SCIENCE


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Logarithms on the 'Spoils System.'

While the President of the United States is considering whether he will follow the advice of the naturalists of the country and appoint as Fish Commissioner a really competent man, or accept the recommendation of one of his political friends and select a man who, in the opinion of that friend, knows nothing of the duties of the position, but will 'catch on' if he is given a little time, a good many other people are examining, with no small degree of astonishment, a recent example of the results of managing one of scientific bureaus of the government on the spoils system.

This bureau has just issued its Annual Report, a large quarto volume, and of its 720 pages 325—nearly one-half—are given to the publication of a ten-place table of logarithms! If there never had been a ten-place logarithmic table before this there might be a shadow of an excuse for its publication by the government, but when such tables have been available for more than a hundred years, and can be bought almost anywhere for a small sum, it is difficult to imagine a reason for the printing of this one. Just what it has cost the government from first to last cannot very well be esti-