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THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT.
By Congressman Everett M. Dirksen
16th District, Illinois.

"PROBABLY" FAIR AND WARMER.

Once upon a time, virtually every weather forecast by the U. S. Weather Bureau was qualified by the word "probably." "Probably fair and warmer" or "probably light showers" are familiar phrases to young and old. Since the advent of Commander Reichelderfer as Chief of the U.S. Weather Bureau, the word "probably" is on it's way out so that forecasts have a definite ring. The Weather Bureau has become a veritable forecast and statistical factory. From hundreds of reporting stations over the land, weather reports in code go into the central office like the one in Washington. They are placed before a very versatile man who sits at one end of a long row of desks. On each side of the banked desks are a group of men and women, equipped with maps. The man at the end of the desks begins to read and pencils begin to make notes on the maps." Three twenty eight and eight" he intones, "Northwest force of one one six six and 22, point fourteen, four plus six .. min 22 ..." For an hour and one half he continues to read and when these cryptic messages are translated into understandable terms, it would mean to you and I that "It is cloudy at Stearns, Kentucky with a light wind from the northwest blowing at a velocity less than three miles per hour. There is no rain, the barometric pressure is 1016.6 millibars, the temperature is 22 above, the dewpoint is 14, and the pressure is rising and falling. The lowest temperature was 22 in the last 24 hours." In a jiffy, the information is completed, the map goes to the printer and in a little while, the twice-daily weather man is in the mails. This is the Bureau of wizards who try to keep you informed on what day you should hold that outdoor picnic.

IF JACKSON LOOKS SOUR, WATCH OUT!

The Secret Service Division in the Treasury Department will tell you that the portrait on a \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20 or other denomination of note is usually the tip-off as to whether it is real or spurious. On the genuine Treasury notes the portrait of Jackson, Washington, Lincoln, McKinley and others is most skillfully done. On counterfeit money, it lacks something. When they exhibited samples of spurious bills to the members of the Appropriations Committee, one of the members at once remarked, "Jackson looks sour." In the four years from 1933 to 1936, about 1½ millions in counterfeit money was passed. Since then it has dropped to about one half million annually. Counterfeiting of silver coin however is increasing, notably in the 25 and 50¢ pieces. Forgeries of government checks have likewise been on the increase. A new wrinkle in defrauding the government consists of "washing" revenue stamps. Stamps which have been used and cancelled are purchased and washed so that the cancellation marks are removed. One trusted employee who was charged with purchasing revenue stamps for his company, used a portion of the funds entrusted to him for that purpose for purchasing "washed" stamps at a big discount and pocketing the rest of the funds. But when Uncle Sam caught up with this practice, it cost the employer \$14,000. Sooner or later, the Secret Service catches up with every fraud case.

700,000 OUNCES OF QUININE.

That bitter drug known as Quinine which one takes in capsule form for colds, fever and malaria is regarded by the Army, Navy, and Public Health Service as a strategic material because it is produced only in the far east, namely in the Dutch East Indies, Netherlands India,

Japan and Sumatra. If a war came and the supply was cut off, we would have to depend on whatever stocks of Quinine we had accumulated. It comes to us in the form of Quinine Sulfate and it is said that it can be stored for 20 years without material depreciation. Our normal consumption of quinine is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ million ounces annually and we have on hand a stock of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ million ounces. To add to the stock, we have recently contracted for an additional 700,000 ounces at a price of about 58¢ per ounce. That's a lot of quinine, capable of subduing billions of malaria germs.

MY! HOW HE'S GRO'N.

In 1890, when the bushy-bearded Benjamin Harrison was in the White House, the total annual cost of the Federal Government for all purposes was \$395,000,000. That was 50 years ago. The following year it jumped to \$463,000,000. The year 1892 saw it go to \$524,000,000. With few exceptions, each year saw an increase until 20 years later, the annual expenses of government were slightly over \$1,006,431,726. The Congress of that year became familiarly known as the "billion dollar Congress." Total expenditure for the 20 years following 1890 was about \$13,000,000,000. The total of all appropriations made by the 1st session of the 76th Congress for the fiscal year 1940, which began on July 1, 1939 and ends June 30, 1940 was \$13,480,216,000. Here is conclusive evidence of how Uncle Sam has grown in the last 50 years.

LITTLE ITEM, MUCH ARGUMENT.

Once, there was a complaint that veterans in hospitals were fed on oleomargarine instead of butter. The complaint took root. It was nursed and fed and finally crystallized in the form of what seemed to be a very inoffensive bit of language in an appropriation bill for the Veterans Administration and read as follows: "That no part of this appropriation shall be expended for the purchase of oleomargarine or butter substitutes except for cooking purposes." That language seemed so harmless and simple. But it raised an immediate storm of protest. Members of Congress from cotton states said that since cottonseed oil is used in making margarine and since it is pure, and nutritious, such a provision was not only an infringement of their constitutional rights but that it is discriminatory and curtails their outlet. Since then, similar language has crept into appropriation bills for other hospitals and for the Army and the fight continues. It is estimated that 110,000,000 pounds of cottonseed oil go into the manufacture of oleomargarine and the cotton states are quite ready to do battle to see that there is no reflection on margarine as an article of diet.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT* STILL SMUGGLING LIQUOR.

Despite the repeal of the 18th amendment and the fact that an ample supply of liquor is available in all sections of the country, the Customs Service made more than 3700 seizures of liquor in 1939 which was being smuggled into the U. S. in violation of the tax laws. Perhaps it's the spirit of dare and adventure. The Customs Service is Uncle Sam's official police force and tax collector on all commodities imported into this country. It operates 48 customs districts, supervises the clearance of more than 32,000 vessels into U.S. ports every year and collects about \$1,000,000 per day in import duties. Highest collections of import duties came in 1927 when they reached \$603,000,000. Imports in 1927 aggregated 4 billion as against 2 billion last year. Smugglers are forever busy attempting to evade the payment of duties and the principal items which they seek to bootleg into the U.S. are liquor, Oriental rugs, jewelry and tobacco. Despite the huge area which the Customs Service must cover on the Mexican and Canadian borders and the ports on the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf of Mexico, it does an excellent job and holds smuggling to a minimum.