

Prefatory Note

The first volume of this compilation was given to Congress and the public about May 1, 1896. I believe I am warranted in saying here that it met with much favor by all who examined it. The press of the country was unsparing in its praise. Congress, by a resolution passed on the 22d day of May, ordered the printing of 15,000 additional copies of the entire publication.

I have inserted in this volume a steel engraving of the Treasury building; the succeeding volumes will contain engravings of other important public buildings.

The resolution authorizing this work required the publication of the annual, special, and veto messages, inaugural addresses, and proclamations of the Presidents. I have found in addition to these documents others which emanated from the Chief Magistrates, called Executive orders; they are in the nature of proclamations, and have like force and effect. I have therefore included in this, and will include in the succeeding volumes, all such Executive orders as may appear to have national importance or to possess more than ordinary interest.

If this volume meets the same degree of favor as the first, I shall be greatly gratified.

JAMES D. RICHARDSON.

JULY 4, 1896.