

22d CONGRESS.]

No. 111.

[1st SESSION.]

## CONDITION OF THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 6, 1831.

SIR:	POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, <i>November 28, 1831.</i>	
The following report of the progress and condition of this Department is respectfully submitted:		
The revenues of the Department, being the amount of postages within the year commencing on the 1st of July, 1830, and ending the 30th of June, 1831, were	-	\$1,997,811 54
The expenditures of the Department, within the same period, were	-	1,935,559 36
Being for compensation to postmasters,	-	\$635,028 48
For transportation of the mail,	-	1,252,226 44
For incidental expenses,	-	48,304 44
Leaving an excess of revenue beyond the expenses of the Department, amounting to	-	62,252 18
Of this sum there has been paid into the treasury, (being irregularly deposited by collecting officers,)	-	563 51
Showing a balance in favor of the Department of	-	61,688 67
The surplus of revenue on the 1st of July, 1830, as stated in the report of last year, amounted to	-	148,724 22
Thus the surplus revenue at the disposal of the Department on the 1st of July, 1831, was	-	\$210,412 89
This surplus, reported as available, and at the disposal of the Department, is founded on a statement in the report of the late Postmaster General, of 1828, and on the assumption that all the postages which have accrued since my first report in 1829 will have been collected. Of the postages returned within that time, it is confidently believed the losses in collection will not amount to one-fourth of one per centum:		
The whole amount of postages from July 1, 1828, to July 1, 1829, was	-	\$1,707,418 42
From July 1, 1829, to July 1, 1830,	-	1,850,583 10
From July 1, 1830, to July 1, 1831,	-	1,997,811 54
The increase of postages within the year ending July 1, 1829, above the amount of the year preceding, was	-	108,540 47
The increase of the year ending July 1, 1830, above the amount of the year preceding, was	-	143,164 68
The increase of the year ending July 1, 1831, above the amount of the year preceding, was	-	147,228 44
The expenses of the Department for the year preceding July 1, 1828, exceeded its revenues in the sum of	-	25,015 80
For the year preceding July 1, 1829,	-	74,714 15
For the year preceding July 1, 1830,	-	82,124 85
But for the year preceding July 1, 1831, the revenues of the Department have exceeded its expenditures in the sum of	-	62,252 18
The favorable terms upon which the contracts were last year made for the transportation of the mail in the southern division, commencing on the 1st day of January last, have assisted in producing the result exhibited by the following fact: The revenue of the Department for the half-year beginning with the 1st of January last, exceeded the expenditure for the same period in the sum of	-	75,475 91
Whereas, for the half-year preceding the 1st January, 1831, the expenditure exceeded the revenue in the sum of	-	13,223 73
The difference in which results constitutes the excess of revenue over disbursement for the year now reported, of	-	62,252 18
From the 1st July, 1830, to the 1st July, 1831, the transportation of the mail was increased, in stages, equal to	-	Miles a year, 834,450
On horseback and in sulkeys,	-	do. 134,252
Making an annual increase of transportation equal to	-	Miles, 968,702
beyond the amount of any former period.		
Many routes have also been improved, by substituting stages for horse mails, to the annual amount of	do.	362,321
The total annual increase of stage transportation from July 1, 1830, to July 1, 1831, was	do.	1,196,771
The annual decrease of transportation on horseback within the same time, by substituting stages, was	do.	228,069
Making the annual increase, as above, equal to	do.	968,702
On the 1st of July, 1831, the annual transportation of the mail was—In stages and steamboats,	do.	10,728,348
On horseback and in sulkeys,	do.	4,740,344
Making the whole annual transportation equal to	do.	15,468,692

Other improvements are also determined on, in which remote parts of the country are immediately interested; among them, are the establishment of a regular steamboat mail on the river Ohio, between Guyandotte, in Virginia, Cincinnati, in Ohio, and Louisville, in Kentucky, to form a daily connexion with the line of post coaches from this place, and from Richmond, in Virginia, to Guyandotte; and the improvement of the route to a daily line between Macon, in Georgia, Mobile, in Alabama, and New Orleans, so as to constitute a daily intercourse between New Orleans and the Atlantic cities; and with a despatch of twelve days between New Orleans and this city.

These two improvements are already in a state of progress, and it is expected will soon be in complete operation. The contracts for transporting the mails in the middle division of the Union, comprising the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Ohio, and the Territory of Michigan, will end with the present year. In renewing the contracts for this division, provision has been made for stage accommodation over 560 miles of post roads, on which the mail had before been carried on horseback, and on which the annual transportation in stages will, from the 1st of January next, amount to 62,365 miles. On 1,803 miles of post roads, where the mail is already carried in stages, the frequency of trips will also be increased to the annual amount of 407,524 miles. By these arrangements an annual increase of stage transportation is secured, from the 1st of January next, of 469,889 miles on that section. The value of these improvements, at the lowest estimate, is as follows:

469,889 miles of stage transportation, at 9 cents per mile,	-	-	-	-	\$42,290 01
Deduct 62,365 miles of horse transportation superseded by stages, at 4 cents per mile,	-	-	-	-	2,494 60
Nett value of the improvements,	-	-	-	-	39,795 41
The acceptances for the new contracts, besides the securing of these improvements, are not so great as the amount now paid for the transportation on that division by \$51,787 18.					
The renewal of the contracts, therefore, saves in money to the Department the sum of	-	-	-	-	51,787 18
Which, added to the value of the improvements, effects a saving of	-	-	-	-	<u>\$91,582 59</u>

Other improvements, highly important in their character, are proposed; the decisions on which have been deferred for further consideration. It is, however, anticipated, from the saving which has been effected in renewing the contracts, that the Department will possess the ability to make some further improvements in this division of mail routes.

There were, on the 1st of July last, 8,686 post offices. To the plan adopted for their supervision, and the vigilance with which it is observed, together with the system of finance which is strictly adhered to, may be attributed, in no small degree, the increasing prosperity of the Department.

I have the honor to be, with high regard, your obedient servant,

W. T. BARRY.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

22d CONGRESS.]

No. 112.

[1st SESSION.]

INCREASE OF THE PENSION OF A MAIL CARRIER WHO WAS SHOT IN THE CREEK NATION IN 1805.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 28, 1831.

Mr. PEARCE, from the Committee on the Post Offices and Post Roads, to whom was referred the petition of Jonah H. Webb for an increase of his pension, reported:

That, from the evidence which has been submitted, the committee are satisfied the petitioner is aged and poor; that the wounds he received while employed to carry the mail of the United States from Athens, in Georgia, to New Orleans, rendered him unable to labor, and made him a cripple for life; that he is now in a suffering condition, the present allowance of fifty dollars per annum being insufficient to procure him the necessaries of life. The committee, therefore, ask leave to report a bill to give to said Webb eight dollars per month, the pension of a common soldier when totally disabled by wounds received in the service of his country.

22d CONGRESS.]

No. 113.

[1st SESSION.]

POSTAGE ON NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 13, 1832.

SIR:

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, *January 10, 1832.*

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, enclosing the resolution of the House of Representatives relative to "the expediency of abolishing the postage on newspapers and periodicals;" in which you inquire the amount of "nett revenue arising from this source, and the amount of each, separately;" also, my opinion upon the "propriety of adopting this measure, having a due regard to the prosperity of the Department; with any other information which may be useful to the committee in forming a correct opinion on the subject."

To the first inquiry, I will observe, that the accounts of postages on newspapers and pamphlets are kept together, without distinguishing one from the other. The commission to postmasters is the same on both; and no occasion has ever arisen for separating them on the books of the Department. The postage on pamphlets which are not periodical is very inconsiderable. The intention of the law appears to have been to discourage their transmission by mail, except in cases where it might be regarded as a matter of considerable interest; and the object is accomplished. The postages on newspapers and pamphlets arise principally on the former, probably more than four-fifths of the whole: the remainder is almost entirely on periodical pamphlets.

The gross amount of postage on newspapers and pamphlets for the year ending June 30, 1830, was	-	-	-	-	\$196,606 34
That for the year ending June 30, 1831, was	-	-	-	-	223,485 01
The increase in one year was	-	-	-	-	<u>\$26,878 67</u>

The commission allowed to postmasters on newspapers and pamphlets is 50 per cent. on the gross amount; but, by reserving to the Department the fractions of cents, the nett proceeds are a little more than one-half of the gross amount.

The nett proceeds of postage on newspapers and pamphlets for the year ending June 30, 1830, amounted to	-	-	-	-	\$98,513 44
For the year ending June 30, 1831, to	-	-	-	-	112,111 22
Increase of nett proceeds in one year,	-	-	-	-	<u>\$13,597 78</u>