

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

In presenting to the public the reprint of Congressional Documents, the publication of which has been sanctioned by the act of March 2d, 1831,* the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives deem it proper to explain, briefly, the object of the compilation, the plan of its publication, and the advantages which it may afford to those who may desire to be acquainted with the action of the Government, and the legislative and documentary history of the United States.

The following reports, heretofore presented to both Houses of Congress, will show the plan of the work, and the difficulties which, at its commencement, it had to surmount.

“ To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States:

“ The Secretary of the Senate and Clerk of the House of Representatives respectfully make report of their proceedings, under the act of Congress of 2d March, 1831, directing a subscription to the compilation of Congressional documents proposed to be published by Gales & Seaton.

“ Immediately after the adjournment of Congress, we commenced the discharge of the duties imposed by the act of Congress. At the very outset, however, we found great difficulty in ascertaining the extent of the duties required of us. Messrs. Gales & Seaton, of their own accord, had submitted to Congress a subscription paper, proposing to republish the Congressional documents for the first thirteen Congresses; the volume, the type, and the size of the page were designated, as well as the specific sum for each volume when delivered. With these proposals before them, Congress directed the Clerk of the House of Representatives to subscribe for seven hundred and fifty copies, on two conditions: 1st. The documents to be selected under the directions of the Secretary of the Senate and Clerk of the House of Representatives. 2d. The price paid for the printing to be at a rate not exceeding that of the price paid to the Printer of Congress for the printing the documents of the two Houses.

“ At the first view, it does not appear difficult to ascertain the specific duties required from us. The documents are to be selected by us. It would, therefore, seem that, when we had given the publishers a list of the papers to be reprinted, our agency was at an end. Circumstances, however, which we will now explain, rendered it impossible that our duties could stop here. The great mass of these documents were to be found only in the archives of the two Houses. No complete set of them existed in any other place. They were contained in one hundred and sixty octavo and folio printed volumes, eighty large folio manuscript records, and in some hundred large files of documents. Charged, as we are, with the care and preservation of all these important documents, we could not, for a moment, permit them to go into the hands of others over whom we had no control. To make the separation of those to be published, without producing disorder, required the knowledge and experience, and the most patient, persevering industry of the most able of our assistants, and of ourselves. Had any one, without that knowledge of these things, which can only be obtained by long experience, undertaken to separate and arrange these documents, he would have been in great danger of reducing the whole to a heap of confusion. In addition to this, many of these documents exist only in the manuscript records of the two Houses, consisting of large folio volumes substantially bound, and in the best state of preservation. We could not suffer these valuable records to be taken apart, and the portions selected sent to the printing office. We were also unwilling, either to permit them to be taken from the office to be copied, or to permit strangers to come into the office, and occupy our desks and tables in copying them.

“ From these considerations, (and others of a similar nature not here detailed,) it was evident to us that it was our duty, not only to select these documents, but also to prepare them for the press.

* AN ACT making provision for a subscription to a compilation of Congressional Documents.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives hereby is authorized and directed to subscribe for seven hundred and fifty copies of the compilation of Congressional Documents proposed to be published by Gales & Seaton: Provided, That the documents shall be selected under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives: And provided, also, That the price paid for the printing of the said copies shall be at a rate not exceeding that of the price paid to the printer of Congress for printing the documents of the two Houses.

ANDREW STEVENSON,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

JOHN C. CALHOUN,

Vice President of the United States and President of the Senate.

Approved: March 2, 1831.

ANDREW JACKSON.

Another question then arose, What arrangement should be given to these documents in the proposed publication? Two modes were suggested: 1st. An arrangement strictly chronological: or, 2d, A division into classes, and each class to preserve its chronological order. After much examination and reflection, we decided on the second mode, and finally adopted the following arrangement:

- I. FOREIGN RELATIONS.
- II. INDIAN AFFAIRS.
- III. FINANCES.
- IV. COMMERCE AND NAVIGATION.
- V. MILITARY AFFAIRS.
- VI. NAVAL AFFAIRS.
- VII. POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.
- VIII. PUBLIC LANDS.
- IX. CLAIMS.
- X. MISCELLANEOUS.

Each of these ten series to have its own number, running from one upward, and to be printed chronologically

I. FOREIGN RELATIONS.

This will embrace our entire Foreign Relations. It presents a subject of much unity; and, from the importance of its interest, will be the first series. The annual messages of the President of the United States, from their importance, claim a prominent place in this compilation; and their proper place is the first of Foreign Relations, to follow each other in chronological order.

II. INDIAN AFFAIRS.

- 1st. All documents accompanying Indian treaties.
- 2d. Indian massacres and depredations.
- 3d. Indian wars.
- 4th. Efforts made for their benefit in civilization, agriculture, and the mechanical arts.

III. FINANCES.

This series embraces more variety, consisting of:

- 1st. Public debt and public credit.
- 2d. Revenue, direct and indirect taxation, embracing manufactures.
- 3d. The currency.
- 4th. The Mint of the United States.
- 5th. Bank of the United States, and State banks, so far as connected with the United States.
- 6th. General principles of the annual estimates.
- 7th. General principles of the expenses of collecting revenue.
- 8th. One table of receipts and expenditures.

IV. COMMERCE AND NAVIGATION.

All external matters of this class to be embraced in Foreign Relations.

- 1st. Imports and exports, and all communications and reports containing general principles and reasoning
- 2d. The fisheries, and all communications and reports containing general principles and reasoning.
- 3d. Light-house establishment.
- 4th. Improvement of harbors, rivers, roads, and canals.
- 5th. Tonnage, and all communications and reports of committees containing general principles and reasoning.
- 6th. Coasting trade, and all communications and reports of committees containing general principles and reasoning.

V. MILITARY AFFAIRS.

- 1st. Army.
- 2d. Military academy.
- 3d. Fortifications.
- 4th. Armament, arms.
- 5th. National armories.
- 6th. Militia.

VI. NAVAL AFFAIRS.

This presents a subject of much unity.

VII. POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

This is also a subject in which there is little or no variety.

VIII. PUBLIC LANDS.

This will embrace the whole subject of the public domain, including all claims of individuals and corporations for land.

IX. CLAIMS.

Embracing all claims against the United States, except claims for land, and claims in which Foreign Relations or Finances are directly embraced.

X. MISCELLANEOUS.

Embracing all documents proper to be reprinted, not included in the foregoing.

“ There are many advantages attending this arrangement, which are quite apparent. The class on Indian Affairs, for instance, (the printing of which has been finished,) is contained in a single volume; and, in chronological order, presents our entire Indian relations, unmixed with other matter. Foreign Relations, Military Affairs, Naval Affairs, and the Public Lands, each present distinctions strongly marked from all the others; and the advantage of having each of these great interests in a separate series, is very great. Occasionally, however, documents were met with, partaking so much of two or more classes, that it was difficult to give them a satisfactory arrangement. This was more particularly the case with the series of Finance and Commerce. Some single documents referred less or more to both classes. So, also, of the class of Claims. Some of them involved extensive correspondence with foreign Governments. These were placed with Foreign Relations. Some of them involved our commercial relations; others, the regulations for the sale of public lands. The cases thus described, however, were not numerous; and, in every instance of their occurrence, our best judgment was exercised in giving them the proper arrangement.

“ After we had decided on the foregoing as the principles by which the publication should be regulated, we had an interview with Messrs. Gales & Seaton. They stated to us at once that they considered the proviso, that the printing should be done at the rate of public printing, as, in a great measure, rescinding the details of their proposals, and that they stood, in regard to Congress, in something of the relation of public printers. That every thing performed by them, besides the printing, would, of course, be a charge against the Government, to be settled and adjusted as Congress might direct. That, as we had the care of the archives of the two Houses, they could not expect that we would entrust them to others, either in the selection, copying, or arrangement. That they were willing, nay desirous, that we should take the whole control of the publication, as far as the labor and responsibility of editors were concerned. That the mechanical part, including the paper, the printing, and the binding, would belong to them; and for these they would be responsible.

“ From all these considerations, it was evident to us, that, if we acted at all under the act of Congress, it was our duty to assume the whole responsibility of editing the work. Other considerations, besides those mentioned, also led to the same conclusion. We stood in an official relation to the two Houses, and had every possible motive to devote our entire ability to the proper completion of the work. From long experience, and close application to the business of Congress, we had a reasonable confidence in our ability to do the work justice. We had under our direction able and industrious men, and whose experience in these things were even greater than our own. Much of the usefulness of this work will depend on the indexes; and, for doing justice to this item, we know of none so capable as our assistant clerks. We, therefore, did not hesitate, although the responsibility was great, and the labor great, to act upon the principles thus indicated.

“ Another important question, of no little embarrassment, was presented in deciding on the size of the page. The joint resolution, of 24th May, 1828, placed that subject under our control; and, after much consideration and reflection, and repeated interviews with the publishers, we decided on the folio size. The facility with which the numerous tables can be inserted on a folio page, was one leading reason for giving it the preference. The volumes of Congressional documents are becoming too numerous for easy reference, and we find a great difficulty in keeping our series perfect. For the public offices, or for large libraries, we believed the folio form altogether the best.

“ In selecting the papers for the class on Foreign Relations, it was found, by the Secretary of the Senate, that some important documents, of an early date, were upon the Executive files of the Senate: these papers being under the injunction of secrecy, of course, cannot, in this communication, be particularly described. Generally, it may be observed, that their publication (should there be no objection to removing the injunction of secrecy) would add much to the value and interest of the work. The Secretary of the Senate will bring this subject before the Senate, for their decision respecting it.

“ The progress made in the printing will be communicated to Congress by the publishers, and specimens of its execution will also, by them, be laid before the two Houses.

“ All which is respectfully submitted.

“ DECEMBER 29, 1831.”

“ WALTER LOWRIE,
“ MW. ST. CLAIR CLARKE.

“ *To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:*

“ The undersigned respectfully represent, that, encouraged thereto by the act of Congress of the last session, authorizing a subscription to the work, they have not only made a beginning, but have made considerable progress, in the execution of their proposition for publishing a *Compilation of the Public Documents of the United States*. They have now the pleasure to submit to Congress two volumes, which, excepting the indexes thereto, not yet ready for the press, and the title-pages, which are but temporarily composed, they respectfully offer as samples of the whole work.

“ In the arrangement, as well as the selection of the materials of this great national work, they have been governed by the decisions of the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, under whose directions, moreover, exclusively the materials of it have been prepared for the press. To their intelligence, industry, and discrimination, and that of the gentlemen in their respective offices, it will owe whatever value it possesses beyond that of a mere print and reprint of the documents on the files of the two Houses of Congress. The caution of Congress, in committing these matters to their ability and discretion, rather than to that of the publishers, has, in the opinion of the undersigned, been justified in the fullest extent by the order, and the form and pressure, which have been given to the work.

“ In the arrangement of the documents, the principle of *classification* has been adopted; the advantages of which will be apparent upon the slightest examination of the samples of it herewith transmitted. The two volumes now transmitted, are not the first in the series, but are those which have been most easily collated. One of them, it will be discovered, comprises all the Congressional documents upon *Indian Affairs*, (one of the classes,) from the beginning of the Government up to the commencement of the fourteenth Congress, to which date (4th March, 1815, inclusive) the plan of the present series extends. The other is the first volume of the class of *Finance*, the whole of which occupies two volumes. When indexes, copious and well digested, such as are in preparation, are added to these volumes, they will afford a facility to the investigation of our legislators, whether in debates or in committee business, which will amply compensate for the expense of the publication, without adverting to their value as national memorials, which, of itself, it is respectfully submitted, would have fully justified the sanction which has been given to this undertaking.

“ The two volumes, herewith presented, comprise about one-half of what has been already done in the printing of the work, which is in the course of steady prosecution; and of which, it is hoped, eight or ten volumes may be ready for delivery before the close of the present Congress.

"Of the execution of this work, for which alone the undersigned have any right to credit, they beg leave to observe only, that they have endeavored to make it such as should be creditable to the Government, and as should justify the liberal confidence which, by the act of the last session, Congress has reposed in the undertakers. They confidently submit its merits to a comparison with those of any other work of the like nature ever published in this, or any other country.

"A superficial examination of these sample volumes will suffice to satisfy the intelligent observer of the importance of the work to the public service, and to the history of the country. Documents of the highest interest will be found in it, which were either before unknown to the present generation, or forgotten by it, though yet of modern antiquity. Some, which have lain buried under the mass of less important papers, which it has not been deemed useful to include in this publication, are such as enlighten obscure passages in our civil history, and add new motives for the veneration with which the memory of the early actors in the Government is habitually cherished.

"The class of *Foreign Relations*, first in order, but suspended in its execution to await the decision of the Senate, in regard to the publicity of some of the documents which it would appear properly to comprise, will, when completed, be one of the most interesting and instructive works that has issued from the press within the last thirty years, possessing all the attraction of fiction, sanctified by all the fidelity of truth.

"All which is respectfully submitted by the publishers.

"GALES & SEATON.

"WASHINGTON, December 30, 1831."

To the information conveyed in these reports little need be added to show the design and scope of the work. It will be seen that, soon after its commencement, one portion of it was suspended for the purpose of obtaining the sanction of the proper authority to the publication of papers originally communicated, by the Executive, under an injunction of secrecy, and which remained under the same injunction, although the causes which rendered their publication improper had ceased to exist. These papers, throwing light on past transactions, were numerous and important; and it was thought that the present was, perhaps, the most proper time for their collection and preservation. The circumstances connected with them were, therefore, submitted to the Senate; (*) and having been

(*) "OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE, January 13, 1831.

"To the Senate of the United States:

"The Secretary of the Senate respectfully makes report of his proceedings in relation to the documents on the confidential files of the Senate, referred to in the report made to the two Houses on the subject of reprinting the Congressional documents.

"In selecting the documents for the class of *Foreign Relations*, it became necessary to examine whether there were any papers on the Executive files of the Senate, from which the injunction of secrecy had been removed, and which had not been printed.

"To effect this object it was proper to compare the papers on file with the Executive Journal, and this necessarily brought every document on those files under examination. Although it was discovered that the files were very imperfect, arising from the papers having been returned to the Department of State; yet, with the permission of the head of that Department, all the papers returned were examined there. The examination of these papers led to a full conviction that, if there be no objection to remove the injunction of secrecy, their publication would add much value and interest to the work now reprinting under the act of last session. In these circumstances, the Secretary believed it to be his duty to delay the printing of the class on *Foreign Relations* until the Senate could have an opportunity of passing upon the subject. The measures adopted to lessen the labor of any committee of the Senate, who might have charge of the subject, will be seen by the following letter of instructions to the Executive Clerk of the Senate:"

"OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE, June 4, 1831.

"DEAR SIR:

"In selecting the documents for republication, it is found that some of great importance are on the confidential files of the Senate. These, of course, cannot be published until the injunction of secrecy be removed, either by the Senate or by the Executive. It is found, also, that many papers and documents which were once before the Senate, in their Executive capacity, have been returned to the Department of State. As the Senate will probably act upon this subject at their next session, it is desirable that some examination be made before the meeting of Congress. This examination will embrace as well those papers which have at any time been before the Senate, as those on the files of the Department of State relating to the same subject, but which were not communicated to the Senate. Take, for example, the message of the President of the United States submitting for ratification the treaty negotiated by Mr. Jay, and the instructions and correspondence accompanying this message. In this case the correspondence, as high as No. 22, was laid before the Senate; but, on the files of the Department of State, the despatches reach as high as No. 32 on the subject of this treaty. Take another example in the correspondence of Mr. Morris with the Secretary of State, in 1792-93. In the letters of Mr. Morris, communicated to the Senate, there are numerous blanks. It may be that no reason now exists to prevent these parts from being furnished, and the whole published.

In an interview with the Secretary of State I have stated this subject to him, and he has given permission for the examination of any papers in the Department of State which have at any time been before the Senate. I have to request, therefore, that you will, in the first place, examine the entire documents on the confidential files of the Senate to the close of the thirteenth Congress. In doing this you will take down such an abstract as will show their nature and object. The Secretary of State, having already given his consent, you will extend the examination to the files of the Department of State, which relate to these different subjects, and make a similar abstract of every paper which you may judge of importance. This part of the examination will extend, of course, to such parts of letters as have not heretofore been communicated to the Senate. When you are through the examination, you will make out a report for the use of the Senate. You will also make a copy of that part of the report which embraces papers not communicated to the Senate, which you will deliver to the Secretary of State.

"I need not remark that all examinations you may make in the Department of State will be subject to the same injunction of secrecy as will be required by your situation as the confidential clerk of the Senate.

"I am, &c.

LEWIS H. MACHEN, Esq."

"WALTER LOWRIE, Secretary of the Senate.

referred to a Committee of that body, a resolution was reported and passed,* removing the injunction, under proper restrictions, and virtually authorizing the publication of whatever could add interest or value to the work.

Under this authority, the confidential files of the Senate, and the records of the Department of State, have been examined with care; and every effort has been used, on the part of the compilers, to supply what appeared to be deficient in the original design, and to render the work still more deserving of national patronage.

The present compilation comprehends a period commencing with the first organization of the Government, in 1789, and terminating with the third day of March, 1815.

It must be obvious to all who consider the period which it embraces; the structure of the Government; the systems to be organized; the principles to be established; and the difficulties to be overcome; that this collection of State Papers contains diversified and important information not easily derived from any other source. It lays open, during a critical and agitating period, every spring of the foreign and domestic policy of the United States; it discloses the governing principles of those who first, under Divine Providence, put our republican system into motion; it traces the perils, from within and from without, by which that system was surrounded; it removes the veil from the designs of artful enemies or insidious friends; and it presents for future imitation the integrity and constancy, the moderation and wisdom, under which the republican institutions of the United States have been seen to gather strength from every succeeding year.

In this compilation the future historian may find a body of authentic materials ready prepared for his hand. To the statesman are presented both warnings to admonish and precedents to instruct. The descendants of those who have heretofore filled the most important trusts may here find embodied, in an imperishable form, the cherished memorials of their vigils and their toils. And in proportion as the facts and principles which they contain shall be impressed upon the mind, will the breast of every citizen be filled with an honorable pride in the institutions of his country, and with gratitude to those who have laid the broad and firm foundations of a nation's welfare.

WALTER LOWRIE, *Secretary of the Senate.*

MATTHEW ST. CLAIR CLARKE,

Clerk of the House of Representatives.

JANUARY, 1833.

"In pursuance of these instructions, Mr. Machen devoted six months of patient and laborious examination of the documents thus designated. The task of taking an abstract of one of these State papers, sufficiently full, to give its entire substance, is always difficult; and it is due to this gentleman to state, that the duty assigned to him, difficult as it was, has been executed with great ability and clearness. More than five thousand pages were examined, and their substance embodied in four hundred and forty-two pages of abstracts. Though aware of the labor it would require from him and his assistant clerk, the Secretary was induced to make this examination, and to submit the subject to the Senate, from the consideration that the work ordered to be reprinted by Congress will be one of great expense, and that these documents, while they will add little to that expense, will add much to the value of the work.

"All which is respectfully submitted.

WALTER LOWRIE, *Secretary of the Senate.*

* IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, April 14, 1832.

Mr. TAZEWELL, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, to whom was referred, on the 13th of January, a letter of the Secretary of the Senate, communicating a statement of his proceedings respecting the confidential documents in his office, connected with the publication of State papers by Gales & Seaton, reported the following resolution:

Resolved, That the injunction of secrecy be removed from such papers belonging to the Executive files of the Senate as the Secretary of the Senate may deem proper documents to be included in the present reprint of Congressional documents: *Provided*, That no document be published until the same shall have been submitted to the Secretary of State, and the publication thereof approved by him.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

THE preceding Introductory Notice, comprising a succinct history of the origin, progress, and character of this edition of State Papers, accompanied the first two volumes which were completed and submitted to Congress. On the reception of those volumes, the Members were so impressed with the value of the work, and the public utility of having the compilation extended on the same plan, that a proposition to continue it down to the end of the twenty-second Congress (1833) met with the approbation of the two Houses, and the following joint resolution was passed:

Resolution providing for the continuation of Gales and Seaton's Compilation of State Papers.

Resolved, &c. That the provisions of the act of the second of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirty, authorizing a subscription to a compilation of Congressional Documents, be, and the same are hereby, extended to the continuation of said compilation proposed to be executed by Gales and Seaton; and that the copies of the said continuation, when completed, shall be distributed to the members of the twenty-second Congress, and in such other manner as Congress shall hereafter direct: *Provided*, The said continuation shall be limited to eight volumes.

ANDREW STEVENSON, *Speaker of the House of Reps.*
HUGH L. WHITE, *President of the Senate, pro tem.*

Approved: March 2, 1833.

ANDREW JACKSON.