

tion rooms, literature, etc., for employees in the Bellevue and Allied Hospitals.

Some very interesting problems, a number of which are of great importance to postoffice employes, have in this way come up for consideration. The work of the Federation, it will be seen, is for the most part investigating. It moves slowly and does not always achieve rapid results. However, the investigating is thorough and carries with it the weight of public opinion and the sort of influence that leads to legislation.

Address of Chairman on Work of Federation.

Some extracts from the address of the chairman of the meeting, the Hon. William R. Wilcox, in further explanation of the work, follow:

"The work of the welfare department is not to wring from the employer for the benefit of the employee; but all that we advocate will redound as much for the benefit of one as the other. The questions of sanitary arrangements, recreation, educational advantages, proper housing, insurance, pensions and savings for the old age of employees—no question is raised in the mind of any one as to the propriety of any of these things; but there has not been sufficient activity in bringing them to the attention of our people.

"Our work is in two divisions—one affecting industrial employes and the other public employes. My own experience has been more with the latter class. When you stop to think of it there is no reason at all why the Government should not be a model employer. I don't mean by that that it must pay higher wages than is paid for the same class of work by private employers; but the Government should set an example—it should provide proper working places for its employees. When I was postmaster in the City of New York there were about 6,000

men employed in the various departments. I found men working in the general postoffice down in the basement, where the light never reached, and where there was no arrangement for heating. Now that is not proper. No one could defend such neglect on the part of the Government. The whole building was entirely unfitted for postal service. It is a crying shame and has been severely criticized not only by the Civic Federation, but by other committees and boards of health. The place has been improved. We put in heating apparatus and one for pumping fresh air, and every means was taken to benefit the men by making it a more decent place in which to work.

"Up to the time that I took up officially a year ago public utilities instead of public buildings I had visited many Government buildings and many postoffices as postmaster; I have yet to see a Government building in this country that is properly constructed for the purpose for which it is used. That is a pretty broad statement, and some of the speakers, I hope, will challenge it if they chance to know of any Government building well adapted for the purposes for which it is built. And the shame of it all is that some of the buildings constructed lately cost the greatest amount of money and are even worse than some constructed many years ago. The Chicago postoffice is a monstrous failure as a place in which men should work. There is no reason on earth why men who sort letters from day to day should not have the same benefit of light and air that the head of the office has who is on another floor and in a larger room. These are things that we can prevent. We can call the attention of various Government officials to them. My own experience has been that in the busy whirl of everyday life such men do not have time to think about these things, but when I told Postmaster General Cortelyou, Postmaster General Meyer and their first assist-