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NEW ORLEANS:
WEDNESDAY MORNING, JANY 4, 1860.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS.

The Postmaster-General places the actual expenditures of his department for the year 1858 at $15,724,999 89, and the gross receipts at $7,738,484 07. The expenses for the next year are estimated at $15,038,027 62, and the revenues at $9,387,233. Allowing for other resources and especial appropriations, the amount to be provided by Congress is $4,416,692 71.

There are 97-48 mail routes and 7353 contracts. The total annual transportation of mails in 1859 was 82,306,462 miles, costing $9,468,759. This is an increase in the transportation of about 4 per cent., and of about 21 per cent. in the cost. The whole number of Post Offices on the 30th June, 1859, was 28,539.

The whole number of dead letters, containing money, registered and sent out during the year ending June 30, 1859, was 9726, of which 8574 were delivered, leaving 1152 unclaimed. The whole amount of money received was $45,718 11, amount restored to owners, $41,143 74.

The number of letters registered and sent out, containing valuables, including drafts, other than money, such as bills of exchange, drafts, bonds, treasury warrants, &c., was 9647; of which 7748 have been restored to the owners, leaving unclaimed 1899.

The amount of the enclosures was $6,522,266 11; the amount of the enclosures in sending was $7,963 75; the amount of the enclosures in franks was 194,421.

The number of dead letters received (unopened) to foreign countries, during the last fiscal year, was 153,961, divided as follows, viz: England, 101,310; France, 15,757; Prussia, 19,402; Bremen, 6019; Hamburg, 1401; Canada, 2529; New Brunswick, 1739; Nova Scotia, 1866.

The Postmaster suggests that the time during which letters remain in the local Post-Offices before being sent to the Dead Letter Office be shortened. The nomenclature of Post Offices requires simplification.

To our undisguised astonishment the Postmaster-General comes out fiercely in opposition to the privilege enjoyed by the newspaper press of receiving exchanges free. He argues that the press is entitled to no other privileges than other occupations, and professes to consider the privilege more exceptionable than the gross abuse of franking. We fancy that Mr. Holt's views will not be likely to induce Congress to curtail the press of an immunity extended to it almost since the formation of the Government—one, too, which has materially contributed to raise it to its present elevated and commanding position.

The report of Mr. Toucey, Secretary of the Interior, is rather voluminous. From this document we learn that 16,618,183 acres of public lands have been disposed of, about one-third having been sold for cash, and the remainder being located with bounty land warrants, or granted to the States for railroad purposes, or as swamp lands.

During the same period of time 13,917,222 acres were surveyed and prepared for market, and 10,740,533 acres proclaimed and offered at public sale.

The aggregate quantity of public land that has been surveyed, but not yet purchased or offered at public sale, was, on the 30th September last, 59,220,910 acres, and the estimated quantity which has been offered at public sale, and remained subject to private entry at the various land offices, was 90,000,000 acres.

There are 11,585 pensioners on the rolls, receiving annually $1,034,914 15. Of the entire number 10,967 are from the army, and 918 from the navy. The number of revolutionary pensioners had dwindled down to 185, 80 having died during the present year. The number of widows of revolutionary officers and soldiers was 3744, and the whole number of persons on the rolls, under the act allowing half pay to widows and orphans of deceased officers and soldiers, was 2432. The entire quantity of public lands granted for military services amounts to 63,720,222 acres.

The distribution of public documents and other works printed or purchased by order of Congress has been made in accordance with law. There still remain, however, a large number of volumes of books, which cannot be distributed under existing laws. The acts relative to this subject need revision.

Preparations are making for commencing the labor of taking the eighth census on the 1st June, 1860. The Secretary of the Interior says: Subsequent reflection has but confirmed me in the opinion expressed in my last annual report, that the object in view, in all respects, will be in conformity with the provisions of the law for taking the seventh, will prove most advantageous and satisfactory to the country. The necessary expense which will be incurred will require an appropriation of at least a million of dollars at the approaching session of Congress.

The records in the Patent Office exhibit the steady progress of our country in the application of science to the useful arts. During the past year 5107 applications for new patents have been received, 913 caveats filed, and 3334 patents issued and released. The increase for the year averages nearly 20 per cent. The receipts for three quarters of the year were $198,538 77, and the expenditures $157,101 15, leaving a surplus of $41,476 62. The Patent-Office is self-sustaining. Amendments of the existing laws are seriously required; such as an increase of the force necessary for transacting the business of the bureau, a diminution of the fees required from British subjects.

The remarks of Mr. Toucey on the subject of Agriculture are so interesting as well as pertinent, that we subjoin them in full:

AGRICULTURE

The intrinsic importance of agriculture and the number of our people engaged in that pursuit justify the expenditures annually made for its improvement. Experience has demonstrated the truth that the benefits which the farmer has derived from the discoveries of science, and the general diffusion of intelligence has generally removed the aversion to change in the modes of cultivation.

The agricultural reports which have been annually issued from this department have been favorably received by the people, and large additions of each successive report have been printed and widely circulated. The influence exerted by the last never to be named, but this large circulation has been followed by a spirit of inquiry in the public mind, and a readiness to adopt new methods of cultivation and a knowledge of the elements of husbandry, and a demand for concentrated manures from remote islands, and for the introduction of useful plants and animals from abroad.

It is unquestionable to open and conduct an experimental farm under the direction or supervision of this department, upon which the value of new plants and new theories of cultivation may be tested and determined. This task must be left to practical agriculturists, and to the voluntary impulse of such men are the various agricultural associations composed. Each society, in its locality, can better test the adaptation of plant or seed to be tested, and it can determine with ease and certainty the usefulness and profitableness of each. These peculiar facilities of the agricultural societies of the country have placed the branch of the public service in the possession of a number of the facts established and the information obtained through these societies and the experience of private individuals.

Few useful seeds and seedlings of foreign and domestic growth have been distributed through not the country. This has created such an active and extensive demand, that it was impossible for the office to meet it, and consequently individual enterprise was enlisted in the service, and importers have become, to a considerable extent, commercial agents in every part of the country. Those who engage in this trade justly complain of the import duties, and the increase by a gratuitous distribution by Government of large quantities of the very article offered by them in market. The Committee having greatly reduced the appropriation below that of former years, the policy of distributing seeds of domestic growth was abandoned, and to portion of the appropriation has been expended for their purchase. It is believed to be both wise and just to confine operations to the purchase and distribution of such valuable seeds, plants, seedlings, etc., as have not already been introduced into the country.

The tea seed, which was introduced from China, and germinated in houses prepared for that purpose in Washington, is the next to be taken to to convey the plants to established localities, and to cause them to be reared under the supervision of intelligent and responsible persons. This will be done at the earliest favorable period, and with no apprehension as to their successful growth in all cases in which proper attention shall be given.

The successful cultivation of the vine in this country no longer remains an experiment. The breadth of land planted in vineyards is every day extending, and the yield is large and remunerative. The estimate is that we now have more than eleven thousand acres devoted to this culture, and while the product of some vineyards, in the most favorable season, has been eight hundred gallons to the acre, the average crop per acre of the whole country will compare favorably with that of the most successful in the producing countries of Europe, and its value is less or six hundred per cent. greater at the seat of general places of production. The different species of native grapes have been sought for, and, as far as practicable, the value of each for the manufacture of wine has been tested by chemical analysis. The modes of cultivation, and the processes of making and preserving wine have been examined, and much interesting and valuable information obtained. A large number of cuttings of the most approved varieties have been procured for distribution.

Steps have been taken to introduce from foreign countries a variety of seeds, plants and trees which have been carefully cultivated and grown in this country.

A number of scientific gentlemen in various parts of the country have been employed for several years past, without compensation, in making meteorological observations, which have been regularly communicated to the Patent Office and this department, the latest being provided for, the necessary instruments being provided at the joint expense of the Patent Office and the Smithsonian Institution. To reduce these observations to a condensed tabular form has required an expenditure which has also been jointly sustained. These observations thus condensed are now ready for the press, and will accompany the annual report of the Commissioner of Patents. They exhibit the mean temperature of the seasons in different parts of the country, and their formula does not contain of high importance in scientific agriculture, and as of great value in supplying the facts on which are based important theories of the winds and storms that sweep over the continent.

In justice to the gentlemen who have devoted their time and labor in this behalf, these tables should be printed; but whether the expense should be defrayed by the Smithsonian Institution or by the Government, is a question submitted for the determination of Congress.

The particular attention of buyers is called to the [illegible] sale of damaged Dry Goods to take place THIS DAY, at 10 o'clock, by E. Roger & Co., No. 28 Old Levee. [illegible] cash.

CREDIT SALE.—We call the attention of the [illegible] to the sale of Seasonable Dry Goods to take place THIS DAY, at 10 o'clock, A. M., at Bisland & Co.'s auction rooms, No. 77 Chartres street. Terms cash.

Office, 83 Chartres street.

Our friends of the *Delta* seem greatly opposed to Mr. Gilmer, of North Carolina. They hint that he is little better than a Black Republican, though he does own a hundred slaves. A few days ago they compared him with Frank Blair and Cassius M. Clay, who, be it observed, own no slaves. Says the *Delta*:

We have known large slaveholders who were very unsound and unreliable on the subject of slavery. Mr. Gilmer is one of that class. There is no man in Congress who more habitually reviles slavery with the Black Republican party, and is always with the Black Republicans in their votes, so generally acceptable to that party as Mr. Gilmer. That fact speaks louder than his simple ownership of a score or so of negroes.

Putting aside the point whether large slaveholders are likely to fight against their own interests by opposing slavery, we should like to know the *Delta's* warrant for the declaration that no man in Congress coalesces more habitually with the Black Republican party than Mr. Gilmer. We have noticed his votes during the session, and are somewhat familiar with his record. We notice, too, that the North Carolina and Georgia papers speak of him in the high terms as eminently trustworthy, and we are disposed to believe that he is either unsound or unreliable. But would not any Southern Opposition member be deemed objectionable in the eyes of the *Delta*? If it is determined not to the Gilmer, what does it think of Maynard, of Tennessee, who does think of Winslow, of the same State, or Adams, of Kentucky? We are a little apprehensive that our contemporary thinks nobody sound on the slavery question except the Democratic Representatives. Is it not so?

The Female Sceptic, or, Faith Triumphant.—This is the title of a work of fiction from an unknown pen, for which we are indebted to De Witt, through Bloomfield & Steel, No 60 Camp street. With a very unattractive title the author has written a highly interesting and instructive story. As may be presumed, it aims to depict the struggles, the temptations, and the *finale* of a soul seeking for truth among many false theories in religion, and finding only the bitter ashes of disappointment, until it repairs to the only pure and genuine source, and then obtains the knowledge that God is Love, and that faith without works is dead. The story itself has been gracefully told, and there is quite enough of the livelier element about it to relieve the more serious portions from too sombre a coloring.

We are indebted to Capt. Baxter, of the bark Brazilian, for a late Rio Janeiro paper.

New Firm.—It will be seen by the card in our columns that Messrs. M Goldsmith and M. Barnett have formed a copartnership for the sale of foreign and domestic liquors. Their place of business is 78 Magazine street. Both gentlemen are well known and highly respectable persons, and we have no doubt will give entire satisfaction to all who may favor them with their custom.

The Department of State has received a reply to General Cass's dispatch to Mr. Dallas upon the San Juan affair. The British Minister has also received a dispatch on the same subject. The tenor of these dispatches indicates a peaceful solution of the apprehended difficulty, and that Great Britain, while maintaining her right to the island under treaty, will hardly adhere to the pretensions first assumed by her. It is understood that General Scott's instructions are satisfactory to her Majesty's Government.

Our Neutral Friend.—We are indebted to Ezekiel, No. 7 Exchange Place, for No 36 of this cheap and useful publication.

Disaster.—We are indebted to Messrs. Mesa & Carcullo, merchants of this city, for the following particulars relative to the schooner M. S. Lanfear, Capt. Raymond, owned here. The Lanfear sailed from this port on the 5th or 6th November, for Curacao, W. I., where she arrived on the 3d December. During the first ten days out from this port she experienced heavy gales, was compelled to throw overboard her deck load, and lost her spars and sails.

Schools in San Francisco.—The citizens of San Francisco have expended $604,000 on account of the public schools the past year. The daily average attendance was 2800, and 1240 children attending private schools. No State in the Union has less than five of its native children in the schools, public and private, and the District of Columbia, Utah and Washington are represented. The only Territories unrepresented are Kansas, Nebraska and New Mexico. New York has 1498 children in the exclusive schools but 17. Louisiana has 334; Pennsylvania 230. Maine 168. New Jersey 162, and none of the other States as many as 100.

A Veto from Governor Banks.—New York, December 29.—A special despatch from Boston states that Governor Banks has vetoed a bill passed by the Massachusetts Legislature relating to the militia. The ground of the veto is his objection on the military clause, admitting negroes as volunteers, saying that this is upon constitutional and conflicts with the Federal enactments. This intelligence has caused great excitement among the Republicans in Congress, while it is generally backed up the Democratic indication of the adoption of a more conservative course by the North.

Clay's Appeal.—In the United States Senate, in February, 1839, Henry Clay concluded a speech on the slavery question in the following "words of wisdom":

If one dark spot existsin our political horizon, it is the question of slavery. The bright, and effulgent, and cheering light that beams all round us! Was ever a people before so blessed as we are, if true to ourselves? In the progress of other nations through its bloom so many elements of prosperity, of greatness and of glory? Our only real danger lies in dual composition elevated and visible. It was clearly discerned at the commencement, and distinctly seen through out our whole career. Dual we wantonly run upon it, and instead of the anticipated explosion of the high destiny that awaits us? I beseech the Abolitionists themselves solemnly to pause in their mad and fatal course. Amid the jubilee of objects of humanity and benevolence which invite the employment of their exercise, let their select one every harmless that does not threaten to deluge our country in blood

I call upon that small portion of the clergy which has lent itself to these wild and reckless schemes, not to forget the peaceful duties and divine mission of the founder of our religion, and to profit by his peaceful examples. I entreat them to abstain from all intervention who have given their countenance to abolition, to remember that they are ever most loved and most useful when they diffuse the light of truth and delightful sphere; and to reflect that the ink which they shed in subscribing with their fair hands petitions may prove to be the poison blade to the destruction of the blood of their brethren. I adjure all the philanthropists of the free States to rebuke and discountenance, by their opinion and by their votes, the fanatical spirit, most inevitably lead to the most calamitous consequences. And as to all, as countrymen, as friends, and as brothers, I call upon them in undying memory the motto which bore our ancestors triumphantly through all the trials of the swaddling band, as, I trust, it will another trial, posterity through all that may, in the dispensations of Providence, be reserved for them.

A Prophecy.—The Republican newspapers throughout the country are still sneering at the Union meetings, and instead of giving the Union sentiments, and instead of giving the Union sentiments, and instead of giving the Union sentiments