

WILSON'S ANNUAL REPORT

GREAT GROWTH IN WORK OF AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

Way to Stop Great Loss to Cattle Industry by Injudicious Management of Ranges.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 25.—The annual report of Secretary of Agriculture William Wilson, of the department of agriculture, will soon be published. It contains a full and complete summary of the work of the department during the past year. An extension of the weather forecast to farmers through the rural free delivery is contemplated. Wireless telegraphy will soon connect Tacoma, Wash., with the mainland. The Secretary suggests that it might be well for this country to follow the example of Great Britain and exclude livestock from other countries entirely. The Secretary points out the serious evil resulting from a system of state inspection which, in some cases, would effectively prevent the marketing of livestock in some sections, and would restrict much of the usefulness of the Federal inspection. He regards the present conditions as so menacing to the interests of the cattle industry in the West and Southwest, that he has requested the Attorney-General to co-operate in bringing the matter before the Supreme Court for decision as to the constitutionality of these state laws. This request has been favorably received, and the assistance of the Department of Justice promised.

The Secretary suggests that much has resulted to the cattle industry in the West in recent years owing to the injudicious management of the ranges. The department's experiments show that much could be done to bring proper control, to restore the ranges to their original conditions, and he recommends action by Congress, giving the President authority to acquire the public lands of his department such tracts of public lands as may be necessary.

The Forest Lands.

The Secretary reports that the bureau is co-operating with the Federal Government, with the several states, and many private owners in handling their forest lands. Altogether, assistance has been given to the management of 5,000,000 acres, of which 4,000,000 are held by private owners. Forest investigations include the study of commercial trees and economic tree planting, of forest fires, grazing, lumbering, forest production and other important lines. The work of the experiment station in Alaska, with headquarters at Sitka, and subsidiary stations at Kodiak, on Cook Inlet and at Rampart, in the Yukon Valley, is recognized as distinctly encouraging. From all the evidence received at the department, it seems clear that agriculture may be sufficiently established in this territory to serve as an important aid to the mining, lumbering and fishery industries.

During the year, a station has been established in Hawaii, the first work at this station was the planting of taro, with the special object of studying the diseases seriously affecting the crop. Probably 80 per cent of the working population in the islands depend on taro for their daily food, and on account of these diseases, and the attendant deterioration of the crop, the price of taro has increased to such an extent in the last decade. Some other diseases of fruits and vegetables call for study, and poultry experiments have been inaugurated with a view to increasing the supply of poultry. It is reported that the chickens sold in Honolulu at \$15 a dozen, and eggs at 40 to 50 cents a dozen. Hogs bring 10 to 15 cents a pound on the hoof and experiments have been undertaken in the feeding of swine with various tubers and roots.

The Secretary regards it as extremely desirable that agricultural investigations should be undertaken in the Philippine Islands under the War Department, and in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture. In furtherance of this work, the Secretary has recommended an appropriation of \$15,000 for the ensuing year.

Irrigation Investigations.

The Secretary devotes a great deal of space to a discussion of irrigation investigations. These have been conducted through the office of experiment stations and embrace:

First—Studies of irrigation laws, and the social and industrial institutions of irrigation and agriculture.

Second—Investigation of the methods by which water is conserved, distributed and used.

In reference to the first subject, the Secretary states that the character of titles to water finally recognized will do more than all other influences combined to determine whether the Western farmers will be tenants or proprietors. Naturally, this makes the character of the water resources of the West a matter of vital importance, not only to the persons directly interested, but to the country at large. The Secretary expresses the belief that irrigation will, in the near future, become a subject for legislation by Congress, there being important reasons why it should have the attention of that body. At the same time, he says that the best informed believe that the uncertain character of water rights can only be remedied by a larger measure of public control, and that the present classes of irrigation structures permanent public works. This, it is urged, should not be owned by private parties, and the argument produced in favor of constructing reservoirs in the Philippine Islands is the same which justifies setting aside forest reserves and the maintaining of a fund to control them. On the other hand, the Secretary suggests an appropriation of money by Congress to construct such irrigation works will bring the country face to face with a new Government policy, and will carry a large measure of the water resources of the West that has hitherto prevailed or been sanctioned by public sentiment. He reviews the influence of the public lands which control the disposal of 600,000,000 acres of arid public lands must have a vital influence on the success of irrigated agriculture. He condemns the desert land act, stating that 100 acres is more than a man of moderate means can cultivate under irrigation. Cutting the entries from 60 to 320 acres is an improvement, but he believes in the entire repeal of the desert land act, and in requiring settlers or homesteaders to cultivate as well as live upon their land.

General Wood Leaves for New York.

HAVANA, Nov. 25.—General and Mrs. Wood left here today for New York on the steamer Monterey. General Wood expects to meet the Cuban reciprocity commissioners in Washington, and to discuss the question of reciprocity with President Roosevelt.

China Asks Japan for Officers.

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First—That private enterprises will have to be supplemented by public aid in the construction of certain classes of irrigation works if we are to secure the largest development of Western agriculture.

Second—That reservoirs located in the channels of running streams should be public works.

Third—That the first step toward Na-

tional aid for irrigation should be the passage of enlightened conditions of water laws by the states to be benefited. Fourth—That the land laws should be modified by repealing the desert act, and by requiring cultivation as well as residence on a homestead.

The Secretary reports the successful introduction and establishment in California of the fig-fertilizing insect which the result that it has been thoroughly established at several points, and the extension of entomology is now ready to supply fig insects to any grower after he has succeeded in raising to the bearing stage capri figs and Smyrna fig trees.

The San Jose Scale.

The discovery is reported by an expert of the division sent to Asia for the purpose, that the San Jose scale is not indigenous to Japan, but that it is so in North China. It has been found in a section of the coast of North China, and has been found to be a pest of the apple, and all fruits are of native origin. Further, in this district it was found to have a natural enemy, a lady bird beetle, of which the expert reports that he has secured specimens and forwarded them to Washington, and steps will be taken to acclimate this important species. This importation of the lady bird beetle is of value to fruitgrowers in this country. Another valuable importation of the lady bird beetle variety was one which feeds upon distinct species of plant life, which was accidentally imported into this country from Europe.

THE MEADE COURT-MARTIAL.

Colonel Denny's Testimony Contradicted by a Report.

NEW YORK, Nov. 25.—The Meade court-martial at the Brooklyn navy-yard today. Colonel Frank E. Lee Denny took the stand after Major Charles H. Lauchheimer had corrected his testimony. He testified as to his relations with Colonel Meade while he was in the barracks during the past two years. Lieutenant Niblack, the Judge-Advocate, put in as evidence the report of a board of inquiry on the barracks in January last. The report contradicts Colonel Denny's testimony on many points in connection with the condition of the barracks. When asked by Lieutenant Niblack why Colonel Meade was not placed in charge of the repair work on the marine barracks at Brooklyn, Colonel Denny declined to answer, saying his answer would be unbecomingly confidential.

Colonel Denny testified that he had no improper financial relations with architects or contractors engaged on the repair work. He also denied knowledge of conspiracy against Colonel Meade. Colonel Denny was cross-examined at length, the defense seeking to show that there were irregularities in the repair work.

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