

ing to the other Colonel, "was grievously wounded." In the light of these two statements by the two Colonels, it is difficult to see why Governor Wilson should be, as he has been, accused of ingratitude. On the published statements of facts, there is nothing in Governor Wilson's course that is incompatible with a sense of gratitude to a friend and appreciation of his services. If Colonel Harvey did not want his question answered, he should not have asked it; and since he did ask it, it is scarcely fair for him to give the impression that Governor Wilson "made a statement" rather than answered a question. The delight with which certain Democrats, as well as Republicans, have welcomed this incident as an injury to Governor Wilson's prospects, is a measure of the impression which Governor Wilson has made on the American people as a progressive leader.

EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

"I have stated that the Congress, the President, and the administrative officers are attempting to discharge the duties with which they are intrusted without full information as to the agencies through which the work of the Government is being performed." This is a statement from President Taft's Message on Efficiency and Economy which he transmitted to Congress last week. In substance this Message sets forth the main facts that have been discovered by an Efficiency and Economy Commission that was created last June. As a result of the investigations carried on by this Commission, the President states that it is beyond question that many millions of savings may be realized. For example, a million dollars, it is estimated, could be saved by abolishing the Revenue Cutter Service and apportioning its activities among other services. There are numerous other savings possible. Most people do not know what a "jurat" is. The President informs us that, as it is now used in connection with Government accounts, it costs about sixty thousand dollars a year, and is entirely unnecessary. The President also points out the great expense due to the lack of business methods. To cite a single instance, in the distribution of public documents there is a waste of a quarter of a million of dollars because of a bad system. Few people know that the annual cost of travel to the Government is about twelve million dollars. A great deal of this can be saved. It is not only

money, however, that should be saved, but also the time and energy of public officials, from the President down. The removal of local officers from the realm of political patronage, the President points out, would not only reduce the pay-roll, but would also enable the President and Members of Congress to devote the time they now spend over matters of patronage to the really important questions of policy and administration. This is not merely a question of economy in the sense of saving money, but also a question of efficiency. Indeed, the best kind of economy is efficiency. There is nothing that is done so economically as that which is done thoroughly well. To secure such economy and efficiency will require further investigation and further plans. There ought to be many changes made in the organization of Departments and Bureaus. There ought to be action taken that will save this country from the reproach that it is the only great civilized country that does not make a budget—that is, that does not make its appropriations in accordance with a systematic outline of its needs. The President asks that this Commission be continued. That is a most moderate request. He has pointed out that the savings which have already been made have more than paid for the cost of the Commission. We cannot imagine that the country would credit for a moment the sincerity of a Congress which, on the plea of economy, would obstruct the continuance of investigations that are necessary before real economy can be secured.

THE POST-OFFICE AND THE TELEGRAPH

The Postmaster-General has recommended the acquisition by the Federal Government of the telegraph lines throughout the United States, and their operation as a part of the postal system. Mr. Hitchcock's recommendation, it appears, was made without the knowledge of the President, although the matter was discussed with him a year ago, and the decision reached that that was not the proper time to bring the matter up. In a statement from the White House it is explained that the Postmaster-General intended to bring the matter to the attention of the President before his recommendation was made public, but that he was suddenly called out of town without having done so. This method of making a recommendation for such an enormous undertaking seems to be a little informal. But if the President does not

object to such informality on the part of a member of his Cabinet, we do not see why any one else should. Mr. Hitchcock favors the Government ownership of the telegraph lines because the experience of other countries—fifty in all, including every great country of Europe—indicates that the government-controlled telegraph is a successful and profitable institution. In every instance, says Mr. Hitchcock, it has been found to be of immense practical benefit to the people, both in the quality and in the cost of the service. Because of the more extensive organization already maintained by the postal service, and because of the freedom from taxation and other charges which private corporations are subject to, he believes that the Government could undoubtedly afford greater facilities at lower rates. "Next to the introduction of a general parcels post, for which there is a strong popular demand," the Postmaster-General concludes, "the establishment of a Government telegraph system offers, in my judgment, the best opportunity for the profitable extension of the Nation's postal service." Mr. Hitchcock's arguments for Government ownership and operation of the telegraph lines as a part of the postal service are sound. There is no real distinction between the transmission of messages written on paper and inclosed in an envelope and the transmission of messages by an electric current over a wire, which would make one a proper function of government and the other not. And the experience of the world shows that there can be little question that government-owned telegraphs would be for the public benefit through improved facilities and lowered rates. But there are two improvements in the Post-Office Department which ought to be carried to accomplishment before the acquisition of the telegraph lines is seriously thought of. Mr. Hitchcock has pointed out one—the parcels post. The other is even more fundamental. It is the reorganization of the Post-Office Department in accordance with the principles of modern business efficiency. A plan to this effect was proposed by a Congressional commission after elaborate investigation, and was embodied in the so-called Carter-Weeks Bill. The increase of the business of the Post-Office and of its efficiency, which has transformed the former deficit into a surplus, has obscured the need for such a reorganization, but it has not done away with it. The first thing that Congress ought to do for the Post-Office Department

is to enact a law equivalent to the Carter-Weeks Bill; the second thing is to establish a parcels post. Meanwhile, it will do no harm to talk about the acquisition of the telegraph lines by the Post-Office Department, provided the talk about this proposal is not allowed to interfere with action on the others.



A NEEDLESS LABOR WAR

The acts of violence at Lawrence, Massachusetts, last week were the inevitable accompaniments to the evil practice of applying the methods of war instead of those of conciliation to labor problems. Lawrence would not have seen riots in her streets, nor would it have been found necessary to repulse raging mobs at the point of the bayonet, had the question at issue been calmly considered by an adequate and impartial tribunal before hostilities in the form of strikes began. Such a tribunal, although its powers are not complete or final, exists in the State Board of Conciliation and Arbitration. Under the law of New Zealand a strike would have been impossible until after the capitalists and workmen had submitted the question at issue; and if either had refused to do so, or to abide by the decision, the law provides adequate punishment. Under the less stringent law of Canada every possible incentive would have been offered to the contending parties to present their case. In Massachusetts the Board of Conciliation offered its services, but not, as we understand it, until the war was on. The mill-workers promptly agreed to submit their side of the case; the mill-owners declined to do so. Efforts to come to terms are now being made by the two hostile forces. However these may result, it is regrettable that the whole matter has not been laid before the Board of Conciliation, for principles and questions are involved of more than local or temporary significance. A new State law had reduced the week of the mill employees from fifty-six to fifty-four hours, which is equivalent to six days of nine hours each. At the time of an earlier reduction from fifty-eight to fifty-six hours the mill-owners had continued the wages at the former rate, but at the last reduction the mill-owners refused to pay their men the same amount for a fifty-four-hour week as they had paid for a fifty-six-hour week. Thereupon the men went on strike, and, after going out, they enlarged their demands to include an increase of fifteen per cent in wages from the old sum and