of Samuel G. King—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. WOOD: A bill (H. R. 9508) to grant a pension to Howard Franklin, son of Benjamin Franklin, Company E, Fifty-second Indiana Volunteers—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. CUMMINGS: A bill (H. R. 9509) for the relief of Samuel Sentenne—to the Committee on Military Affairs.

Also, a bill (H. R. 9510) granting an honorable discharge to Carl P. Larsen—to the Committee on Military Affairs.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 1 of Rule XXII, the following petitions and papers were laid on the Clerk's desk and referred as follows:

By Mr. ADAMS: Resolutions of the city councils of Philadelphia, relating to the improvement of League Island Navy-Yard—to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

By Mr. ALDRICH of Illinois: Paper to accompany House bill granting a pension to James R. Zeiring—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. BAKER of New Hampshire: Petition of Mary F. Isaminger, in the matter of lot No. 43, square 358, Washington, D. C., and to accompany House bill 9468—to the Committee on the District of Columbia.

By Mr. BARRETT: Resolutions of the board of aldermen of the city of Chelsea, Mass., in relation to the improvement of the grounds of the United States Naval Hospital in that city—to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

By Mr. COX: Sundry petitions of citizens of the State of Tennessee, praying for favorable action on House bill 4566, to amend the postal laws relating to second-class matter; also House bill 838, to reduce letter postage to 1 cent per half ounce—to the Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads.

Also, petition of citizens of Tennessee, praying for the establishment of a national park at Vicksburg, Tenn.—to the Committee on Military Affairs.

By Mr. DALZELL: Petition of Pennsylvania State Convention of Christian Endeavorers, representing 207,000 members, favoring the passage of a Sunday law for the national capital—to the Committee on the District of Columbia.

Also, petition of the Pennsylvania State Endeavor Convention, for a bill to prevent the nullification of State antigambling laws by extending to interstate gambling by telegraph the penalties provided for gambling by mail and express—to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Also, petition of the Pennsylvania State Endeavor Convention, J. T. McCrory president, favoring the passage of an industrial arbitration bill—to the Committee on Labor.

Also, petition of the Pennsylvania State Christian Endeavor Convention held in the city of Scranton, Pa., October 8, 1896, in favor of the Phillips labor-commission bill—to the Committee on Labor.

By Mr. HATCH: Affidavits in support of House bill 8306, for the relief of Darwin T. Brown—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. HENDERSON: Resolution of the board of trustees of the Iowa Agricultural College, favoring the Wilson-Squire engineering experiment station bill—to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

By Mr. HILL: Resolutions of the Society of the Sons of the Revolution of the State of Connecticut, praying for the publication of valuable documents and manuscripts relating to the history of the Revolutionary period—to the Committee on the Library.

Also, petition of the citizens of Washington, Conn., concerning outrages upon American citizens and destruction of American property in Armenia—to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MEREDITH: Petition of John M. Williams, executor of John S. Pendleton, of Culpeper County, Va., praying that his war claim be referred to the Court of Claims under the Bowman Act—to the Committee on War Claims.

Also, petition of Joseph Allen, praying that the war claim of C. A. S. Allen, of Fauquier County, Va., be referred to the Court of Claims under the Bowman Act—to the Committee on War Claims.

By Mr. WHEELER: Petition of B. F. Andrews, of Limestone County, Ala., praying that his war claim be referred to the Court of Claims—to the Committee on War Claims.

By Mr. WOOD: Petition of Howard Franklin, son of Benjamin Franklin, of Company E, Fifty-second Indiana Volunteers, for a pension—to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

SENATE.

WEDNESDAY, December 9, 1896.

Prayer by the Chaplain, Rev. W. H. MILBURN, D. D.

NEWTON C. BLANCHARD, a Senator from the State of Louisiana, and WILLIAM M. STEWART, a Senator from the State of Nevada, appeared in their seats to-day.

The Vice-President being absent, the President pro tempore (WILLIAM P. FRYE, a Senator from the State of Maine) took the chair.

The Journal of yesterday's proceedings was read and approved.

REPORT OF COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate the annual report of the Comptroller of the Currency for the year ended October 31, 1896; which was referred to the Committee on Finance, and ordered to be printed.

MARITIME CANAL COMPANY OF NICARAGUA.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate a communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, in compliance with law, the annual report of the Maritime Canal Company of Nicaragua; which, with the accompanying report, was referred to the Select Committee on the Construction of the Nicaragua Canal, and ordered to be printed.

EXPENDITURES AT SPRINGFIELD ARMORY.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate a communication from the Secretary of War, transmitting, in compliance with law, a statement of the expenditures at the Springfield Armory, Springfield, Mass., for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1896; which, with the accompanying report, was referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore presented a memorial of the American Surgical Association, of Detroit, Mich., remonstrating against the passage of the bill relative to the practice of vivisection in the District of Columbia; which was referred to the Committee on the District of Columbia.

He also presented a petition of the select and common councils of the city of Philadelphia, Pa., praying that an appropriation be made to dig out the Back Channel separating the mainland from the League Island Navy-Yard; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce.

He also presented a petition of the select and common councils of the city of Philadelphia, Pa., praying that an appropriation be made for improving the channel of the Delaware River; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce.

He also presented the petition of Abendroth Bros., of New York City, and sundry other manufacturers of the United States, praying for the passage of House bill No. 6116, to protect free labor, etc.; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

He also presented the petition of J. E. Richards, governor, and sundry other citizens of Montana, praying for the passage of House bill No. 6851, to aid the Wilberforce University; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

Mr. PEPPER presented a petition of the Glass Blowers' Association of the United States and Canada, praying Congress to prohibit immigration of any kind, sex, character, or nationality whatever for the space of five years; which was referred to the Committee on Immigration.

Mr. DAVIS presented the petition of Rev. E. V. Campbell, of St. Cloud, Minn., praying for the adoption of an amendment to the preamble of the Constitution of the United States, so as to recognize the Supreme Being; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. ALLEN presented a petition of the Congregational church of Neligh, Nebr., praying for the enactment of legislation relieving the suffering Armenians in Turkey; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. VEST. I present a memorial of the alumni of the St. Louis Medical College, of St. Louis, Mo., and a memorial of the Academy of Science, of St. Louis, Mo., remonstrating against the passage of Senate bill No. 1552, in regard to the vivisection of animals. I do not know to what committee the memorials should be referred.

Mr. GALLINGER. I suggest to the Senator from Missouri that the bill has been reported, and that properly the memorials should lie on the table.

Mr. VEST. Let them lie on the table.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The memorials will lie on the table.

Mr. TURPIE (for Mr. VOORHEES) presented the petition of John Niblick and sundry other citizens of Indiana, praying for the passage of the so-called Dingley tariff bill; which was referred to the Committee on Finance.