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BY B. W. BATES.

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1911.

SAVING IN PENSIONS.

**New System Is Proposed By The
Commissioner.**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 15.—A saving estimated at \$1,000,000 annually to the pensioners of the United States and eventually about \$180,000 a year to the government, is contemplated by a simplified plan for the payment of pensions without vouchers, which Commissioner of Pensions Davenport submitted to the secretary of the interior in his annual report made public today.

During the year \$157,325,160 was paid as pensions, a decrease of \$3,498,154 from last year, making the total amount paid in pensions since the foundation of the government, \$4,230,331,730. There were 55,580 names dropped from the roll and 26,200 added, leaving a net loss of 28,985 pensioners. The total number at the end of the year was 982,098, the smallest number since 1892. Methods of economy resulted in a decrease of the cost of administration by

\$140,546, the amount being \$2,517,127, the lowest since 1892.

Red Tape Would Be Cut.

Commissioner Davenport's plan, which was devised at the request of congress and which will require the passage of a law, would greatly simplify the methods of paying pensions; result in the making of pension checks on the day upon which the pension falls due, eliminate the cost to the pensioners in a large majority of cases to the execution of pension vouchers, which varies from \$1 to \$2 yearly; decrease to a considerable extent the work in drawing and mailing pension checks and eliminate the sending of four million letters yearly through the mails, saving about \$80,000 thereby.

The plan contemplates payment direct by checks mailed to the last address of the pensioner. Besides the indorsement on the back of these checks, the government would require certification by two witnesses as to identity. In a few instances, Commissioner Davenport said, vouchers still would be required.

Fraud Declared Negligible.

Commissioner Davenport told of his efforts to ascertain the truthfulness of reports in the press and elsewhere that the pension roll was honeycombed with fraud. He sent field men from pensioner to pensioner in the Washington district and is now doing the same in the Knoxville agency. Out of a total of 47,181 pensioners seen and questioned, only 28 cases of improper pensioning were revealed.

The last pensioner of the revolutionary war, Mrs. Phoebe M. Palmer, daughter of Jonathan Worley, who served in a New Hampshire company, died at Brockfield, N. Y., April 25, 1911, aged 90 years. Mrs. Britania Kemmon, of Wash-

ington, D. C., a great granddaughter of Martha Washington, and who died during the year, drew a pension as a widow longer probably than any other person in the history of the pension office, having received \$50 a month almost 67 years. Mrs. Ken-

non was a widow of a captain of the United States steamship Princeton, who was killed February 28, 1844, by the bursting of a cannon on that vessel.

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