

DEFICIENCY APPROPRIATION BILL.

REMARKS

OF

MESSRS. BECK, McNEELY, AND MARSHALL,
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MARCH 11, 1870.

The deficiency appropriation bill being before the House—

Mr. DAWES, after briefly explaining the bill, said: I now yield to my colleague on the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Kentucky, [Mr. BECK,] who desires to address the committee for a few moments.

Mr. BECK. Mr. Chairman, I do not desire to make a speech, but before the committee proceed to consider this bill under the five-minutes rule, I wish to say that while I think that Congress did appropriate enough to cover all that ought to have been expended, this deficiency bill appropriates very nearly a million dollars less as now presented than the amount asked for deficiencies by the Departments. They ask for \$3,367,912. This bill, which will no doubt be largely increased before it gets through both Houses, appropriates \$2,407,711 80. I make no question that each item in that deficiency was reduced to the very lowest amount, the gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. LAWRENCE,] who originally had charge of it, being very particular to cut it down as low as he could.

But I desire further to say, that if this House is under the impression that the expenditures of the current year have been diminished below what they were during the previous year, in my opinion it is a very mistaken impression. I have taken occasion to say here before, that the expenditures of this Government were \$350,000,000 a year, and that statement has been subjected to some criticism in the press of the country. I find that the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, and the Speaker of this House—the one in a speech in New Hampshire, the other in a letter—have lately announced as a fact that President Johnson had expended \$368,000,000 during the last year of his administration; the one gentleman stating that there was a debt of \$6,000,000 contracted besides, and the other stating that there was a surplus of expenditures of \$8,000,000 beyond the amount stated by him. And they both agree in the statement that during the first year of General Grant's administration the expenditures of the country had been reduced to \$314,000,000, or \$60,000,000 less than the expenses of last year. Whether the Speaker of the House first obtained these facts and the chairman of the committee borrowed them from him, or whether the chairman of the committee got the facts and the Speaker of the House took them from his statements, I do not know positively, nor is it material. They have each

made those statements. And the chairman of the committee stated in his speech that before he went to New Hampshire and made those statements he had thought it necessary to go to the President of the United States and have them verified by him. I quote from the gentleman's speech, as follows:

"I was charged yesterday afternoon by the President himself with this message to the people of New Hampshire. When I told him that I was coming here he told me to assure the people of New Hampshire that this exhibit that I have made here of the successful collection and economical expenditure of the money during the present year is an earnest and a pledge of what it shall be each year to come. 'Tell the people of New Hampshire,' he said, 'that during my administration there shall be no ascending scale of public expenditures, but wherever and whenever the closest scrutiny shall disclose the possibility of cutting off a dollar it shall be done.'"

When the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations and the Speaker of the House each makes a statement to that effect, and the Speaker of the House announces that there has been expended "\$60,000,000 less than was expended in the same time by President Johnson's administration," and that "these figures are taken from official records and their accuracy cannot be questioned," I say that they are both mistaken, and both mistaken, in my judgment, to the amount of not less than sixty or seventy-five million dollars, and that the expenditures of the Government for this current year are nearer \$400,000,000 than any other figures that the gentleman can estimate—certainly nearer than they are to \$314,000,000. Why do I say so? Because when the Secretary of the Treasury failed to give us an account of the unexpended balances that he had on hand at the close of the last fiscal year, as by law he was required to do when the book of estimates was sent in, a resolution was passed through this House requiring him to do so. A statement of the unexpended balances then came in, giving them only on the 30th day of September, 1869, which threw no light upon the subject whatever, and thereupon, with the consent of the Committee on Appropriations, I offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

"Whereas by the second section of the act approved May 1, 1820, it is made the duty of the Secretary of the Treasury to annex to the annual estimate of appropriations required for the public service a statement of the sums remaining in the Treasury, or in the hands of the Treasurer as agent of the War or Navy Department, from the appropriations of former years, estimating the sums which will be required to defray the expenses incurred in a previous year, and showing the whole amount which will be subject to the disposition of the executive Government for the year to which the estimates apply; and whereas the fiscal year as provided by law ends on the 30th day

