

division should be estimated in the exact proportion to the number of miles travelled in each State, it would be exceedingly incorrect, because the transportation of the mail, owing to the difference in roads, the different degrees of weight and celerity, and the difference in number of passengers, costs four times as much per mile on some routes as upon others in the same vicinity.

The mail routes in the United States are divided into four sections, viz: The northeastern, comprising the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York; the middle, comprising the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, and Kentucky, and the Territory of Michigan; the southern, comprising the States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, and the Territory of Florida; the southwestern, comprising the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana, and the Territory of Arkansas.

Without a greater amount of labor than can be given to it during the present session, the division of the expense for transportation cannot be made beyond that of the four divisions.

The amount of expense for transporting the mail from the 1st of January, 1830, to the 1st January, 1832, was—

For the northeastern section, -	-	-	-	-	-	\$640,024 29
For the middle section, -	-	-	-	-	-	780,976 41
For the southern section, -	-	-	-	-	-	701,476 68
For the southwestern section, -	-	-	-	-	-	469,776 16
					Total,	<u>\$2,592,253 54</u>

The amount of extra allowances made to contractors during the same period was—

In the northeastern division, -	-	-	-	-	-	\$25,035 73
In the middle division, -	-	-	-	-	-	41,315 74
In the southern division, -	-	-	-	-	-	2,101 27
In the southwestern division, -	-	-	-	-	-	50,619 13

Total amount of additional allowances for two years, \$119,071 87

There was a saving during the same time in renewing the contracts in two divisions, viz:

Southwestern division, from January 1, 1830, -	-	-	-	-	-	\$19,195 37
Southern division, from January 1, 1831, -	-	-	-	-	-	25,047 87

\$44,243 24

Leaving the amount of extra allowances from January 1, 1830, to January 1, 1832, beyond the amount curtailed in the same period, \$74,828 63. The amount of expenses for transporting the mail for the year 1831 was \$1,320,097 56; the amount of expenses for transporting the mail for the year 1829 was \$1,245,268 93; the difference, agreeing with the above statement of increase, is \$74,828 63; the amount paid for compensation to postmasters, including the contingent expenses of their offices, from January 1, 1830, to January 1, 1832, was \$1,278,963 60; the incidental expenses of the Department were, from January 1, 1830, to January 1, 1832, \$135,837 32.

The foregoing statements exhibit the whole expenses of the Department for the two years from January 1, 1830, to January 1, 1832, viz:

For transportation of the mails, -	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,592,253 54
Compensation to postmasters, including the contingent expenses of their offices, -	-	-	-	-	-	1,278,963 60
Incidental expenses, -	-	-	-	-	-	135,837 32
						<u>\$4,007,054 46</u>

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

To the Hon. HUGH L. WHITE, *President of the Senate pro tem.*

W. T. BARRY.

APPENDIX.

14th CONGRESS.]

No. 1.

[2d Session.]

SUNDAY MAILS.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MARCH 1, 1817.

Mr. MILLS made the following report:

The committee, to whom were referred sundry petitions, from different parts of the United States, praying that Congress would prohibit, by law, the transportation and opening of the mail on the Sabbath, ask leave to report:

That they have devoted that attention to the said petitions which the importance of the subject, and the motives which actuated so respectable a portion of their fellow-citizens, seemed to require.

To enable them to decide with more correctness, the committee addressed a note to the Postmaster General, requesting of him information upon the following points, viz:

1. "What instructions, if any, have been given by your Department to the deputy postmasters of the United States, in regard to the arrival and departure, opening and distribution of the mail on the Sabbath?"

2. "Is the mail now transported on the Sabbath over any route where it is not transported every day in the week? If so, please to state over what route, and for what reasons, it is thus transported."

3. "Would the prohibition of the transportation and opening of the mail on the Sabbath essentially impede the arrangements of your Department, or injure the public interest?"

To these inquiries, the Postmaster General returned the following answer, which the committee make a part of their report:

GENERAL POST OFFICE, *February 20, 1817.*

To the honorable the Committee to whom were referred sundry petitions, from different parts of the United States, praying that Congress would prohibit, by law, the transportation and opening the mail on the Sabbath day.

The first point of your inquiry is, "what instructions, if any, have been given by your Department to the postmasters of the United States, in regard to the arrival and departure of the mails at their respective offices on the Sabbath?"

To which I observe, that the ninth section of the "act regulating the Post Office establishment" directs that postmasters shall attend, every day on which a mail shall arrive at their offices, and at all *reasonable hours*, on every day in the week.

To regulate the operations of postmasters, under the above-quoted section, and to prevent unnecessary intrusion on the Sabbath, the following instructions were prescribed, to wit:

"At post offices where the mail arrives on Sunday, the office is to be kept open for the delivery of letters, &c. for one hour after the arrival and assorting of the mail; but, in case that would interfere with the hours of public worship, then the office is to be kept open for one hour after the usual time of dissolving the meeting, for that purpose."

I will further state that, when a mail is conveyed on the Sabbath, it is to be opened and exchanged, at those offices which it may reach, in the course of the day. This operation (at the smaller offices) occupies not more than ten or twelve minutes; in some of the larger offices, it occupies one hour; and, it is believed, does not considerably interfere with religious exercises, as relating to the postmasters themselves.

Another instruction prescribes, "That if a mail arrives at an office too late for the delivery of letters on Saturday night, the postmaster shall deliver them on Sunday morning, at such early hour as shall not intrench upon the hours devoted to public religious services."

No complaint has reached this Department against postmasters for non-observance of those instructions; which, if not strictly adhered to, must be imputable to the urgency of applications, or the complaisance of the postmasters.

The usage of transporting the mail on the Sabbath is coeval with the Government under the present constitution of the United States; though the practice of delivering letters on the Sabbath is of more recent origin, and commenced in 1810, by virtue of the aforesaid ninth section, and the above-recited instructions emanating therefrom.

The second point of inquiry is, whether "is the mail transported on the Sabbath along any route where it is not transported every day in the week? if so, which are those routes, and for what reasons is it thus transported?"

To which it is replied, that in forming arrangements, and fixing the times for the arrivals and departures of mails on lesser and cross routes, care is taken to avoid the transport of the mail on the Sabbath, except where the omission to transport on that day would break chains of communications, producing great delays to public and private intercourse: and it is the mutual desire of the contractor and the Department to avoid running the mail on the Sabbath.

The third point of your inquiry is, "would the prohibition of the transportation and opening the mail on the Sabbath essentially impede the arrangements of your Department, or injure the interests of the public?"

As precursory to my reply to the third point, it is to be considered that the mail now passes every day in the week from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to Savannah, in Georgia, without resting on the Sabbath; and the same practice prevails on the two great routes from Washington city to Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois Territory, and Missouri Territory; from this city to Tennessee, Mississippi, and Kentucky, to New Orleans; from Charleston to Tennessee and Kentucky; and on several other great chains of communication. If the mail were not to move on the Sabbath, on the first-mentioned route, it would be delayed from three to four days in passing from one end of the route to the other:

From Washington city to New Orleans, three days; from Boston to New Orleans, four and five days; and, generally, the mails on the great route would (on an average) be detained one-seventh part of the time now employed.

The following will serve as an example of delay to the weekly mails carried on horseback: The mail is carried from Baltimore to Washington city in a stage; thence, to the mouth of the Potomac, on horseback. By travelling on Sunday, there is half a day allowed in Baltimore for answering letters; but, if the horse-mail did not travel on Sunday, an answer to letters would be delayed a whole week.

The compensation for carrying the mail in stages is but a partial benefit to contractors; the principal one arises from the transport of passengers. If the stages which carry the mail cannot proceed on the Sabbath, passengers will not enter those stages; of course, the stage proprietors, who offer for the carriage of the mail, will rise in their demands, according to the deduction of receipts which shall be occasioned by loss of passengers: for those rival stages which run every day will be resorted to. Even foreign agents would outspeed the Government, and obtain advantages beyond its own establishments of communication. Added to this enhanced expense of transport, would be the loss of postage that would occur from a practice (which would inevitably follow) of sending letters by passengers in those stages which run daily. This practice of sending by passengers prevailed, in a considerable degree, during the existence of the law which added fifty per cent. on former postages.

A prohibition to transport the mail on the Sabbath would disorder the whole system of transportation on more than seven hundred routes.

The population of the United States is widely extended. The greater the territorial extent of any Government, the greater must be the necessity for celerity and frequency of its intercourse.

If it be considered necessary that governmental despatches be transmitted on the Sabbath, it may then be observed that, as far as such transmission is beneficial to the nation, by preserving or improving its condition, so far has it a tendency to the conservation and the protection of the great community, in the enjoyment of *religious* as well as *civil liberty*; and enabling it to enjoy, in safety and in quietude, the benefits diffused from a due observance of the Sabbath.

The contents of mails are not confined to public despatches, nor to subjects of private business or pleasure. The same mail which transports such, equally accelerates supplies to want, consolation to affliction, and to piety evangelical correspondence; and thus, performing works of charity, it may be considered as *doing good on the Sabbath day*.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. J. MEIGS, JUN.

In addition to the foregoing letter, the committee beg leave to observe, that they cordially agree with the petitioners in the importance of a religious observance of the Christian Sabbath—an institution calculated to afford an opportunity for relaxation from labor and worldly cares; for reflection upon serious and moral subjects; for devout adoration of the Creator and Governor of the world; for acts of charity and benevolence; and for the exercise and improvement of all those virtues which adorn the nature and contribute to the happiness of man. To the State Governments, however, and not to the Government of the United States, belongs the power, as far as the rights of conscience and the provisions of their respective constitutions will permit, of establishing and supporting such institutions as are calculated to enlighten the understanding and correct the heart, by inculcating and diffusing among the people the great principles of piety, religion, and morality, and of passing and enforcing laws to prevent the profanation of the Sabbath.

The power "to establish post offices and post roads" is, by the constitution of the United States, exclusively vested in Congress; and the transportation and distribution of the mail, at such times and under such circumstances as the public interest may require, are necessarily incident to that power. In regulating an establishment of so much importance to the country, Congress have, by law, enjoined it upon the Postmaster General "to provide for the carriage of the mail on all post roads that are, or may be, established by law; and as often as he, having regard to the productiveness thereof, and other circumstances, shall think proper." In pursuance of this authority, it has been the invariable practice of that Department, ever since the establishment of the General Government, to provide

for the transportation of the mail, upon every day of the week, along the great and important routes through and across the country. If, in the early period of our political existence, such an arrangement was found necessary, the great increase of wealth, population, and territory, which has since taken place, in the opinion of the committee, demands its continuance.

In a country so extensive, and whose citizens are united by so many ties of friendship and consanguinity, as well as of business and policy, the convenience of the people and the exigencies of Government alike require that every reasonable facility should be furnished for the intercourse and communication of its different parts.

Under some circumstances, the petitioners themselves must admit that travelling upon the Sabbath is not only excusable, but an act of duty; and the committee cannot doubt that, along the chain of communication from one extremity of the Union to the other, through places of great wealth and business, and a dense population, the facility of communication furnished by the mail prevents, in numerous instances, the doing of that which, without such facility, would be a "work of necessity or charity."

Many of the evils stated by the petitioners are not necessarily incident to the practice of which they complain. The transportation of the mail upon the Sabbath, by the agent of the Government, furnishes no justification to the traveller who unnecessarily fixes upon that day to perform his journey in the public stage; nor does the delivery of letters at the respective post offices justify the assemblage of a concourse of people at such offices on that day. These evils, if they exist, it is perfectly within the power of the several State Governments to correct. But, as the practice of travelling on the Sabbath is tolerated by the State Governments, in at least three-fourths of the Union, the prohibition of the transportation of the mail on that day would have no other effect than to transfer to private hands that communication from place to place which is now performed by the Government. Stage coaches and expresses would supply the place of the mail. If, for example, the mail should not pass on the Sabbath between New York and Philadelphia, or between Philadelphia and Baltimore, there being no law to prohibit any other communication between those places on that day, the citizens of those large commercial cities would still maintain their daily intercourse with each other, by such private conveyance as they could employ. This would put upon the road, as agents, expresses, and private contractors, many more persons and carriages than are now employed in the transportation of the mail. Until, therefore, the prohibition of travelling on the Sabbath, by the several State Governments, shall have become, in some degree, general, a law to stop the mail on that day would rather increase than diminish the evil of which the petitioners complain.

In the opinion which the committee have formed upon this subject, they have not been influenced by any considerations of economy in the transportation of the mail, though that is alluded to in the letter of the Postmaster General; but by a sincere belief that, in the present situation of the State laws, and under proper regulations, the practice is as consistent with the requirements of the *moral law* as it is with a sound and enlightened policy.

But, although the committee believe it necessary to continue the transportation of the mail, they do not perceive that the same necessity exists for the delivery of letters at the respective post offices on the Sabbath. They, therefore, report the following resolutions:

Resolved, That it is inexpedient, at this time, to pass any law respecting the transportation of the mail.

Resolved, That provision be made, by law, to prohibit the delivery of letters at the respective post offices of the United States on the Sabbath.

18th CONGRESS.]

No. 2.

[2d Session.

CONDITION OF THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, DECEMBER 2, 1823.

SIR:

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, *November 17, 1823.*

In obedience to your request, I have the honor to submit the following statement respecting the affairs of this Department.

There are established by law 88,600 miles of post roads in the United States; and, at this time, the mail is transported 85,700 miles on these roads, leaving 2,900 miles not yet carried into operation. The mail is transported in stages on 20,943 miles of post roads.

At the commencement of the next year the mail will be conveyed on all the routes established, with perhaps one or two exceptions, for which contracts have not yet been made.

The following statement will show the increase of post roads in the years specified:

In the year 1819	there were established of post roads,	-	-	-	9,113 miles.
In the year 1820	do. do.	-	-	-	4,906
In the year 1821	do. do.	-	-	-	6,562
In the year 1822	do. do.	-	-	-	5,746
In the year 1823	do. do.	-	-	-	2,800

29,127

Making a total increase, in the five years stated, of twenty-nine thousand one hundred and twenty-seven miles.

As near as can be known from the records of this Department, there are about 5,243 post offices established: means have been taken to ascertain the exact number.

The following will show the increase and diminution of the amount due to the Department by postmasters, late postmasters, and contractors:

On the 31st December, 1799,	there was due	-	-	-	-	\$84,544 74
On the 31st December, 1804,	do.	-	-	-	-	144,457 57
On the 31st December, 1809,	do.	-	-	-	-	215,347 63
On the 31st December, 1814,	do.	-	-	-	-	232,652 19
On the 1st April, 1820,	do.	-	-	-	-	668,472 72
On the 1st April, 1821,	do.	-	-	-	-	613,007 96
On the 1st April, 1822,	do.	-	-	-	-	486,358 25
On the 1st April, 1823,	do.	-	-	-	-	435,651 46